

Getting Started... “What do I do first?”

ZONING COMPLIANCE

When a business is interested in locating in the Borough of Metuchen, the first question to ask is if the proposed business is a permitted use. This can be determined by contacting the Zoning Official at the Office of Zoning and Construction who can assist in identifying the zoning district of the property and if the business would be a permitted use within the zone. The applicant may also check the Metuchen Land Development Ordinance on the Borough website to preliminarily gauge whether or not the business would be permitted at the proposed site.

If and when the applicant is ready to submit an application for a zoning permit to propose a new business in Metuchen, there are several different outcomes that are possible:

Permitted Uses

A: If the proposed business is a permitted use, does not propose any changes to the building and is not considered a Change of Use, the applicant can submit a zoning permit to the Zoning Official.

B: If the proposed business is a permitted use and proposes minor alterations or is considered a Change of Use, the proposal will be considered a Minor Site Plan requiring review by the Technical Review Committee prior to being reviewed by the Planning Board.

C: If the proposed business is a permitted use and proposes major alterations, the proposal will be considered a Major Site Plan requiring review by the Planning Board.

Conditional Uses

D: If a proposed business is considered a conditional use and meets all of its conditions, the proposal is considered a Major Site Plan requiring review by the Planning Board.

Prohibited Uses

E: All other proposed businesses not listed as permitted or conditional uses, as well as conditional uses that do not meet all of its conditions will require an application for a Use Variance and Site Plan requiring review by the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

If any proposed business requires a hearing before the Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment, the applicant will need to coordinate with the Office of Zoning and Construction regarding various requirements that need to be met prior to the hearing. The applicant may request a review for technical assistance by the Technical Review Committee to advise the practicability of the proposal, if not already required by the Zoning Official.

All applications that are approved by the Board (having jurisdiction) establish a resolution that contain conditions of approval. It is important to note that conditions of approval (typically for parking, signage, landscaping and other site improvements) are required to be completed prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

It should also be noted that there are fees and escrow associated with zoning permits and Applications for Development. Each case is unique, so the requirements, associated fees and timeline can vary and are to be determined on a case-by-case basis.

SIGNAGE

A permit to erect, alter or relocate a sign is required prior to its installation. A zoning permit and other requirements can be obtained from the Office of Zoning and Construction.

In Metuchen, signs are generally free-standing or attached to the building. There are various size, height, color and lighting requirements for the design of the sign, depending on the location and type of sign proposed. These design requirements should be discussed and coordinated with the Zoning Official prior to the establishment of the design and submittal of the zoning permit.

Preparing the Property... “Do I have all the permits?”

BUILDING PERMITS

Once zoning approval is obtained and the business owner wishes to do remodeling or signage, a building permit will be required. Due to the nature of the construction, architectural plans may be necessary. Once construction and zoning requirements are satisfied a Certificate of Occupancy is required prior to the new business opening on the site.

If there is a Change of Use or Occupancy for the new business per the Uniform Construction Code (UCC) standards even if no construction is proposed, a Continued Certificate of Occupancy (CCO) must be obtained to ensure that the site meets the UCC regulatory requirements for the business category in which the new business is classified. To obtain a CCO, the business owner must submit an application to the Building Department. The Building Department will then conduct a CCO inspection, which is a visual observation of any obvious safety and property maintenance conditions.

In obtaining a CO, inspections are required by the Borough's licensed inspectors. Those include building, electric, plumbing and fire. The inspections needed are based on the type of work being performed, regulatory construction issues, and/or the issues that surface as a result of the new business being in a different business category than the prior use per the UCC. As well, the Health Department may require a health inspection to be done prior to a CO being issued to comply with any necessary business licensing and permit requirements.

Please note that there are fees associated for building permits along with CO and CCO applications.

SITE PLAN COMPLIANCE

When board approval is required or there is a need to complete site work such as parking, landscaping, drainage, etc., engineering and planning reviews and approvals may be required. The Borough has site plan review applications, tree removal and replacement permits, storm water compliance and other applications. To ensure that all site plan requirements comply with site plan resolution, the business owner should contact the Planning and Zoning Department to ensure that all elements of the site plan are completed.

Registering the Business...
“What licenses are needed?”

BUSINESS LICENSES

The Borough requires certain types of businesses to obtain business licenses. The majority of licenses are issued by the Borough or New Jersey state agencies. Licenses are necessary to protect the safety and welfare of the public utilizing or in proximity to these establishments. Types of licenses and reporting include, but are not limited to the following:

- *Alcoholic beverage sales
- *barbershops
- *charitable solicitations
- *child care facilities
- *home improvement contractors
- *hotels and motels
- *massage parlors
- *motor vehicle sales lots
- *multiple dwelling and rental registration
- *peddlers, solicitors, and transient merchants
- *precious metal and gem businesses
- *poolrooms, bowling alleys, circuses, and amusements
- *spas and pools
- *taxicabs and limousine services

The Borough’s Health Department requires all restaurants and food businesses to be licensed. As well, restaurants are required to go through plan review with the Health Department, in addition to any necessary Building Department reviews and inspections.

The 9-1-1 Center maintains a database of every business in town. The Borough requests that businesses send their information on their letterhead, including business name, address, telephone number and emergency contact list. This can be faxed to: **Police Records at 732-632-8114**

Opening the Business...
“Which utilities & services?”

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

The Borough does have regulations on property maintenance. The Zoning Department is responsible for monitoring grass, landscaping, dilapidated buildings, exterior building maintenance and other impacts that a property or business may have on adjacent properties. The Building Department is also responsible for dilapidated buildings. The Health Department is responsible for litter control, noise control and odor issues. For information on these issues, please contact the Zoning Department.

UTILITIES & SERVICES

Property Tax	Borough	732-632-8512
Recycling	Borough	732-632-8519
Garbage	Borough	732-632-8519
Sewer	Borough	732-632-8519
Water	Middlesex Water	732-634-1500
Gas/Electric	PSE&G	732-764-3000
	Elizabethtown Gas	908-289-5000
Cable	Cablevision	732-548-2400
Phone	Verizon	800-339-9911

Additional Information on Opening a new business in New Jersey is available at:

<http://nj.gov/njbusiness/starting/index.shtml>

Borough of Metuchen, NJ

Borough Hall - 500 Main Street
Metuchen, New Jersey 08840

Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00AM - 4:00PM

www.metuchennj.org

CONTACTS

Administration

732-632-8509

Planning and Zoning Office

732-632-8554

Zoning Official

732-632-8514

Building Department

732-632-8515

Construction Officer

732-632-8556

Health Inspector

732-632-8526

Public Works Department

732-632-8519

Police and Fire Department (non-emergency)

732-632-8500

Tax Assessor

732-632-8516

Tax Collector

732-632-8512

Borough of Metuchen, NJ

**A GUIDE TO
OPENING A
NEW BUSINESS
IN METUCHEN**



*Accessing the
Metuchen Government
for Business*



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Brochures printed by the
Metuchen Area Chamber of Commerce

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(732) 548-2964