

1 BUSINESS PLAN

The New Bedford Economic Development Council (NBEDC) offers technical business assistance, loan opportunities, workshops, and site location assistance once you have drafted a business plan.

*New Bedford Economic Development Council
1213 Purchase Street, Third Floor
New Bedford, MA 02740
508-991-3122
info@nbedc.org
<http://www.nbedc.org>*

Before contacting the NBEDC draft a business plan. Business plans are part of a continuous process to define your business concept, understand your market, set goals and effectively meet client needs. Typically, plans encompass operational issues including, but not limited to, the following: What services and products will your business provide and what needs do these fulfill? Who is your target market and how will you reach them? How will your company secure and repay financing? Contact the Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Small Business Development Center for a detailed business plan guide with a sample business plan:

*Southeastern Massachusetts Regional SBDC
200 Pocasset Street
Fall River, MA 02721
508-673-9783
www.msbdc.org/semass*

TIP: This guide concerns the regulations and licensing requirements for starting a sole proprietorship with no employees. If planning on hiring employees, consult "Becoming an Employer."

2 LOCATION

The New Bedford Economic Development Council Real Estate Assistance Program (REAP) maintains a list of commercial property for sale, rent, or lease to help business owners find property in New Bedford or relocate within the city.

*New Bedford Economic Development Council
Real Estate Assistance Program
1213 Purchase Street
New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740
Tel: 508-991-3122 Fax: 508-991-7372
info@nbedc.org
<http://www.nbedc.org>*

Draft a detailed floor plan, as you may need it throughout the permitting and licensing process. If you plan to make repairs or do renovations, the floor plan should show what the property will look like when the work is complete. The floor plan does not need to be prepared professionally, but must show all planned furniture, doors, windows, equipment, plumbing and electrical outlets.

3 ZONING AND PERMITTING

- 3a. Contact the **Building Department** and determine which building permits or certificates you may need.

*Building Department
Inspectional Services Division
New Bedford City Hall, Room 308
133 William Street
508-979-1540*

- 3b. If you are placing any new building signs or changing existing ones, contact the **Building Department**.

Any freestanding signage will have to be approved by the **City Planner**:

*Department of Planning
New Bedford City Hall, Room 303
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740
508-979-1488*

- 3c. If you are within one hundred feet of a "wetland resource area", you may need to file a **Notice of Intent** with the **Conservation Commission** in order to move forward with your project. For more information on what constitutes a "wetland resource area" or whether you need to file a Notice of Intent, contact the Conservation Commission:

*Conservation Commission
New Bedford City Hall
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740
508-991-6188*

4 ZONING AND PERMITTING

- 4a. Visit your local branch of the **Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles** (RMV). Obtain the appropriate license for operating the vehicle(s) you will use transport passengers. Your vehicle(s) must have livery plates and meet Massachusetts' inspection standards. Upon receiving your federal tax ID number (see Step 8), you may register your livery vehicles with the Registry of Motor Vehicles:

You must acquire livery plates for each vehicle that you intend to use to carry passengers. You will pay a minimum of \$80 dollars for each vehicle. If a vehicle has seven or fewer passenger seats, the additional fee per seat is \$6. If the vehicle has more that seven seats, it will cost you \$8 per seat in addition to the \$80 minimum fee.

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For information on fees for registering your vehicle(s), visit the RMV website:

<http://www.mass.gov/rmv/fees/registration/index.htm#otherspecialty>

A designated livery vehicle is not permitted to have more than 15 passengers. There are different rules pertaining to vehicles that are legally considered buses. If you need to check on the status of your vehicle, call the RMV at 617-351-4500.

- 4b. Livery vehicles transporting more than nine passengers are required to have a Certificate of Compliance for Charter Service from the **Transportation Division** of the **Massachusetts Department of Telecommunications and Energy** (DTE).

*Massachusetts Department of Telecommunications and Energy
One South Station
Boston, MA 02110
617-305-3559
<http://www.mass.gov/dte>*

After you have submitted your application, you will be contacted by the DTE to discuss additional requirements for charter services.

- 4c. Livery services traveling on I-90, the I-93 tunnel, the South Station tunnel, and the Boston Harbor tunnels need a Common Carrier License from the **Massachusetts Turnpike Authority**.

*Massachusetts Turnpike Authority
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4160
Boston, MA 02116
617-248-2847*

- 4d. Vehicles that transport passengers across state lines and weigh more than 10,000 pounds need to register with the **U.S. Department of Transportation**.

*Department of Transportation
Motor Carrier Safety
55 Broadway, Bldg. 3
Cambridge, MA 02142
617-494-2270
<http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/index.htm>*

- 4e. Vehicles operating in and out of Logan Airport must obtain a letter from a city official (on official letterhead) stating that the city has no objections to your business before filing for permission from the **Massport Ground Transportation Unit (GTU)**. Your operating agreement will require the following:

proof of insurance for the certificate holder that covers at least: \$250,000 of bodily injury per person, \$500,000 of bodily injury per accident, and \$100,000 in property damage;
a Certificate of Insurance with a broker's stamp, authorized signature, and the name of the certificate holder;
a list of fleet vehicles;
a certified check or money order for the appropriate fee. (You will have to pay 3 months of operating fees in advance);
vehicles with operational air conditioning, a clean luggage compartment, and working seat belts.

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For more information, visit the Massport website:

<http://www.massport.com/logan/faq.html>

You should also request a copy of *740 CMR23.00 – Rules and Regulations for the Operation of Commercial Ground Transportation Services at Boston-Logan International Airport*.

*Massport Authority
1 Harborside Drive, Suite 200A
East Boston, MA 02128
617-561-1633*

NOTE: Massport offers commercial vehicles using alternative fuel and/or power sources recognized by the Energy Policy Act a 25 percent discount per outbound trip. This could be cost-effective if your business will make frequent trips to and from the airport. For more information contact Logan Ground Transport: 800-23-LOGAN.

- 4f. You also must acquire a **Livery License** from the **City Clerk**:

*City Clerk
New Bedford City Hall, Room 118
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740
508-979-1450*

5 BUSINESS CERTIFICATE

Prior to opening, you must acquire a **Doing Business As (DBA) Certificate**. Complete an application and submit it to the **City Clerk** with the \$30 application fee (an additional \$10 is required for your own copy):

*City Clerk
New Bedford City Hall, Room 118
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740
508-979-1450*

TIP: Open a business account with your local bank or credit union. If you are not using your social security number for your business, be sure to get your Tax ID# before opening a business bank account. A separate business account spares you the hassle of untangling personal and business transactions when you file taxes, decreases the likelihood of a missed deduction, and facilitates transparent recordkeeping in the event of an audit. Business accounts also increase credibility with potential lenders and clients and accommodate business growth. If possible get a debit card with your account to help you with back up record keeping.

6 TAXES

A **Form of List** is used to document the property owned by your business, so that it may be assessed and taxed by the city. It is required that you file one with the New Bedford City **Assessor's Office**:

*Assessor's Office
New Bedford City Hall, Room 109
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740
508-979-1440*

7 INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

You must also file all necessary tax forms with the **United States Internal Revenue Service**. Once you file these forms, the IRS will give you a tax identification number and provide instructions on compliance with federal regulations.

*Internal Revenue Service
JFK Federal Building
15 New Sudbury St.
Boston, MA 02203
617-316-2850
<http://www.irs.gov>*

8 MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

You must also file tax forms with the **Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR)**. Most sole proprietors file a Schedule C form with their income taxes. If you plan to sell tangible goods, you must file a Form TA-1 to pay Massachusetts' sales tax.

Massachusetts Department of Revenue

Data Integration Bureau
PO Box 7022
Boston, MA 02204
<http://www.dor.state.ma.us>

- 8a. Call the DOR's Customer Service Office at 617-887-MDOR (6367) or toll free at 1-800-392-6089 to request the forms by mail. Forms and filing instructions are available on the DOR website; however, it is still recommended that you speak to a DOR representative to ensure you are in full compliance with the law:

<http://www.dor.state.ma.us/forms/formlist.htm>

- 8b. After you have completed the forms either file online or mail the printed forms. Once you file Form TA-1, you will receive your Massachusetts Sales Tax Registration Number.

9 INSURANCE

Do a thorough risk assessment and determine what coverage best suits your business's needs. Commercial vehicle insurance is required.

Most forms of insurance are not required. However, business insurance protects you and your business in the event of fire, theft, or other losses. The most common coverage types include liability, property, business interruption, "key man," automobile, and home office.

The U.S. Small Business Association (SBA) publishes a booklet called "Small Business Risk Management Guide, #MP-28," which contains information about insurance requirements for business owners. It is available from the SBA by calling 617-565-5590 or you can download it from their website at

http://www.sba.gov/idc/groups/public/documents/sba_homepage/serv_pub_mplan_mp28eng.doc

If you get insurance, it is recommended that you assess and inventory your business facility and assets every two years. This will ensure replacement costs are up to date, enable you to settle claims faster, and help you explain business losses on your tax returns.

*Source: Navigating through Regulations and Licensing Requirements:
A Guide for Entrepreneurs in New Bedford in Twenty Occupations,
Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research. www.pioneerinstitute.org*