

# City of East Lansing One Pager Plus

## Start a Business in East Lansing

Thank you for considering relocating or establishing your business in East Lansing, Michigan! Already an established Michigan business? Skip to Section 2. If you don't have a business formed already, start with Section 1.

### 1. State and Federal Information

- **State Resources.** Check out [www.michiganadvantage.org](http://www.michiganadvantage.org), the official website of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, an online resource for new or relocating businesses to Michigan. Read the [Guide to Starting and Operating a Small Business](#) for general and state-specific information.
- **Name and Legal Structure.** Corporations and LLC's must register their business names when filing Articles of Incorporation and Articles of Organization with the State of Michigan. Conduct a [name availability search](#) with the State. If the sole proprietorship or partnership is assuming a different name they must file a "DBA" (doing business as) certificate with the [Ingham County Clerk](#) (517-676-7258).
- **Federal and State Tax Laws.** Contact the [IRS](#) for federal tax information at 800-829-4933 and the [Michigan Department of Treasury](#) for state tax information at 877-766-1779.
- **Employer Identification Number.** To apply, visit the [IRS](#) website or call 800-829-4933.
- **Business License.** Michigan does not have a generic business license; however, many occupations, industries, and services are required to be licensed by the State. Visit the Michigan's [One Stop License Search](#) or call 877-766-1779.

### 2. East Lansing Information

- **City Resources.** For business assistance and support, talk to the Economic Development staff at 517-319-6930 or visit the City's development website, <http://www.cityofeastlansing.com/development/>. The website offers many resources including free site selection GIS and property locator, business [calendar](#) and market data. [Register your business](#) for free with the City to receive useful business updates and correspondence. [Sign up](#) for our online Business Update e-newsletter.
- **Business Personal Property Tax.** All businesses located in East Lansing that have personal property have to pay business personal property tax. Contact the City's [Assessing](#) Department at 517-319-6880 for more information.
- **Location.** Contact the Economic Development staff at 517-319-6930 for assistance with available sites.



## Start a Business in East Lansing (Continued)

- **Business License.** The City does not have a generic business license. Several activities are required to be licensed by the City, including: Amusement Center and/or Video Arcade, Concessionaire Carts/Food Trucks, Dancehalls, Entertainment, Distribution of Medical Marijuana, Motor Bus Operators, News Vending Device, Restaurants, Peddlers/Solicitors & Transient Merchants, Rubbish Removal Service, conducting business in public Right of Way, Taxicab Service, Selling Liquor or Tobacco, a Used Car Dealership or a Wrecker/Towing Service. Contact the [City Clerk's Office](#) at 517-319-6914 for license applications and fees. Please allow time for the review process as certain license applications may require the approval or review of several City departments (i.e. [Fire](#), [Police](#), [Building & Code Enforcement](#), and [Planning & Zoning](#)), City Council or City boards and commissions ([Downtown Development Authority](#), [Planning Commission](#)).
- **Home Occupations.** Conditions apply (i.e. do not create traffic or noise), so check zoning requirements with the [Planning & Zoning](#) staff at 517-319-6930.
- **Downtown Parking.** Businesses can purchase monthly parking permits for the downtown parking garages at City Hall. Validation with a 40% discount is available for customers of downtown merchants. For more information, contact the [Parking Department](#) at 517-337-1277.
- **Liquor License.** In order to serve alcohol, businesses need to apply for a Liquor License with both the State - [Michigan Liquor Control Commission](#) (866-813-0011) and the City Clerk's Office (517-319-6914). You also need to apply for a Special Use Permit (SUP) with the [Planning & Zoning](#) Division (517-319-6930).
- **Planning & Zoning.** Talk to [Planning & Zoning](#) staff at 517-319-6930 with regard to site modifications or new building construction. If you wish to build a new building, you must go through a site plan review process.
- **Zoning.** Check out [the online zoning map](#) or talk to [Planning & Zoning](#) staff at 517-319-6930 to find out the zoning of a site.
- **Building modifications.** If you want to use an existing building and wish to make modifications to the building, talk to [Building & Code Enforcement](#) at 517-319-6857. For additions/modifications to an existing building, you may need a Zoning Administrative Review or a Special Use Permit (SUP).
- **Building Permits.** Depending on modifications, you may need an electrical, sign, plumbing/mechanical and/or building permit from the [Building & Code Enforcement](#) Division (517-319-6857). You will need to bring drawings of your plans to apply for a Building permit. If the use or occupancy of the space changes, you need to bring the space up to current Building Code requirements. Any new sign requires a sign permit and an annual sign license.

Visit [www.cityofeastlansing.com/development/](http://www.cityofeastlansing.com/development/) or call 517-319-6930 for more information about starting a business in East Lansing.

