



# STEPS TO OPEN YOUR BUSINESS IN SANTA MONICA



## Step 1:

Before you sign a lease, please contact the **City Planning Division** to confirm:

- a) The proposed business is permitted in the zoning district, and
- b) It meets the parking requirements.\*



## Step 2:

Will the business require physical alterations to the building, or interior, including signage?

If yes...



## Step 3:

Apply for a **Business License** and applicable local regulatory permits. Call (310) 458-8745 for an application, or apply online:

[www.smgov.net/BusinessLicense/](http://www.smgov.net/BusinessLicense/)



## Step 4:

Congratulations! Once your business license certificate is issued and you are compliant with all applicable local, state and federal regulations, you may open for business.



## Step 5:

If you have 10+ employees, you will need to submit an employee transportation plan to the City's Transportation Demand Management team. For more information: [smgov.net/Departments/PCD/Transportation/Employers/](http://smgov.net/Departments/PCD/Transportation/Employers/) or call (310) 458-2201 ext. 2344 or ext. 8956.



## Step 6:

Now that you're open, we encourage you to check out these free business resources: a) Go to [GoSaMo.com](http://GoSaMo.com) to help get your employees to work. b) Sign up to [BuyLocalSM.com/signup](http://BuyLocalSM.com/signup) to promote your business in the community + reach the locals! c) Take steps to green your business by visiting [sustainableworks.org/programs/business](http://sustainableworks.org/programs/business). d) Learn more about the city where you work by signing up to an "I am SM" workshop: [santamonica.com/iam](http://santamonica.com/iam). e) For additional business/employee resources & info: [SantaMonicaAlliance.com](http://SantaMonicaAlliance.com).



**Planning Approval** may be as simple as an Over-the-Counter (OTC) permit, or may require approval(s) from the City's Architectural Review Board (ARB), Landmarks Commission (LC) and/or Planning Commission (PC).

If a **Building Permit** is required, the plans must be prepared by a licensed architect or engineer (or designer, depending on the proposed improvements) and approved by various divisions/departments before a building permit can be issued. Prior to applying for a building permit, ensure that all land use approvals from Planning (CUP, ARB, etc.) have been obtained. For more information, including submittal requirements and plan check processing times:

[smgov.net/Departments/PCD/Permits/Plan-Check/](http://smgov.net/Departments/PCD/Permits/Plan-Check/)

Plans may be submitted and processed online through the City's **Electronic Plan Review** system. \*\*

- For **Planning** requirements/questions: (310) 458-8341
- For **Building + Safety** code requirements/questions: (310) 458-8355, press option 1, then option 0.
- For **Plan Check** submission, routing & permit process enquiries, contact Permit Services: (310) 458-8355 press option 1, then option 3 to speak to a permit specialist
- For **Inspection Requests** (AFTER building permit is issued): (310) 458-2202

*The initial plan check review is 3 to 5 weeks, and recheck is 2 weeks depending on the size and scope of the project.*

\*Contact the **City Planning Division** at (310) 458-8341 or visit [smgov.net/Departments/PCD/Zoning/](http://smgov.net/Departments/PCD/Zoning/) to verify zoning and confirm permitted uses and parking requirements. Some business operations may also require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP).

\*\* **For Electronic Plan Review assistance**, call (310) 458-8355 or email: [eplans@smgov.net](mailto:eplans@smgov.net). If you prefer to meet with staff, the City's Public Counter is open 8:00AM – 5:00PM weekdays (closed alternate Fridays). Location: Santa Monica City Hall, 1685 Main Street, Room 111 Santa Monica, CA 90401. For customers pulling permits or paying fees, please arrive 1.5 hours before the counter closes to allow enough time.