

Start Here!

Before you complete each step in this process, you should ALWAYS check in with a representative from relevant State of TN or Metro Nashville departments. View a list here: www.nashville.gov/departments/finance/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/resources/essentials-entrepreneurs/start-your-business

FREE

Choose a Business Structure

Decide which business structure best fits your needs and future plans. While it is not required, consulting with attorneys and accountants on this step will be helpful.

www.sba.gov/business-guide/launch-your-business/choose-business-structure

FREE - \$20

Choose a Business Name

Select a name for your business and confirm that it is available. If you are not ready to move on to the next step and register your business, you can reserve your chosen business name with the TN Secretary of State for a fee.

<https://tnbear.tn.gov/Ecommerce/NameAvailability.aspx>

FREE

Obtain Employee Identification Number (EIN)

An EIN is used to identify a business entity and is typically required. Check the IRS' website to see if you need an EIN.

www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/employer-id-numbers

\$100 - \$300

Register your Business with Tennessee's Secretary of State

Most businesses in Tennessee, excluding those with a Sole Proprietorship business structure, must register with the TN Secretary of State.

<https://tnbear.tn.gov/Ecommerce/RegistrationInstr.aspx>

\$15 - \$100

Obtain Business License

A business license is required for all businesses, including home-based operations. There are additional licenses you may need depending on your business' activity.

www.nashville.gov/departments/county-clerk/business-services

FREE

Register for State Business Tax

If your business grosses \$100,000 or more and is not a sole proprietorship, you must register for Tennessee's state business tax.

www.tn.gov/revenue/taxes/business-tax

If you wish to do business with Metro, get certification and/or small business approval: www.nashville.gov/departments/finance/procurement/how-do-business-metro



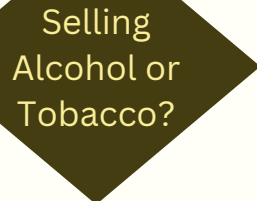
No

Yes

Liability Status Application
If you intend to hire employees, you must file an application to determine the status of your liability for unemployment insurance. www.tn.gov/workforce/employers/tax-and-insurance-redirect/unemployment-insurance-tax.html

No

Yes



\$100 - \$5,000

Obtain Additional License(s)

Separate licenses to sell alcohol and tobacco can be obtained from the State of Tennessee's Department of Revenue. www.tn.gov/revenue/for-businesses/for-new-businesses/licenses-permits-registration

Storefront Business?

No

Yes

Home-Based
If you meet clients or customers in your residential home or your employees work there, you need a Home Occupation Permit. www.nashville.gov/departments/codes/land-use-and-zoning-information/zoning-examinations/home-occupation-permits

Brick and Mortar
If you have or will purchase a property for your business, check if the property is zoned correctly for your business type. www.nashville.gov/departments/codes/construction-and-permits/building-permits-central/move-business

Visit our "Essentials for Entrepreneurs" site to find services, tools, and assistance to help you grow and sustain your business! www.nashville.gov/departments/finance/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/resources/essentials-entrepreneurs



No

Yes

Obtain Permit
If your business is not zoned correctly, you must get a Use and Occupancy permit from the Codes Department. zoninghelpdesk@nashville.gov

Obtain Letter
Obtain a zoning verification letter from the Codes Department to maintain use and occupancy. zoninghelpdesk@nashville.gov

Price Varies

Obtain Additional Permits
You must submit a Commercial Permit Application along with an electronic copy of your business site plan. Your submitted application is reviewed by each department, who assess it based on their own unique regulations and requirements. Upon approval, your building permits will be issued, and you can track their status and inspection requirements through the Codes Department's epermits system (www.epermits.nashville.gov). www.nashville.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/Commercial-Permit-Application.pdf?ct=1679944714

Done!