

CITY OF CHARLESTON PROCESS TO OPENING A NEW BUSINESS

A quick guide for the process to open a new business in the City. **Customer tasks** are on the left. **City staff tasks** are on the right.

Submit for a Business License (BL)

The business owner should apply for or renew their Business License (BL) through CSS to be able to perform business in the City.

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Process BL

Staff will process the BL request. If the business is operating out of a physical space, the BL will be put on hold until the CO is Issued.

Submit for Certificate of Occupancy (CO)

If operating out of a physical location within City limits, the business owner should apply for a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) through CSS to be able to perform business in the space.

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Process CO

Staff will ensure submittal completeness. If it is complete the application will be initiated for review. If it is not complete, an email will be sent requesting additional information.

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Review CO

Assigned reviewers will have 10 days to evaluate submitted materials. If it meets all requirements, it will be approved. If it does not meet all requirements, comments will be provided through CSS.

Submit revisions (if necessary)

Once all reviews are complete, submit revised materials along with a revision application through CSS and notify staff at permits@charleston-sc.gov once uploaded. (NOTE 1: Revisions will not be processed until all reviews are complete; NOTE 2: Staff does not get notified when new documents get uploaded through CSS).

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Life Safety Inspection (LSI)

Once all approvals are received, schedule the Life Safety Inspection through CSS.

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Complete LSI

FMD Staff will be on site to complete the inspection and will input results in CSS. Once passed, the CO will automatically be released for issuance.

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Process BL

Staff will be alerted to check for a BL. If this has been updated and paid, they will link and issue both CO and BL. If the BL has not been done, the customer will be notified to apply or pay before it gets linked and issued.

Ready to Open

Once the CO and BL have been received you are ready to open for business!

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