

Starting a Business in West Hartford

A ONE-PAGE GUIDE

STEP 1 • LOCATION

Confirm your proposed location is approved for your business use/type.

● Economic Development

(860) 561-7527

Location search | Prior tenant verification | Permitting Assistance

● Planning & Zoning (P&Z)

(860) 561-7552

Property zone verification | Site plan | Parking | Signage

If your location is not approved, or you do not have one, work with Economic Development to find a suitable site.



Scan or click here for
more details

STEP 2 • PERMITS NEEDED

A building permit is required if you are doing any of the following:

- Tenant buildout (space modifications)
- Change in tenant
- Changing fixtures or floor plan
- Change in business operations from previous tenant
- Adding signage
- Fire Sprinklers, Commercial Kitchen Hoods, Ansul System
- Adding or removing walls
- Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing (MEP)
- Driveway, Roadway, or Parking Lot (Engineering permit)

For permit questions: Contact Building Department at (860) 561-7530 | Please note this is not an exhaustive list. Other permits may be required.

STEP 3 • ONLINE PERMIT PORTAL

Online portal guide

Step 1 Create a portal account. Activate via email link.

Step 2 Before submitting permit applications, confirm **MEP** contractors are registered in the portal and have uploaded their license and workers' compensation insurance (or Form 7A/7B if they do not have workers' comp).

Step 3 Apply for building permits.

Step 4 Signage: Contact Planning & Zoning if there is a pre-existing sign box and you are changing the face. If you are installing a new sign, contact Building.

STEP 3A • SPECIAL BUSINESS PERMIT TYPES

- 1 Child Care
- 2 Salon & Spa
- 3 Tattoo
- 4 Massage Therapy
- 5 Food & Beverage

Types 1-5 require health permits. Contact:

- **West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District** (860) 561-7900

Type 5 may require additional permits: outdoor dining, food truck, or entertainment license. Contact:

- **Planning and Zoning (P&Z)** (860) 561-7552
- **CT Department of Consumer Protection** (860) 713-6229 - liquor permits or baking licenses
- **The Metropolitan District (MDC)** (860) 278-7850 - grease traps

STEP 4 • AFTER PERMIT APPROVALS

1

Begin Work

Only after permits from all departments are approved

2

Progress Inspections

During construction. Call departments individually

3

Final Inspections

By Building, Fire Marshal, P&Z, + others if a Step 3A business

4

Affidavit & CO

Final cost + Certificate of Occupancy or Approval

5

Open for Business

Stay in touch for support

Business Owner Guide and Department Contact List

This directory outlines the various departments you may need to contact or obtain permits from when opening a business in West Hartford. Note, items with “*” are for restaurants/food sale businesses.



REQUIRED DEPARTMENTS

Economic Development Office Room 214 Town Hall | 50 South Main Street | 860-561-7527 | [Kristen Gorski](#) 860-561-7527 | [Lauren Siegel](#) 860-561-7528

- ☐ Assistance with all department's processes and requirements. Review types of permits, zoning ordinances for use types, parking requirements, State licensing, and other requirements.

Planning & Zoning (P&Z) Division Room 208 Town Hall | 50 South Main Street | 860-561-7552 or 7555 or [email](#)

- ☐ Property zone verification, site plan, parking and signage requirements/limitations (shared application with Building Division), *liquor license, *entertainment license, *outdoor dining, and inspections. Call to schedule inspections.

Building Division Room 208 Town Hall | 50 South Main Street | Building Administrative Staff: 860-561-7530

All permits applied for online. Building permits are always required and include any of the following:

- Renovations or improvements of the space (including removing or adding walls, changing fixtures or floorplan), change in tenant, change of use, business signage, other

- ☐ Although Building permit applications are shared with the Fire Marshal's Office and P&Z Division, inspections are separate for Building, P&Z, Health, and Fire Marshal. Business owners or contractors can schedule inspections by contacting each department individually. The number of inspections required is based on scope of work. Call to schedule inspections.

Assessment Office Room 142 Town Hall | 50 South Main Street | 860-561-7414

- ☐ Address changes and/or updates for personal property tax purposes.

Fire Marshal's Office (FMO) Room 204 Town Hall | 50 South Main Street | 860-561-8320

- ☐ Occupancy permits and required fire safety inspections for all commercial building, including grease hoods, fire alarm systems, fire protection systems, fireworks permit, liquor license, open burn permits, and other extinguishing equipment. Call to schedule inspections. (FMO reviews shared Building Dept. applications.)

CONDITIONAL DEPARTMENTS (Depending on Business Type)

The West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District 580 Cottage Grove Road, Suite 100 | 860-561-7900

- ☐ *Food licenses, salons, daycares, massage establishments, spas, tattoo parlors, and associated inspections. Call to schedule inspections.

Town Clerk Office Room 313 Town Hall | 50 South Main Street | 860-561-7430

- ☐ Trade Name or "Doing Business As" (DBA) registration if not operating under an LLC or DBA. This is separate from State registration/licensing/tax and other permits through the Secretary of State.

MDC (Metropolitan District Commission) [Magen Bakaj](#) 860-278-7850 X 3239

- ☐ *Grease traps, water/sewage connection services, wastewater collection, and treatment services. Please note the MDC is not a town department.