

# The City of Paterson



## **BUSINESS HANDBOOK**

**A guide to a positive experience**

**Doing business with the**

**City of Paterson**

Business Guide for the City of  
Paterson

This guide will help you through the process of obtaining all the necessary permits/applications to operate a business or expand a commercial property in our City. City Officials will assist you as much as possible, so please do not hesitate to call upon them. The City of Paterson's goal is to ensure that the all departments in the City of Paterson guarantee your transition to opening a business in Paterson is an efficient experience.

## Who to see

The Department of Community Development is comprised of seven divisions along with the Administrative Offices of the Director. The seven divisions are as follows:

- Economic Development
- Community Improvements
- Planning & Zoning
- Redevelopment
- Historic Preservation
- Cultural & Community Affairs
- Housing

Here at the Department of Community Development "CD," we take great pride in participating on every level to ensure that our shared vision of an economically sound, historically preserved, culturally diverse and unified City of Paterson not only be maintained....but prospers!

## **GUIDELINES**

1. Meet with Zoning Officer – Make an appointment with the City’s Zoning Officer (973) 321- 1343 at the start of the project. The Zoning Officer will give you the necessary forms to obtain the permits needed to open or renovate your business.
2. Contact the Economic Development Division – The Department of Community Development through the Division of Economic Development offers many incentives to new and existing businesses. The Division has available low interest loan programs through the Paterson Restoration Corporation as well as low interest loans, tax incentives and reduced sales tax to eligible businesses. There is no fee to become a member of the Urban Enterprise Zone. You can contact the UEZ at (973) 321-1212 Ext. 2267 or register online at [www.nj.gov](http://www.nj.gov)
3. Apply for Zoning Permit – This application allows the Zoning Officer to determine if your business will comply with the City’s Zoning Ordinances. It takes **approximately 3-7** days for this permit and there is no charge for plan review.
4. Apply for Licenses – Once you have received your Zoning or Planning Board approval, you must apply for a Business License at the County Clerk’s Office, 401 Grand Street, Paterson, NJ 07505 – (973) 881-4000. Depending on the nature of the business, special licenses may be required. The Zoning Officer will refer you to the proper department for any special licenses needed. (**List of licenses**)

- 5.** Apply for Building Permits – Building permits are required for various improvements made to the space being occupied. Fees vary with the type of permit, cost of construction, and size of addition or alteration. The waiting period for permits varies from **3 – 20 days** depending on the extent of plan review required. Make an appointment early in the planning process to speak directly to the Construction Official about your building plans and to determine exactly which types of permits are required for your project ([List of permits and fee schedules](#))
  
- 6.** Applying for Sign or Awning Permit – If your business will require a sign or awning, a permit will be required. This applies to any sign or awning visible from the street. A Sign/Awning Permit Application may be picked up at the Planning and Zoning office and must be filled out in conjunction with a Zoning Permit Application. Typically, you will be required to provide a sketch of the sign or awning, color samples, building photos and installation details. If the Zoning Officer denies you a permit for a sign or awning due to non conformance with the Zoning Ordinance, you may apply to the Planning Board for approval. A **If you would like further information about permitted signs and awnings, a copy of this section of the Ordinance may be obtained from the Zoning Officer. The fees for a sign permit are \$1.00 per sq. ft. for flat signs, and \$2.00 per sq. ft. for double faced signs. The fee for an Awning Permit is based upon the cost of the awning. Typically, the Zoning Officer can grant an approval in 5 – 7 days. If the property is in a Historical District, the application must first be submitted for review and**

**approval by the Department of Community Development, Division of Historic Preservation (973) 321-1355.**

- 7.** Arrange for Certificate of Occupancy (CO) Inspection – Commercial buildings without residential units: Any time a new commercial building or addition is constructed, a CO Inspection is required. The fee for this inspection is \$75.00 under 5,000 sq. ft., \$150.00 over 5,000 sq. ft., and is arranged through the Division of Community Improvements. The City does NOT require this inspection for an existing commercial property at the time of sale, only a change in occupancy.
- 8.** Commercial Buildings with Residential Units: If a commercial building has residential units, a re-rental inspection is required when there is a change in residential tenancy. This inspection is arranged through the Division of Community Improvements **and the fee is \$10.00. If a re-inspection is required, it is an additional \$5.00**
- 9.** Arrange Health Inspections – Before, during and after the opening of a restaurant or retail food establishment, the Health Division **MUST** be involved. You must apply to the Paterson Division of Health and Human Resources for inspections, permits and licenses. A fee applies for certain services. For further information, contact (973) 321-1242. **(List fees and permits)**
- 10.** Food Handlers Course – Employees who prepare or handle food within the City of Paterson must attend and complete a Food Handler’s Course before beginning work. The program provides information on proper sanitation in a food establishment as well as food storage, refrigeration,

processing and serving. Courses are offered in English, Spanish and Mandarin Chinese (**check languages**). A nominal fee applies. Please call (973) 321-1242 for course information

## **PROCEDURES FOR APPLYING**

**To the**

### **PLANNING BOARD**

**Or**

### **ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT**

If your Zoning Permit Application has been denied, and you have been instructed to apply to one of the Boards, the following information will help to simplify the process:

#### **CONTACT THE DIVISION OF PLANNING/ZONING SECRETARY**

Contact the Planning & Zoning Office at (973) 321- 1343. They will send you all the necessary forms to fill out for the appropriate Board, notify you of any required fees, and give you information about the upcoming meeting schedule.

Seek Professional Advice – Since these are administrative proceedings at public hearings where legal and technical requirements must be met to get approvals, you may want to obtain the services of an attorney or other professionals (i.e. architect, engineer, etc.) to assist you. If the applicant is a corporation, you are required by law to be represented by an attorney. All material, fees and notices must be submitted at least 10 days before the scheduled meeting date in order for an applicant to be considered for placement on that agenda. Applications are always placed on the Agenda in the order in

which they are received, so be sure to submit in a timely manner in order to keep your project on schedule.

**PLANNING BOARD MEETINGS**

7:00 P.M.

1<sup>ST</sup> & 3<sup>RD</sup> Wednesday of Each Month

**ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT**

7:30 P.M.

2<sup>ND</sup> AND 4<sup>TH</sup> Thursday of Each Month

For specific meetings dates, times and requirements, contact  
(973) 321-1243