

GUIDE

to Doing
Business in
Whittier





City of Whittier Economic Development Vision and Mission Statements

The vision for economic development in the City of Whittier is:

A well balanced City where business complements and adds to the quality of life for all who live, work, shop and play in Whittier.

The mission statement established to achieve this vision is to:

Facilitate the growth, diversification and stability of the Whittier economy; create prosperous income opportunities for all citizens of the City; expand the economy; and provide a sustainable future for Whittier.



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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations! You are already on the right track towards starting your business by reading this handbook. This major undertaking requires time, money and the ability to gather and sort information pertaining to your new business. The more research you conduct from the very beginning, the better informed and prepared you will be to start your new business. You will probably save money by being well-informed on the process of opening a business too!

Ombudsman Services

The City of Whittier wishes you a profitable and enjoyable business venture. For your convenience, ombudsman services are available to potential and existing businesses for assistance in resolving matters related to doing business in the City of Whittier. The Business Development Manager serves as the Ombudsman or point person at City Hall and is available to walk you through the process of opening a business in the City. General information on operating a business in the City may be provided over the phone or at the Community Development counter. Additionally, a meeting may be scheduled to explore the potential business or concept. Referrals for more technical assistance such as how to write a business plan and information on copyrights, patents and trademarks are also available.



STEPS TO OPEN A BUSINESS

Planning, Research, and Writing

Before applying for a business license with the City of Whittier, consider and review the following questions. This list is provided in order to assist you as you embark on this business enterprise.

- Have you fully researched your business concept?
- Did you write a business and marketing plan?
- Have you secured financing and capital for your business?
- Did you consult with a legal representative/attorney and accountant to determine the best business structure (i.e. Sole Proprietorship, Corporation, Limited Liability Company, etc)?
- Did you file a legal structure with the Secretary of State Business Filings Section?
- Did you file a fictitious business name with the LA County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk?
- Did you apply for a federal tax identification number with the Internal Revenue Service?
- Did you apply for an employer identification number with the California Employment Development Department?
- Did you obtain a state seller's permit from the Board of Equalization?

A key component to getting started is ensuring you have fully researched your business concept. However, it also includes significant self-analysis.



Consider the following details about most business owners, especially new ones, and determine whether you are prepared for them. Most new business owners:

- Work 12-16 hour days, 6 or 7 days a week;
- Don't see any profits the first couple of years;
- Invest (or deplete) all savings on the new business;
- Sometimes must lower their standard of living until the business is better established; and
- Experience emotional pressures which may affect the family.

This is only the beginning; read ahead for more information!

Next, you must assess your employment experience and skills to determine whether they are appropriate for the type of business you want to open. Has your employment background provided the necessary qualifications to run the business? Have you been in management and decision-making positions in the past? Do you already have a strong familiarity with the industry? Have you found a niche in the market? Will you serve an unfulfilled need? Is there a demand in the market for your product or service? Will you offer competitive prices on a good quality product? Who are your competitors? Who are your customers? How will you bring the customers in the door?

By taking all of these details into account, you will be better prepared to write your business plan which, in turn, will increase the chances of a successful business.

The Business Plan

While there is always a degree of risk associated

with starting your own business, the success of the business will depend on the level of research, planning and execution of the business plan. A business plan is a blueprint or roadmap of every aspect of your business. Management, sales goals, marketing, budget and financial statements are just some of the necessary components of the plan. The goals should include strategies for implementation and completion. Furthermore, a business plan is a living document and should be reviewed and updated often.

For more information on how to write a business plan, you may visit the U.S. Small Business Administration website at www.sba.gov. Additionally, the Whittier Public Library or your local bookstore will offer a myriad of books on business plans and how to start a business.

Things to Know Before You Sign a Lease

Once you are ready to open your business and you have a potential location in mind, you can obtain a Business License Application from the City Clerk's office located on the first floor in City Hall. The majority of new businesses will need to take the Application to the Community Development Department for approval signatures from the Planning and Building staff. The following are additional steps which will assist you in opening your business in the City:

1. Planning

The Planning Services Division of the Community Development Department is charged with the administration of ordinances and policies related to zoning, land use and development within the City. The Division reviews and processes development plans for compliance with zoning and subdivision regulations and conditional use permits.





Zoning — Planning staff must verify that the location is appropriate for the desired type of business or use.

Parking Requirements — Parking must be verified if the new use at the location will change. For example, if the last business at the site was a retail shop and you want to open a restaurant, the parking must meet the minimum standards for a restaurant. If the parking standards are not met, the new business may not be allowed.

Development Review Including Tenant Improvements — If you are making improvements to the building (interior or exterior), you must complete a Development Review Application. Depending on the building and type of business, you may be required to go before the Historic Resources Commission and Planning Commission for approval. This may require several months, so plan this into your schedule.

Signage — A plan review and permit are required for any sign in the City. Avoid unnecessary spending of money on prohibited signs by being prepared to discuss your signage several months before the opening of your business. (More information on signage can be found on page 10).

Conditional Use Permits — CUPs are issued when the use may be compatible under certain conditions with other existing and permitted uses, but which are not allowed as a matter of right by the Zoning Code. CUPs require a Public Hearing before the Planning Commission and/or City Council. The purpose of conditions on the CUP is to ensure that the activity permitted will be conducted in a manner consistent with the peace, safety, and



general welfare of the community. For example, a CUP is required for restaurants with an on-sale alcohol beverage license. The CUP process typically requires three to six months to complete.

Temporary Use Permits — Certain activities on property within the City of Whittier such as promotional sales, temporary events and fundraisers (including sidewalk sales) will require a Temporary Use Permit. Promotional (sidewalk) sales are limited to three per calendar year. Applications for Temporary Use Permits need to be submitted at least one month prior to the activity or event.

2. Building

The Building & Safety Division, also located in the Community Development Department, reviews construction plans for any site improvement or for interior/exterior improvements to buildings, issues building permits, and conducts inspections.

Construction Plan Review — Once Planning has approved the Development Review Application and development plans, the Building Division will review the construction plans for conformance with building, energy conservation, disabled access and other codes. Please note, if submitting building plans, four full sets of plans are required (one set for Planning and three for Building). Time for review varies, however, you should allow three to four weeks for the first plan review. Some projects may require separate review by Fire, Health, Sanitation, School Districts, or SCAQMD. Please consult with Building staff to verify applicability.

Building Permits — Permits are issued once construction plans are approved and





all fees have been paid. Fees are based on the valuation of project.

Inspection Record Card — When you receive a building construction permit, you will also receive an Inspection Record Card. Your City Inspector will then inspect construction throughout the construction period and work cannot proceed beyond each designated inspection point as indicated on the Inspection Record Card. The first inspection must occur within six months of the permit issuance or the permit will expire and the applicant will be subject to pay fees for review of any code changes and to renew the permit.

3. Health Permit for Food Facility

If the business is a food establishment (i.e. sit-down restaurants, take-out, including wine/beer establishments), you must contact the Los Angeles County Public Health Department, Environmental Health Division for permit requirements and for a food construction plan check. The Health Department will assist in the planning and construction of kitchen and restroom facilities for your type of food establishment. New food establishments within the City of Whittier fall under the East Los Angeles District Office, located at 4801 E. 3rd Street, Los Angeles, CA 90022. For more information, call (323) 881-7075 or visit the website at www.lapublichealth.org/eh/.

4. Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC)

If you plan on selling alcohol at your place of business, you must apply for an Alcoholic Beverage License through the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC). The ABC District Office is located at

222 E. Huntington Dr., Suite 114, Monrovia, CA 91016, (626) 256-3241. You may also find plenty of useful information regarding the Alcoholic Beverage License at www.abc.ca.gov. Establishments that wish to obtain an ABC License are also required to obtain a Conditional Use Permit from the City.

5. Los Angeles County Fire Department

Some building improvements and development projects may require review of plans by the Fire Department. Check with the City of Whittier Building Division to determine if your plans require Fire review. If advised by the Building Division that your project requires a Fire review, you should contact the Fire Department to confirm the review and requirements for the review. If a review of plans is required, you will be responsible for coordinating/scheduling the review directly with the Fire Department.

Los Angeles County Fire Department

Land Development Unit

5823 Rickenbacker Road

Commerce, CA 90040

Phone: (323) 890-4243

Fax: (323) 890-9783

www.fire.lacounty.gov

6. Disabled Access Compliance

State and federal laws give people with disabilities the right to access everyday activities such as buying an item at the store, watching a movie in a theater, and enjoying a meal at a restaurant. Businesses (and property owners who lease to businesses) are obligated to provide access to all patrons for existing facilities as well as when a facility is altered or newly constructed. The valuation of the project may trigger full disabled access compliance. Projects below a certain



threshold are required to provide a minimum of 20% of the total project budget in upgrades that improve accessibility. Your architect should be aware of the priorities for improvements that the State recommends. Additionally, while improvement plans are being drawn up, your architect should be able to tell you the valuation of the project and whether you will be expected to comply with disabled accessibility. However, if not, please feel free to contact the Building Division for that information.

7. Historic Buildings

Whittier is blessed with a number of wonderful historic buildings that date back to the early 1900s. The Whittier community highly values our historic buildings and seeks to preserve and enhance them. Adaptive reuse, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic buildings are strongly encouraged, especially in the Uptown Whittier area. The City's Historic Resources Ordinance sets forth the requirements for undertaking improvements to a historic building. If you are proposing to locate your business in a historic building and make modifications to a historic building, please contact the Planning Division as soon as possible so we can assist in guiding you through the process of complying with the City's historic resource requirements.

8. Business License

Once Planning and Building have signed your Business License Application, you may return it to the City Clerk's office for processing and payment. Please note: some businesses may require approval



from the Police Department/Code Enforcement and require finger printing; contact Business License at (562) 567-9880 for more information. If your business will be located in Uptown Whittier, generally bounded by Hadley Street on the north, Painter Avenue on the east, Penn Street on the south and Pickering Avenue on the west, membership in the Whittier Uptown Association is mandatory. Uptown Whittier is designated as a business improvement district (BID) and requires an annual assessment of businesses located in the district. Call the Whittier Uptown Association at (562) 696-2662 for information on how assessments are used to benefit the district.

Signage/Banners

The City of Whittier recognizes and strongly supports the needs of merchants and property owners to identify their businesses through signage and other means of advertisement. Size, placement, number and design of signs significantly influence the general perception of both the community's visual environment and its economic health. The City desires to preserve and enhance the quality of life for residents both in the residential areas and commercial corridors. Consequently, the Municipal Code allows for the use of signs that create a high-quality visual environment and regulates signs to ensure designs are proportionate in scale to surrounding structures and commercial districts. The intent is to eliminate visual clutter while providing reasonable opportunities for adequate identification of businesses and the goods and services they offer. Furthermore, sign regulations reduce potential hazards and promote the safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians throughout the city. Consequently, there are limitations on the amount of signage allowed per business and building. As previously mentioned, a permit is required





from the Planning Services and Building and Safety Divisions for any sign in the City including, but not limited to, permanent window signs, wall signs, monument signs, awnings, and temporary signs such as “Grand Opening” banners. Most sign permits can be processed and issued over the counter by the Planning Division. Banner permits are particularly easy to process. Be sure to bring in the actual banner to be hung (made of vinyl or weather resistant material) and a picture of the storefront or building where the banner will be placed. Also, it is important to know the linear footage of the storefront or building as the maximum size of the banner will depend on that length. Finally, please check with Planning staff for specifics on temporary banner time limits.

The following types of signs are prohibited in the City:

- Pole signs
- Balloon strings
- Roof signs
- Vehicle-mounted signs
- Outdoor advertising structures
- Animated signs
- Signs that produce smoke, sound, or other emissions
- Can signs



Animated signs include any type of sign that flashes, changes colors, moves or rotates. Additionally, neon lighting that frames a window is also prohibited.

For more information on signage or other planning related questions, please call the Planning Services Division in the Community Development Department at (562) 567-9320 or go to www.cityofwhittier.org.

OTHER RESOURCES AND HELPFUL INFORMATION

Board of Equalization Seller's Permit

A Seller's Permit is required of individuals as well as corporations, partnerships, and limited liability companies, who are engaged in business in California and intend to sell or lease tangible personal property that would ordinarily be subject to sales tax if sold at retail.

BOE Sales Tax (Seller's Permit)

Field Office

12440 E. Imperial Highway, Suite 200
Norwalk, CA 90650
(562) 466-1694
www.boe.ca.gov/info/reg.htm#sales

Business Taxes and Employer Identification Numbers

Businesses are liable for taxes and should apply for an Employer Identification Number (EIN). However, due to the complexity of tax regulations, it is recommended that you seek advice from a certified public accountant and/or a tax attorney. The EIN will be used when filing federal income tax and payroll tax. The State of California Tax Service Center offers information on required taxes for each type of business structure (Sole Proprietorship, Corporation, LLC, etc.) at: www.taxes.ca.gov/income_tax/incbus.shtml.

Internal Revenue Service

Toll-free telephone within the United States: (800) 829-4933
Washington, D.C. Headquarters:
(202) 874-1460
www.irs.gov/businesses/index.html

Franchise Tax Board

General information toll-free telephone:
(800) 852-5711
Automated telephone service:
(800) 338-0505
www.ftb.ca.gov/



Community Development Commission of the County of Los Angeles

The Community Development Commission offers several loan programs for businesses located in Los Angeles County. Loans are available for land acquisition, construction, equipment, and working capital. Additionally, the County Business Expansion Loan Program (CBELP) provides financial assistance to small and medium sized businesses to create and expand permanent job opportunities and promote economic development in the County.

Community Development Commission of the County of Los Angeles Economic Development Programs & Business Loans Division

700 W. Main Street
Alhambra, CA 91801
(626) 262-4511
www.lacdc.org

Employment Development Department (EDD)

EDD offers many services for persons seeking jobs and for business owners such as job placement and referrals, unemployment insurance, disability insurance, employment and training, labor market information, payroll taxes, and more! There are EDD offices throughout the State which offer various services. Visit the EDD website for more information and for a department phone directory at www.edd.ca.gov.

Graffiti Removal

As a token of appreciation from the City Council, the City of Whittier offers a \$500 reward to any person who observes a graffiti vandal and files a report with the City's Police Department leading to the arrest of the graffiti vandal(s).

Public Works Department

Graffiti Removal Hotline: (562) 567-9560
Email: graffiti@cityofwhittier.org

Whittier Police Department

To report graffiti in progress call:
(562) 567-9200 or 9-1-1



Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC)

The LAEDC provides business assistance to prospective businesses and existing businesses in Los Angeles County. The LAEDC's award-winning Business Assistance Program (BAP) offers free, confidential assistance to business owners, decision makers and consultants representing small or large, domestic or international businesses. The LAEDC's services include advanced technical assistance, cost containment, human resources, international trade, economic research, site selection and financing.

Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation

(213) 622-4300

www.laedc.org

Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk Fictitious Business Name Statement

A fictitious business name statement (D.B.A. or "doing business as") must be registered with the County Clerk if the business is any of the following: sole proprietorship doing business under a name not containing the owner's surname; partnership; or, corporation doing business under a name other than its legal name.

Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

12400 Imperial Highway, 2nd Floor

Searches: Room 2207

Filings: Room 2001

Norwalk, CA 90650

(562) 462-2177

www.lavote.net

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

The federal OSHA requires businesses to provide a safe work environment. OSHA is the main federal agency charged with the enforcement of safety and health legislation. The State of California offers an OSHA approved state program managed by the Department of



Industrial Relations. Assistance is provided to employers regarding safety and health in the workplace through on-site visits, telephone support, publications and educational outreach. All services provided by Cal/OSHA Consultation are free to California employers.

CAL/OSHA Consultation Service

Department of Industrial Relations
Los Angeles/Orange

1 Centerpoint Drive, Suite 150

La Palma, CA 90623

Phone: (714) 562-5525

Toll Free Assistance: (800) 963-9424

www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/consultation.html

OSHA (Federal Agency)

For general questions and to report violations:

(800) 321-OSHA (6742)

www.osha.gov

Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County

The Sanitation District provides wastewater and solid waste management and turns it into resources such as reclaimed water, energy, and recycled materials. The Sanitation District charges for the privilege of connecting a parcel within the District to the District's sewerage system and also charges existing users for increasing the quantity of wastewater discharged. Be sure to contact the Sanitation District for more information and specific requirements for new businesses where plumbing fixtures are proposed to be added.

Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County

1955 Workman Mill Road

Whittier, CA 90601

(562) 908-4288

www.lacsd.org

SASSFA/Partners for Progress

WorkSource Center

SASSFA provides a variety of employee recruitment and training services for businesses.



**SASSFA/Partners for Progress
WorkSource Center**

10400 Pioneer Boulevard, Suite 9
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
(562) 946-2237
www.sassfa.org or
www.pfpworksource.org

SCORE of Greater Los Angeles

SCORE is a nonprofit association dedicated to helping small businesses get off the ground, grow and achieve their goals through education and mentorship. SCORE is supported by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and offers services free of charge or at a very low cost. Counselors are available for mentoring either online or via an appointment at the main office in Glendale or at one of the 25 locations throughout Los Angeles County. SCORE also offers workshops lead by business experts. The workshops are geared specifically for startups or expanding businesses.

SCORE L.A.

330 N. Brand Boulevard, Suite 190
Glendale, CA 91203
(818) 552-3206
www.scorela.org

**Secretary of State Business Filings
Section/Business Structure**

The Secretary of State operates the Business Program Division to assist businesses with filings for incorporation, limited partnerships, non-profit status, and other business classifications.

**Secretary of State Los Angeles
Regional Office**

300 South Spring Street
Room 12513
Los Angeles, CA 90013
(213) 897-3062
www.ss.ca.gov/business/business.htm

**Secretary of State Document Filing
Support Unit**

P.O. Box 944225
Sacramento, CA 94244-2250
(916) 657-5448
www.ss.ca.gov/business/gp/gp.htm



Small Business Administration (SBA)

The U.S. SBA was created by the federal government to assist small business owners. The SBA website offers a plethora of information, tools and resources ranging from financial assistance information to business planning and much more.

SBA Los Angeles District Office

330 North Brand, Suite 1200
Glendale, CA 91203
(818) 552-3215 or (818) 552-3201
www.sba.gov

Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The SBDC offers free on-site business consulting and workshops on various topics such as how to write a business plan, starting your own business, financing/access to capital, and marketing your business.

Los Angeles Regional Network California SBDC

4900 E. Conant Street, Bldg 02, Suite 108
Long Beach, CA 90808
(562) 938-5100
www.longbeachsbdc.org

Southern California Edison Free On-site Business Energy Audits

An Edison representative will conduct a review of your business and provide useful tips on how you can save energy and ultimately save money on your monthly bill.

Southern California Edison

1-800-736-4777
www.sce.com

South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)

The SCAQMD is the local governing board which is responsible for protecting the public health from air pollution. Certain types of businesses require clearance from the SCAQMD. Following are examples of the types of machinery in certain businesses that require clearance: charbroiler, dry cleaning machine; spray booth; and



printing press. For more information go to www.aqmd.gov or call (800) CUT-SMOG (288-7664).

Whittier Area Chamber of Commerce

The Whittier Area Chamber provides a wide variety of services for the business community from networking events to workshops and seminars throughout the year. Businesses may gain the most value from the marketing opportunities offered. Often new businesses struggle to get customers in the door, the Chamber's marketing activities provide opportunities for you to establish a solid customer base. Additionally, the Chamber provides free ribbon cuttings and publicity for new businesses.

Whittier Area Chamber of Commerce
8158 Painter Avenue
Whittier, CA 90602
(562) 698-9554
www.whittierchamber.com

Whittier Police Department

Business Watch/Community Relations
(562) 567-9208
Code Enforcement
(562) 567-9190

Whittier Uptown Association

The mission of the Whittier Uptown Association is "to promote the businesses located in the Uptown district through marketing and the production of quality events; to work with property owners and tenants to enhance the Uptown area by maintaining a safe and welcoming environment; and to communicate the collective interests of the Association and serve as a liaison to local government."

Whittier Uptown Association
6717 Bright Avenue
Whittier, CA 90601
(562) 696-2662
www.whittieruptown.org



Workers' Compensation

California law requires all businesses with one or more employees to obtain workers' compensation. Information for employers can be obtained from the Division of Workers' Compensation Information and Assistance Unit; however, workers' compensation insurance coverage can be purchased from a licensed agent or broker. For more information on authorized insurers visit the CA Dept. of Insurance website at www.insurance.ca.gov/.

**Division of Workers' Compensation
Information and Assistance Unit
Department of Industrial Relations**
320 W. 4th Street, 9th floor
Los Angeles, CA 90013
Local Office: (213) 576-7335
Automated Telephone Service:
(800) 736-7401
www.dir.ca.gov/dwc

UTILITIES

Cable

Charter Communications
13300 E. Whittier Boulevard
Whittier, CA
(800) 681-9997
www.charter.com

Electric

Southern California Edison
(800) 655-4555
www.sce.com

Gas

Southern California Gas Company
(800) 427-2200
www.socalgas.com

Telephone/Cable

Verizon
(800) 483-4000
www.verizon.com

Trash

City of Whittier Solid Waste
(Sanitation) Division
(562) 567-9530
www.cityofwhittier.org



Consolidated Disposal Service, Inc.
(562) 946-6441
www.consolidateddisposalservice.com

Waste Management
(800) 266-7551
www.wm.com

Water
City of Whittier Public Works/
Water Division
(562) 567-9530
www.cityofwhittier.org

Suburban Water Systems
(562) 944-8219
www.suburbanwatersystems.com

San Gabriel Valley Water Company
(562) 699-1041
www.sgvwater.com

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Acro Printing
13301 Philadelphia Street
Whittier, CA 90601
(562) 945-9638
www.acroprinting.com

Casita del Pueblo
13100 Philadelphia Street
Whittier, CA 90601
(562) 693-2844
www.casitadelpueblo.org

Dattilo Restaurant
6746 S. Greenleaf Avenue
Whittier, CA 90601
(562) 945-8723
www.dattilorestaurant.com

Haendiges Plumbing Corporation
13303 Philadelphia Street
Whittier, CA 90601
(562) 698-8044
www.since1937.com

Lascari's Restaurant and Deli
16255 E. Whittier Boulevard
Whittier, CA 90603
(562) 943-1113
www.lascarisdeli.com

Orchard's Fresh Foods
16426 E. Whittier Boulevard
Whittier, CA 90603
(562) 902-1825
www.orchardsfresh.com

Pour Le Bain
6721 Greenleaf Avenue
Whittier, CA 90601
(562) 464-3636
www.pourlebain.com

The Flag Shop
7731 Painter Avenue
Whittier, CA 90601
(562) 945-3377
www.theflagshop.com

Vinatero Wine Shop
6531 Greenleaf Avenue
Whittier, CA 90601
(562) 464-9463
www.vinaterowineshop.com

Whittier Cyclery Inc.
10316 Santa Gertrudes Avenue
Whittier, CA 90603
(562) 947-1214
www.whittiercyclery.net





This booklet was produced by the City of Whittier Community Development Department. While every effort was made to ensure accuracy, errors and omissions in this guide will not relieve the business owner or operator of the responsibility, obligation, or liability in fulfilling all legal requirements of operating or managing a business in the City of Whittier.



City of Whittier
13230 Penn Street
Whittier, CA 90602
(562) 567-9999
www.cityofwhittier.org