FORT BEND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

FORT BEND BUSINESS Start-Up Guide

The Advocate for Excellence in Fort Bend County and Beyond

445 Commerce Green Blvd. Sugar Land, TX 77478 | 281-491-0800 www.FortBendChamber.com



FORT BEND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Welcome to The Nation's FASTEST GROWING COUNTY

The Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce would like to welcome you to Fort Bend County and assist you in your quest to create a successful business. The Fort Bend Business Start-Up Guide is a resource for business and entrepreneurs of all types; whether you are looking at Fort Bend County as a possible location for your existing business or are thinking about starting a new business in Fort Bend, this guide can assist you in finding the proper resources. It contains information about contacting agencies, obtaining permits and licenses, and explains the different types of business structures that exist in Texas.

Fort Bend has much to offer and is a prime location for your business. With a population of over 900,000, Fort Bend County is home to seventeen cities, small to large, each with its own unique flavor and outstanding characteristics. Fort Bend is the fastest growing county of the ten largest counties in Texas and is consistently ranked in the Top 3% of the Nation's counties in 5 key demographic measures. A recent study published by Rice University identifies Fort Bend County as the single most diverse county in the United States. Fort Bend is known for high academic standards and an incredibly skilled and educated work force. Our business climate is flourishing and Fort Bend County is an ideal area for your business to grow.

We wish you much success and prosperity! Your Fort Bend Chamber Team stands ready to assist in any way we can.

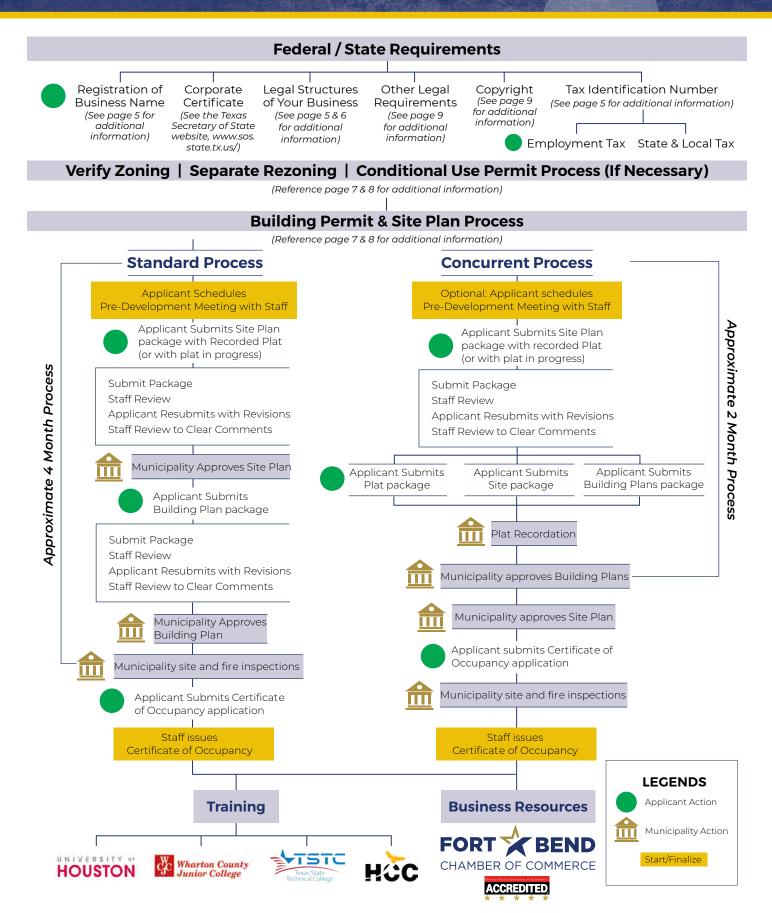
Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce | 2023

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BUSINESS START-UP PROCESS

* This is a standard process for a business start-up. Steps may differ based on the location of the business.



Legal Aspect of STARTING A BUSINESS

Deciding what form of legal entity your business will take is an important decision. This will have an impact on the future of your business including your protection under law and the rules and regulations that will apply to your business. It is recommended that before you enter into any of these forms of business, a professional tax consultant, accountant and/or attorney should be consulted before determining which legal business structure is most appropriate for the requirements of the business and owner(s). After determining the most suitable legal structure, please contact the Secretary of State to complete the necessary registration requirements.

THERE ARE SIX BASIC BUSINESS STRUCTURES IN TEXAS:

- ★ Sole Proprietorship
- ★ General Partnership
- ★ Limited Partnership

Sole Proprietorship

- Corporation (C or S)
- Limited Liability Company (LLC)
- ★ Registered Limited Liability Partnership

A sole proprietorship exists when a single individual operates a business owning all assets, is personally liable for all debts and business ownership is limited to the life of the individual proprietor. It makes no legal distinction between personal and business debts and does not require a separate income tax return.

General Partnership

A general partnership exists when two or more individuals or businesses join to operate one business. Under the general partnership, a separate business entity exists, but creditors can still look to the partners' personal assets for satisfaction. General partners often share equally in assets and liabilities. It requires an annual partnership income tax return, separate from the partner's personal returns.

Limited Partnership A limited partnership is a partnership formed by two or more individuals or entities and having one or more general partners and one or more limited partners have limited debt obligations.

general partners and one or more limited partners have limited debt obligations. **Corporation**

A corporation is created when two or more individuals, partnerships or owners join together to form a separate entity for the purpose of operating a business in Texas. A corporation has its own legal identity, separate from its owners. The corporation safeguards the business owners' personal assets. Taxation of the corporation varies depending on the type of corporation formed: C Corporation or S Corporation. A C Corporation is often taxed at a rate higher than an individual. The owners are not taxed personally for profits; however, the owners do pay personal taxes on any salaries and/or dividends and the corporation is also taxed on the dividends. An S Corporation may personally deduct losses the same as a partnership. It also offers alternative methods of distributing the business income to the owners with no added cost to the incorporation process.

Limited Liability Company (LLC)

The limited liability company (LLC) is an unincorporated business entity, which shares some of the aspects of S corporations and limited partnerships, yet has more flexibility than some of the more traditional business entities. The LLC provides owners with limited liability and pass-through tax advantages without the restrictions imposed on S corporations and limited partnerships.

Registered Limited Liability Partnership

A registered limited liability partnership is similar to a general partnership, but differs in that a partner is not individually liable, under some circumstances, for debts and obligations of the partnership arising from errors, omissions, negligence, incompetence or malfeasance committed in the course of partnership business by other partners.

You must contact these agencies:

Fort Bend County Clerk

Permit: "DBA" or "(Doing Business As) In Texas we refer to a DBA as filing an Assumed Name Certificate.

An Assumed name, or DBA, is required to be filed in each county in which you do business. A DBA is a public notice – it does not permit others from using the same name.

301 Jackson Street Richmond, TX 77476 281-341-8685 cclerk@fortbendcountytx.gov www.fortbendcountytx.gov

Texas State Comptroller

Permit: Texas Sales Tax Permit

Texas levies a 6.25% sales tax on tangible personal property, some types of labor and services. A sales tax permit and sales tax bond is required of all businesses selling, renting, leasing, or providing taxable items or services. Corporations are required to pay franchise taxes. Local taxing jurisdictions (cities, counties, special purpose districts and transit authorities) can also impose up to a 2% sales and use tax for a maximum combined rate of 8.25%. Also collected are taxes on amusement machines, motor fuels, minerals, vehicle tires & batteries and motor vehicles. Operating without a valid sales tax permit is a crime and is punishable for up to a \$500 fine for each day in operation without permit.

Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

State tax filings are done through the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

Lyndon B. Johnson State Office Building 111 East 17th Street Austin, Texas 78774 1-800-252-5555 www.comptroller.texas.gov www.comptroller.texas.gov/taxpermit

FIELD OFFICE L OCATIONS

Houston Northwest

1919 North Loop West, Suite 640 Houston, Texas 77008-1364 713-426-8200

Houston South east

2222 Bay Area Blvd., Suite 108 Houston, Texas 77058-2071 281-226-8000

Houston South west

1011 Highway 6 South, Suite 120 Houston, Texas 77077-1036 281-497-8442

Internal Revenue Service

Filing: Employer ID Number, Federal Tax ID Number 281-721-7021 www.irs.gov

FIELD OFFICE L OCATIONS

Houston Downtown

1919 Smith Street Houston, TX 77002 281-721-7021

Houston Northwest

12941 I-45N Houston, TX 7706O 713-209-5499

Houston South east

8876 Gulf Freeway Houston, TX 77017 281-721-7021

Houston South west

8701 S. Gessner Houston, Texas 77074 281-721-7021

File an Employer ID Number (EIN) Application Form if you pay wages to one or more employees. Sole proprietors with no employees may use their social security number. Corporations, partnerships or non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations must have EIN's – ask for Publication 583, Publication 1635 and the "Employer's Tax Guide."

Fort Bend County Appraisal District..

Filing: Rendition of Business Personal Property

Owners of business personal property as of January 1st of each year must file a rendition, a listing of business personal property assets, between January 1st and April 15th of every year. Assets include inventory items, raw materials, lease hold improvements, machinery and other equipment, furniture and fixtures, computer equipment and vehicles used for business purposes. Property must be located in the taxing jurisdiction for more than a temporary period.

Fort Bend Central Appraisal 2801 B.F. Terry Blvd. Rosenberg, TX 77471 281-344-8623 www.fbcad.org

If a business is operated in a home, review the deed restrictions and contact the homeowner's association. You can obtain a copy of your deed restrictions through the Fort Bend County Clerk at 281-341-8685.



Fort Bend County Courthouse

Contact the number listed below for permit, license and regulatory information required by the city in which you plan to run your business.

If a permit does not fall into City jurisdiction, it may go through Fort Bend County.

CITY OF MEADOWS PLACE

One Troyan Drive Meadows Place, TX 77477 281-983-2950 www.cityofmeadowsplace.org



Alarm System, Application | Building Permits | Certificate of Compliance/Occupancy | Commercial Permits Development Plat | Electrical Licenses | Food Dealer/Health Permits | Government Procurement Permits & Code Enforcement | Planning & Zoning | Purchasing | Wastewater Capacity Reservation

CITY OF MISSOURI CITY

1522 Texas Parkway Missouri City, TX 77489 281-403-8500 www.missouricitytx.gov



Building Permits | Certificate of Compliance/Occupancy | Commercial Permits | Development Plat Electrical Permit | Food Dealer/Health Permits | Permits & Code Enforcement | Government Procurement Planning & Zoning | Purchasing

CITY OF RICHMOND

402 Morton Street Richmond, TX 77469 281-342-5456 www.richmondtx.gov



Alarm System, Application | Building Permits | Certificate of Compliance/Occupancy | Development Plat Electrical Licenses | Food Dealer/Health Permits | Permits & Code Enforcement | Development Plat Government Procurement | Planning & Zoning | Purchasing | Police Department Permits Wastewater Capacity Reservation | Commercial Permits (281-232-6871)



2110 Fourth Street Rosenberg, TX 77471 832-595-3300 www.rosenbergtx.gov



Alarm System, Application (832-595-3500) | Building Permits | Certificate of Compliance/Occupancy Commercial Permits | Food/Dealer Health Permits | Government Procurement | Permits & Code Enforcement Planning | Purchasing | Wastewater Capacity Reservation | Police Department Permits (832-595-3700)



2610 South Main Stafford, TX 77477 281-261-3900 www.staffordtx.gov



Alarm System, Application (281-261-3950) | Police Department Permits | Building Permits (281-261-3940) Certificate of Compliance/Occupancy | Commercial Permits | Electrical Licenses | Food/Dealer Health Permits Permits & Code Enforcement | Planning & Zoning | Development Plat | Government Procurement Purchasing | Wastewater Capacity Reservation



2700 Town Center Blvd. Sugar Land, TX 77479 281-275-2700 www.sugarlandtx.gov



Alarm System, Application | Building Permits | Certificate of Compliance/Occupancy | Commercial Permits Electrical Licenses | Food/Dealer Health Permits | Government Procurement | Permits & Code Enforcement Planning & Zoning | Development Plat | Purchasing | Police Department Permits Wastewater Capacity Reservation

OTHER RESOURCES

Texas Workforce Commission www.twc.state.tx.us Employers ID # 1-800-252-3642
Texas New Hire Program www.twc.state.tx.us/businesses/new-hire-reporting New Hire Reporting 512-463-2222
Texas Workers' Compensation Commission www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/index.html Workers' Compensation General Information 512-676-6000 OR 1-800-578-4677 To report Unsafe Working Conditions or Create a Workers' Compensation Claim 1-800-252-7031
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
www.eeoc.gov Information regarding Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and 1991, Americans with Disabilities Act, Equal Pay Act of 1963, Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
OSHA-U.S. Occupational Safety & Health Administration
www.osha.gov Safety Regulations 281-286-0583 OR 1-800-321-6742
Immigration and Naturalization Service
www.uscis.gov 1-800-375-5283
Employee eligibility verification of those authorized to work in the U.S.
U.S. Department of Labor www.dol.gov 1-866-487-2365
Information regarding minimum wage requirements, overtime, and child labor recording under the Fair Labor Standards Act
Secretary of State, State of Texas www.sos.state.tx.us
512-463-5555 Texas trademark information
United States Patent and Trademark Office
www.uspto.gov 1-800-786-9199
Copyright Office, Library of Congress www.copyright.gov 202-707-3000
U.S. Commercial Service Houston www.export.gov/texas/houston 281-228-5652
International Trade Administration I U.S. Department of Commerce

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING AGENCIES

University of Houston Small Business Development Center

Fort Bend County Location

www.sbdc.uh.edu/sbdc/FortBendCountySBDC.asp 117 Lane Dr., Suite 29 Rosenberg, Texas 77471 281-499-9787

Houston Center Location

www.sbdc.uh.edu/sbdc/HoustonCenterSBDC.asp 1455 West Loop South, Suite, 900 Houston TX 770027-9530 713-752-8400

University of Houston campuses offer free business consulting and fee--based training seminars to help entrepreneurs start, manage and grow their companies.

IRS Small Business Tax Workshops

www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-&-Self-Employed/Texas-Tax-Workshops-Meetings-and-Seminars

Offers Small Business Tax Workshops weekly covering business tax returns, tax benefits and obligations.

Houston Community College System – Small Business Resources

www.hccs.edu/locations/southeast-college/small-business-development--entrepreneurship-center/ Workforce Building 6815 Rustic St. Houston, TX 77087 713-718-5243 **Provides online workforce development and continuing education services for businesses and**

Provides online workforce development and continuing education services for businesses and their employees.



U.S. Small Business Administration Houston District Office

www.sba.gov/tx/houston 713-773-6500 8701 S. Gessner Dr., Ste. 1200 Houston, TX 77074

SBA helps Americans start and grow their small business through its main programs of counseling, contracting (doing business with the federal government), and access to capital.

★ Free counseling and low-cost workshops are offered by SBA and its resource partners (SCORE, Small Business Development Centers, and the Women's Business Center).

★ SBA lenders provide small businesses with an array of financing options from the smallest needs in micro-lending to substantial debt and equity investments.

SBA with other federal agencies award 23 percent in prime contract dollars to small businesses. SBA contracting programs include 8(a) Business Development, HUBZone, Woman Owned Small Business (WOSB), Economically Disadvantaged Woman-Owned Small Business (EDWOSB), Small Disadvantaged Business, and Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business.

SCORE - Service Corps of Retired Executives

www.houston.score.org 713-487-6565 8701 S. Gessner Dr., Ste. 1200 Houston, TX 77074

A resource partner of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), the Houston Chapter has 130+ volunteer business people who share their expertise across 62 industries. Through free 1-on-1 business mentoring and no fee or low cost workshops, SCORE mentors provide the education and tools necessary to help small businesses succeed.

WBC - Womens Business Center ····

www.wbea-texas.org/womens-business-center
713-681-9232
9800 Northwest Freeway, Ste. 120
Houston, TX 77092
The Houston Women's Business Center (WBC) is committed to inspiring and empowering women who want to start or expand their business. The WBC provides support to entrepreneurs in education, scholarships, and matchmaking with corporate and government contracting offices.

COUNTY-WIDE Economic Development PARTNERS



JACK BELT Executive Vice President 281-242-0000 jbelt@fbedc.org Fort Bend Economic Development Council One Fluor Daniel Dr. Sugar Land, TX 77478 www.fortbendcounty.com



JOE ESCH Economic Development Director 832-595-3339 jesch@rosenbergtx.gov City of Rosenberg 3825 TX-36 Rosenberg, TX 77471 www.rosenbergtx.gov/economic-development



BOB GRAF Consultant 281-983-2931 meadowsplaceedc@yahoo.com City of Meadows Place 1 Trojan Dr. Meadows Place, TX 77477 www.meadowsplaceedc.org



ANNEL GUADALUPE Economic Development Director 281-346-8820 ecodev@fulsheartexas.gov City of Fulshear 29255 FM 1093 Fulshear, TX 77441 www.fulsheartexas.gov



CARLOS GUZMAN Economic Opportunity & Development Director 346-481-6913 carlos.guzman@fortbendcountytx.gov Fort Bend County 401 Jackson St. Richmond, TX 774699 www.fortbendcountytx.gov



ELIZABETH HUFF Economic Development Director 281-275-2777 ehuff@sugarlandtx.gov City of Sugar Land 2700 Town Center Blvd. Sugar Land, TX 77478 www.sugarlandecodev.com



JERRY JONES Economic Development Director 281-342-5456 jjones@richmondtx.gov City of Richmond 402 Morton St. Richmond, TX 77469 www.richmondecodev.com



PAUL CHAVEZ Economic Development Director 281-261-3957 pchavez@staffordtx.gov City of Stafford 2610 S. Main Stafford, TX 77477 www.staffordtxedc.com



HERMAN RODRIGUEZ Economic Development Director 281-403-8500 hrodriguez@missouricitytx.gov City of Missouri City 1522 Texas Parkway Missouri City, TX 77459 www.missouricitytx.gov/837/ Economic-Development



ANGIE THOMASON

Manager 281-396-2208 athomason@katyedc.org Katy Area Economic Development Council 2002 W Grand Pkwy. N, Ste. 220 Katy, TX 77449 www.katyedc.org

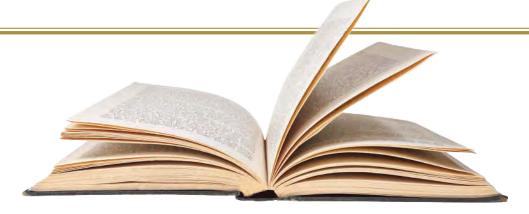
FORT BEND CHAMBER OF C OMMERCE Recommended Reading for Success

Book Titles

7 Habits of Highly Successful People Awakening Your Inner Genius Brief **Business Made Simple Duct Tape Marketing Extreme Ownership** Four Conversations Four Disciplines of Execution **Give & Take Good to Great Great by Choice** How the Mighty Fall It's Not About You Never Eat Alone **Resolved: 13 Resolutions For Life** The 6 Types of Working Genius The Advantage The Compound Effect The Dip The E Myth Revisited The Five Most Important Questions The Go-Giver **Touch Points** Tribes Who's Got Your Back Zap the Gaps

Authors

Stephen R. Covev Sean Patrick Joseph McCormack Donald Miller John Jantsch Jocko Willink & Leif Babin Rod Brace Chris McChesney, Sean Covey & Jim Huling Adam Grant **Jim Collins** Jim Collins **Jim Collins** Bob Burg & John David Mann Keith Ferrazzi Orrin Woodward Patrick Lencioni Patrick Lencioni Darren Hardy Seth Godin Michael F. Gerber Peter F. Drucker Bob Burg & John David Mann Douglas Conant & Mette Norgaard Seth Godin Keith Ferrazzi Ken Blanchard



What is th e FORT BEND CHAMBER ?

At the Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce, we are proud to partner in the success of Fort Bend County ensuring that Fort Bend is the foremost location for economic development and business prosperity. In 2014 and again in 2019, the United States Chamber of Commerce awarded the Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce with 5-Star Accreditation for its sound policies, effective organizational procedures, and positive impact on the community.

Here, you can meet premier business leaders in the County and have access to a multitude of opportunities to network, further your career, hear success stories, stay up to date on community and industry news and socialize. As the voice of business in Fort Bend County and beyond, the Chamber strives to understand the legislative issues important to our members.

For over 50 years, the Fort Bend Chamber has diligently fulfilled its mission as the advocate for excellence in Fort Bend County and beyond. We support, connect, advocate, and educate the thriving economic environment in which we work and live. Through available Divisions, we bring value to our members.

Graduates of our sought-after Fort Bend Leadership Forum program are serving in leadership positions throughout our community. Its sister program, the Excellence for Nonprofit Leadership builds organizational effectiveness within our philanthropic community. High school students have the unique opportunity to experience how volunteerism and philanthropy coexist to serve the community in our Youth in Philanthropy program.

Our commUNITY Initiative was formed to provide resources to our members on how to ensure their businesses understand the business case for diversity. The Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce values the importance of equipping our members with knowledge of diversity and inclusion within their organizations.

As a Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce member, this is just a snapshot of what you have access to, all right here in one of America's most dynamic and fastest growing counties, where success is just around the Bend.





FORT BEND CHAMBER BUSINESS DIRECTORY

The business cards below are Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce members that have agreed to provide an initial consultation meeting at no charge. Please use them as a resource to starting your business.



www.jasonprotects.us





State Farm, Bloomington, IL 2001738



Michael J. Dobert, SPHR, SHRM-SCP Principal/Owner

> Sugar Land, Texas O: 281.494.2985 M: 281.889.9075 mdobert@hrinalignment.com www.hrinalignment.com

HR IN ALIGNMENT, LLC

Providing Strategic Human Resource Solutions

WHAT WE DO MISSION

The advocate for excellence in Fort Bend County and beyond.

FORT BEND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ACCREDITED

BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL

Helps business representatives achieve their professional goals by offering business-oriented sessions to encourage participation in other Chamber functions. In addition, a mentorship program is offered to assist young professionals enhance their career and business success within Fort Bend County.

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GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Provides Chamber members with access to local, state and federal government officials, promotes understanding of current legislative issues particularly in an election year and provides the business community an opportunity for input on these issues.

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INFRASTRUCTURE

Educates and advocates for transportation, infrastructure and development of programs throughout the regionwhile facilitating public and private partnerships to promote investment.



MEMBER SERVICES

Acts as a liaison for communications with new and current members to educate them on current and developing resources available through membership to ensure that the greatest value is achieved.



HEALTHCARE

Develops a network of healthcare providers who are well educated to the needs of Fort Bend County to identify and promote economic initiatives and innovations in healthcare which benefit the membership and the community at large.



COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Focuses on forming effective partnerships and collaborations to offer a positive impact within the Fort Bend community.



LEADERSHIP FORUM

Offers creative learning opportunities in an atmosphere that stimulates creative thinking and encourages participants to work together.



EDUCATION

Enhances opportunities and identifies resources for educational quality in the community by providing a common link between educational institutions, industry leaders and the Fort Bend business community.