

*If you are thinking about starting a business here in the City of Madison, Florida you may need to obtain a number of different licenses and permits. Contact our City of Madison business license department at 850-973-5081 to find out about getting a business license, which essentially grants you the right (after you pay a fee, of course) to operate a business in the City of Madison. When you file your license application, the city zoning department will check to make sure your area is zoned for the purpose you want to use it for and that there are enough parking spaces to meet the codes. Fire department will need to complete a fire inspection prior to signing off on the new business. Below is a quick checklist covering the different federal, state, and local licenses and permits you may need to acquire prior to opening for business:*

1. Federal employer identification number (EIN), also called a tax identification number (required for almost all types of businesses). Note: your business may also need to acquire a similar tax identification number from your state's department of revenue or taxation.
2. Fictitious business name permit (also called "dba" or "doing business as" permit; required for almost all types of businesses).
3. If your business involves the preparation and/or sale of food please go to <https://www.myfloridalicense.com/intentions2.asp> and complete all the requirements listed.
4. Zoning and land use permits, especially for new businesses and certain home-based business operations. Home-based businesses may require a permit &/or license like a store with a physical location and online businesses. So you will also need to comply with licensing and permit requirements for your home-based business. This especially true if you have customers who frequently come into your home. You can access the city's LDR's on our city website by selecting the hyperlink below.  
[https://library.municode.com/fl/madison/codes/land\\_development\\_regulations](https://library.municode.com/fl/madison/codes/land_development_regulations)
5. You can't operate in an area that is not zoned for your type of business unless you first get a variance or a special exceptions permit. To get a variance, you'll need to present your case before your city's planning commission. In many cases, variances are quite easy to get, as long as you can show that your business won't disrupt the character of the neighborhood where you plan to locate. You can access the city's zoning regulations on our city website by selecting the hyperlink below.  
[https://library.municode.com/fl/madison/codes/land\\_development\\_regulations?nodeId=Article%204%20-%20Zoning%20Regulations](https://library.municode.com/fl/madison/codes/land_development_regulations?nodeId=Article%204%20-%20Zoning%20Regulations)

6. Special state-issued business license or permits, if your business will involve the sale of the following types of products:  
<https://www.myfloridalicense.com/intentions2.asp>
  - a. Liquor
  - b. Lottery tickets
  - c. Gasoline
  - d. Firearms
  
7. Special state-issued occupational / professional licenses, if you and/or your employees will be offering a number of state-regulated services, including: (to learn more select the hyperlinks in parentheses)
  - a. Medical care ([www.floridahealth.gov/licensing-and-regulation](http://www.floridahealth.gov/licensing-and-regulation))
  - b. Auto repair (<https://www.freshfromflorida.com/Business-Services/Motor-Vehicle-Repair>)
  - c. Real estate sales (<https://www.myfloridalicense.com>)
  - d. Tax services
  - e. Insurance sales
  - f. Cosmetology
  - g. Legal representation (attorneys)
  
8. Special federal business license or permits, if your business will involve any of the following: (to learn more select the hyperlinks in parentheses)
  - a. Investment advising (<https://www.sec.gov/>)
  - b. Drug manufacturing (<https://www.fda.gov/>)
  - c. Preparation of meat products (<https://www.fda.gov/>)
  - d. Broadcasting (<https://www.fcc.gov/>)
  - e. Ground transportation (<https://www.transportation.gov/>)
  - f. Manufacturing tobacco, alcohol, or firearms; or selling firearms (<https://www.atf.gov/>)
  
9. If your business needs a sign a permit will be needed and it may restrict the size, location, lighting and type of sign you can use outside your business. To avoid costly mistakes, check regulations and zoning with the city before you go to the expense of having a sign designed and installed.
  
10. Businesses such as restaurants, retirement homes, day-care centers and anywhere else that lots of people congregate are subject to especially close and frequent scrutiny by the fire department.
  
11. Basic business operation license from the City of Madison and from the County (Tax Collectors office)

