



New Business Information

If you are starting a business or relocating an existing business in Kernersville, follow these steps to ensure compliance with state and local regulations.

Step 1: Due Diligence

Do not start to build, buy items, or sign a lease only to later find out your business is prohibited. Items that may affect the approval of your business include:

1. **Zoning of the property.** Depending on the zoning classification, each property will have only certain allowed uses. Some uses have additional conditions, and some zoning districts have supplemental standards not required in all zoning districts. In addition, many properties are located in overlay districts that have additional regulations and restrictions.
2. **Classification of the building.** When the use or occupancy of a building or portion thereof changes, it is necessary to bring the building into compliance with the North Carolina State Building Code. Sometimes this requires renovations that may make your project cost prohibitive.
3. **Building design features.** Exterior changes to design features, materials, or color changes must comply with overlay district requirements.
4. **Signage.** New signage must comply with the sign ordinance and overlay district requirements.
5. **Landscaping.** Buildings with change in permitted use, as defined by the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), require compliance with the streetyard standards of 3-4.4 (B), and Interior Motor Vehicle Surface Area standards of 3-4.4 (C).
6. **Parking and walkways.** Parking must meet the standards of UDO section 3-3, specifically, minimum spaces per the principle use (Table 3.8), ADA compliance (3-3.3 (B) (7)), and delineation of parking spaces (3-3.3 (D) (1)).
7. **Screening and fences.** Screening and fencing requirements (UDO section 2-1.6, F (4) (a)) must be met for HVAC units (on-ground or rooftop). For outdoor storage (includes dumpsters, bulk materials, parts, outdoor repair areas) within 100' of the right-of-way, compliance with section 3-4.5 must also be met.
8. **Watershed.** The nature of the business may affect the watershed. A Watershed Permit will be required in addition to the Building or Use & Occupancy Permit in the following situations: parking lot additions, building expansions, adding accessory structures, and creating new parking areas on pervious surfaces.



These items are reviewed when the required permit application is submitted, however you may contact Community Development at cd@toknc.com or (336) 996-7166 if you would like any of this information verified prior to permit submittal.



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Step 2: Apply for Your Permit(s)

Either a **Building** or **Use & Occupancy Permit** is required for businesses new to Kernersville or changing locations in town. The type of permit required depends on the use of the space and what changes you plan to make. You can determine the required permit by using the [Town of Kernersville Permit Guide](#).



A **Sign Permit** is also required for any ground, projecting, or wall signage. This permit is separate from the **Building** or **Use & Occupancy Permit**. For more information about signage, see the [Town of Kernersville Business Sign Guide](#) and [Sign Ordinance](#).

If you plan to operate your business from your residence and you will have customers/clients coming to your home, or you have an employee working in your home who does not reside there, a **Home Occupation Permit** is required in lieu of a **Building** or **Use & Occupancy Permit**.

To apply for your permit(s), go to <https://kernersvillenc.viewpointcloud.com>. The Town uses the **ViewPoint** online permitting system, a service that allows users online access to apply for permits, review active and completed permits, schedule inspections and view results, and pay associated fees using Master Card, Visa, American Express, or Discover. See the [ViewPoint Users Guide](#) for questions about how to sign up, submit a permit application, request inspections, or view inspection results.

Step 3: Other Permitting Considerations

After obtaining your **Building** or **Use & Occupancy Permit** and **Sign Permit**, you have met your legal obligations with the Town of Kernersville. In conjunction with or in addition to your **Building** or **Use & Occupancy Permit**, other permits, approvals or licenses may be required to start your business. Other considerations include:

1. **Alcohol sales.** Businesses that serves alcohol (even temporarily), you will need to obtain a permit from the North Carolina Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission.
2. **Food establishments.** Food establishments require a separate permit from the Forsyth County Department of Public Health with the exception that bakeries, frozen ice cream and yogurt, poultry and dairy businesses require NC Department of Agriculture approval. The City/County Utilities Department will need to make a grease interceptor determination during the building permit process.
3. **Taxes.** If your business is going to have sales, a Sales & Use Tax number is required. If your business will have employees, a Federal Employer Identification number and a North Carolina Withholding number are needed. Applications for both numbers are available from the North Carolina Department of Commerce website. The Department of Commerce also offers many other services to help businesses get off the ground.





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- 4. Making your business official.** A business can organize itself in various ways. Sole proprietorships and partnerships that do business under the assumed name must be filed with the Forsyth County Register of Deeds, which can be contacted at (336) 703-2701. You will also need to register in any other counties in which you will operate. Corporations must file Articles of Incorporation with the North Carolina Secretary of State Corporations Division, which can be reached at (919) 807-2225. An attorney is recommended to insure that all legal issues are properly handled.
- 5. Small business loans and support.** The Small Business Administration (800-827-5722) can provide you with helpful loan information along with local banks. The Department of Commerce may also be able to point you in the right direction. Forsyth Tech has a Small Business Center that is located at 525 Vine Street in Winston-Salem. The Center is open to the public. Their experienced staff can provide reliable information, solid advice, training, one-on-one counseling and business contacts. For more information, call 336-757-3810 or email sbc@forsythtech.edu.
- 6. Chamber of Commerce.** Remember, once you have opened your business you are now a part of the Kernersville business community. An important consideration is membership in the Kernersville Chamber of Commerce (336-993-4521) as a gateway into the community.
- 7. Utilities and waste removal services.** Unless your utilities will be handled through the property owner or Management Company, you will need to establish services for the property. The City/County Utility Commission (CCUC) provides water and sewer. To establish these services you can contact CCUC at (336) 650-7650. Other utility services provided for the property will also need to be established with the appropriate utility providers. For example, electric service is primarily provided by Duke Energy and can be contacted by calling (800) 653- 5307. Gas service is primarily provided by Piedmont Natural Gas and can be contacted by calling (336) 761-8303. Solid waste and recycling services are provided by private haulers as well as the Town of Kernersville. To contract with the Town, contact the Public Services Department at (336) 996-6916.

