

Oconee County Small Business Startup Information

1. The first thing to do before starting a business in Oconee County is to build a business plan. Contact the Clemson Small Business center, by phone @ 864-710-4717 or on the internet @ http://business.clemson.edu/centers/sbdc/sbdc_about.htm , for help with building the business plan. Business Plan Information may also be found @ Plan-A-Biz (<http://www.planabiz.org/>).
2. Second, research legal structure (i.e. Sole Proprietorships, General and Limited Partnerships, C and S Corporations and Limited Liability Companies) and sit down with a Tax Accountant to determine which legal structure is best suited for your business.
3. Third, research site selection for your planned business. Is the area you want to place your business in an approved area? Are there any zoning concerns? Does or can the area you want to place the business have access to necessary utilities? If not, to what extent will it take to get the necessary utilities? All of these questions need to be addressed before purchasing any land or building for use with your small business.

Requirements and License Information

The information listed below is a vital first step in starting a business:

- **Register the name of your prospective business**
 - Call the Secretary of State's office at 803-734-2158 to see if your choice of name is available. Then register the name of your business with the county Clerk of Court at 864-638-4280.
- **Get a Federal ID number**
 - This can be done by completing a SS-4 form (go to www.irs.gov). Then, fax this form to the IRS at 631-447-8960 or telephone the IRS toll-free at 1-866-816-2065 for more information.
- **Obtain a business license**
 - Although Oconee County does not require a business license. However, the towns/cities in Oconee County may, you will need to contact the offices of the town/city your business will be located in to determine if and what necessary license are required:

- **Salem**
Town of Salem
5-A Park Avenue
Salem SC 29676
864-944-2819
- **Seneca**
Seneca City Hall
221 East North 1st St
Seneca SC 29679
864-885-2700
senecachamberofc@bellsouth.net
chall@seneca.sc.us
www.seneca.sc.us/content/blogcategory/40/65/
- **Walhalla**
City of Walhalla
PO Box 1099
Walhalla SC 29691
864-638-4343
walhallacoc@bellsouth.net
<http://www.walhallasc.com/index.htm>
- **Westminster**
City of Westminster
PO Box 399
Westminster SC 29693
864-647-3202
wcoc@nuvox.net
<http://www.westminstersc.com/>

NOTE: Depending on what type of business you open. You may be required to obtain a business license in more than one town/city.

- **Register your business with the SC Dept. of Revenue**
 - Use form SCTC-111 (can be found at www.sctax.org). The form may also be used to obtain an employer withholding number and a retail license. A retail license is \$50 and is valid as long as your business remains at the address it is registered under.
- **Contact Health Dept.**
 - Contact the Oconee County Health Dept. @ 864-638-4170 to see what if any requirements there might be concerning you prospective business.
- **Permits**
 - Permits or License Needed:

City of Walhalla: (864) 638-4343

- Municipal Registration from Oconee County for new construction
- Building Permit from City of Walhalla
- Business License from City of Walhalla
- Sewer/Water Approval from City of Walhalla or Sewer Commission

City of Seneca: (864) 885-2737

- Municipal Registration from Oconee County for new construction
- Building Permit from City of Seneca
- Business License from City of Seneca
- Sewer/Water Approval from City of Seneca or Sewer Commission

City of Westminster: (864) 647-3202

- Business License from City of Westminster approved for specific job
- Building Permit from Oconee County
- Sewer/Water Approval from City of Westminster or Sewer Commission

Outside Municipalities (Walhalla, Westminster, Seneca, Salem, West Union, Fair Play, Townville)

- Building Permit from Oconee County
- Sewer Approval from Sewer Commission or Septic Approval from DHEC.
- No Business License Required from Oconee County
- **Other Specialized Permits**
 - You may need to file applications with the SC Dept of Revenue (www.sctax.org/Publications/startbusns.htm) if you require any of the following:
 - Alcoholic beverage license
 - Bingo license
 - Tobacco manufacturer's license
 - Coin operated device license
 - Gasoline dealer license
 - Soft drink license
 - Admissions tax license

Call the Forms Office of the Dept of Revenue at 803-898-5599 for more information.

- **For more information on retail businesses contact the following:**
 - Small Business Development Center – Clemson University
425 Surrine Hall
Clemson University
PO Box 341392
Clemson, SC 29634-1392
864-710-4717
www.clemson.edu/sbdc
 - Oconee County Library
501 W South Broad St
Walhalla, SC 29691
Phone: (864) 638-4133

- Oconee County Planning Department
415 S. Pine Street
Walhalla, SC 29696
www.oconeesc.com/planning/default.htm
- Oconee County Building Codes
Phone: 864-718-1005
cchambers@oconeesc.com
www.oconeesc.com/Building-Codes/web/index.html
- Business Information Center
SC Dept of Commerce
PO Box 927
Columbia SC 29202
www.state.sc.us/commerce/
803-737-0400
1-800-248-1334 (in SC)
- Seneca Chamber of Commerce
108 E North 1st Street
Seneca, SC 29678
864-882-2097
senecachamberofc@bellsouth.net
- Walhalla Greater Area Chamber of Commerce
214 E Main St.
Walhalla, SC 29691
864-638-2727
walhallacoc@bellsouth.net
- Westminster Chamber of Commerce
203 Augusta St.
Westminster, SC 29693
864-647-5316
wcoc@nuvox.net

- **For more information on business dealing with Industrial – Manufacturing, Distribution, & Warehousing contact the following:**
 - Oconee County Economic Development Commission
502 East Main St.
Walhalla, SC 29691-2028
864-638-4211
jalexander@oconeesc.com
<http://www.oconeescdc.com/>
 - Oconee County Planning Department
415 S. Pine Street
Walhalla, SC 29696
planner2@oconeesc.com
www.oconeesc.com/planning/default.htm
 - Oconee County Building Codes
Phone: 864-718-1005
cchambers@oconeesc.com
www.oconeesc.com/Building-Codes/web/index.html

Finance Information

- **Write a business plan**
 - The Business Plan is the most vital part of starting a small business. It is the first thing a Loan Officer is going to want to see when you apply for a small business loan. For help writing a business plan contact the Small Business Development Center at Clemson University, by phone at 864-710-4717 or at www.clemson.edu/sbdc.
- **Check your credit score**
 - Contact EQUIFAX at 1-800-685-1111. Copies of your credit report can be purchased for a small fee.
- **Contacts for financial assistance**
 - **The Appalachian Development Corporation** is organized for the primary purpose of furthering the economic development and social welfare of the Counties of Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens, and Spartanburg, and their environs with specific emphasis on the area by promoting and assisting the growth and development of business concerns, including small business concerns in such area. The principal objectives of the Appalachian Development Corporation shall be to benefit the community by fostering increased employment opportunities and expansion of business and industry for the citizens of the stated area. Furthermore, the Appalachian Development Corporation will lend to any person, firm or corporation any of its funds.

Contact the ADC:

Appalachian Council of Governments

P.O. Box 6668

Greenville, SC 29606-6668

(864) 242-9733

or

Obtain a loan application online @:

<http://www.scacog.org/rlf/application.html>

- **The Rural Business Services (RBS) of USDA Rural Development** makes its mission to enhance the quality of life for all rural Americans by providing leadership in building competitive businesses than can prosper in the global marketplace. To meet business credit needs in under-served areas, RBS Business Programs are usually leveraged with the resources of commercial or other private-sector lenders. Business Programs of RBS are listed below:
 - Business and Industry Guarantee Loans
 - Intermediary Relending Program Loans
 - Rural Business Enterprise Grants
 - Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants
 - Rural Business Opportunity Grants

For information and/or an application package, contact:

USDA – Rural Development

Rural Business – Cooperative Services

Strom Thurmond Federal Building

1835 Assembly Street, Room 1007

Columbia, SC 29201

803-765-5881

www.rurdev.usda.gov/

OR

Contact the Area 1 offices in Spartanburg @ 864-814-2471, ext.123

Other Helpful Resources

- **Oconee County Library**
 - The Oconee County Library has a special section devoted to small business information. Also, the library offers free internet access to all.
- **TriCounty Technical College**
 - TriCounty Technical College offers many different courses on small business and small business start-up. The links provided give a more in depth explanation of the courses offered.
 - **TCTC Online Instruction Center** (<http://www.ed2go.com/cgi-bin/oic/render.cgi?webname=btc&handler=courseListDepartment&departmentCode=BP>)
 - **TCTC Small Business Start-up Classes** (http://www.tctc.edu/lifelong_learners/business/smallbusiness.html)
 - **SCORE Business Counseling** (http://www.tctc.edu/lifelong_learners/business/score.html)
- **Other Helpful Links**
 - **Dept. of Revenue** (www.sctax.org/Publications/startbusns.htm)
 - **Plan-A-Biz** (<http://www.planabiz.org/>)
 - **Worklink** (<http://www.worklinkweb.com/homepage.cfm>)
 - **infoMentum** (<http://www.infomentum.org/>)

Frequently Asked Questions?

1. Does Oconee County require a business license?

Oconee County does not require a business license; however cities and towns within the county may require business licenses.

2. What permits are required to start a child daycare?

Child Daycare licensing is conducted by the SC Dept of Social Services. The regional office contact number is 1-800-637-8550, or information can be found online at <http://childcare.sc.gov/main>

The County Building Codes Department will need to be contacted for information on building permits @ 864-718-1005.

3. What permits are required to start a nursing home?

Licensing for nursing homes and adult daycare is administered by the SC Dept of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) Health Licensing Division. The contact number is 803-545-4370, or online at www.scdhec.net/health/licen/procedures.htm

The County Building Codes Department will need to be contacted for information on building permits @ 864-718-1005.

4. Can you provide me with a zoning compliance letter for a daycare / nursing home?

The County's Planning Dept can provide you with a zoning compliance letter. You will need to have your property tax map number available. The contact number is 864-638-4218.

5. Where do I get information about required permits / regulations for a poultry house?

The SC Dept of Health & Environmental Control (DHEC) regulates agricultural animal facilities. The Region 1 Environmental Quality Control Office can provide you with more information. The contact number is 864-260-5569, or online @ www.scdhec.gov/environment/water/agpage.htm

The County Building Codes Department will need to be contacted for information on building permits @ 864-718-1005.

6. Who regulates water withdrawal for business use from streams / lakes? How much can be withdrawn without a permit?

The SC Department of Health & Environmental Control (DHEC) Environmental Quality Control Office can provide information on water withdrawal regulations. The contact number is 864-260-5569.

7. Where do I get information about / apply for a septic permit?

The SC Department of Health & Environmental Control (DHEC) regulates septic systems (onsite wastewater treatment systems). The local office contact number is 864-638-4185. General Information can be found online @ www.scdhec.gov/health/envhlt/onsite_wastewater

8. How do I obtain a sales tax ID number? Contact the Sales Tax Office at (864)638-4238

9. Do I need architect or engineered plans for new construction or remodel? Commercial construction may require plans to be submitted for plan review. Commercial remodeling may also require plans. For more information regarding permits contact Oconee County Building Codes (864) 718-1005

10. Can I pull permit as an owner (for a commercial business)? Commercial Construction over \$5000 or any structural, electrical, mechanical, or plumbing has to be permitted by a SC licensed General Contractor.

11. How do I contact the Sewer Commission or DHEC? Oconee County Sewer Commission (864)972-3900 or DHEC (864)638-4185

12. Do I need encroachment permits from the County or State? If a new driveway or road is being cut off of a County or State maintained roadway encroachment permits are needed. For more information contact Oconee County Road Dpt. (864)886-1072 or SCDOT (864)647-0798

13. What are the zoning laws? There is currently no zoning in Oconee County. For more information, contact Oconee County Planning (864)638-4218

14. What do I need to do about change of occupancy? For information regarding Change in Occupancy contact Oconee County Building Codes (864)718-1005