

### What is a Certificate of Use? How do I get one?

Any time a business (new or existing) moves into a different unit, whether it is a shopping center, office complex or industrial building, a Certificate of Use is **required** for the purpose of determining that the zoning is correct and for inspecting the location for current Life Safety Codes, Disabled Codes, and Building Codes. A Certificate of Use application can be obtained by contacting the Commercial Development Division at 352-754-4050 or by visiting this link <http://www.hernandocounty.us/bldg/applications.htm>. If your business is located within the Brooksville City limits, contact the City at 352-540-3810.

### Do I need an Environmental permit?

Environmental regulations may apply if you are handling hazardous materials. You may contact the local office of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection at (813) 744-6100.

Contact the Hernando County Health Department at (352) 540-6800 Ext. 4 to verify if any permits are required for the business you are establishing.

### What signs may I display?

Hernando County Code of Ordinances allows for a variety of signs to be displayed on commercial property. The size and location of the signs vary dependant on things such as size of the sign and road frontage of the lot. Complete details can be obtained from Hernando County Development Department at 352-754-4050. Many times businesses wish to display banners, flags or temporary signs. For details on these regulations contact Hernando County Code Enforcement at 352-754-4056 or visit their website at [www.co.hernando.fl.us/code](http://www.co.hernando.fl.us/code). The City of Brooksville sign ordinance information can be obtained by calling 352-540-3810.

Hernando County Office  
of Business Development ..... (352) 540-6400  
[www.hernanodobusiness.com](http://www.hernanodobusiness.com)

Hernando County Government  
Main Office..... (352) 754-4000  
[www.hernandocounty.us](http://www.hernandocounty.us)

Hernando County  
Property Appraiser ..... (352) 754-4190  
[www.hernandocounty.us/pa/](http://www.hernandocounty.us/pa/)

Hernando County  
Tax Collector ..... (352) 754-4180  
[www.hernandocounty.us/tc/](http://www.hernandocounty.us/tc/)

Hernando County Development  
(Building) Department ..... (352) 754-4050  
[www.hernandocounty.us/bldg/](http://www.hernandocounty.us/bldg/)

The Greater Hernando County  
Chamber of Commerce ..... (352) 796-0697  
[www.hernandochamber.com](http://www.hernandochamber.com)

City of Brooksville ..... (352) 540-3810  
[www.ci.brooksville.fl.us/](http://www.ci.brooksville.fl.us/)

SCORE—Service Corp of  
Retired Executives..... (727) 842-4638  
[www.score439.org](http://www.score439.org)

USF Small Business  
Development Center..... (813) 905-5800  
[www.sbdc.usf.edu](http://www.sbdc.usf.edu)

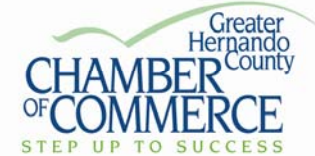
Small Business  
Administration..... (800) 827-5722  
[www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

State of Florida Business/Resident Info  
[www.myflorida.com](http://www.myflorida.com)

State of Florida Permits/Licensing  
[www.myflorida.com/taxonomy/business](http://www.myflorida.com/taxonomy/business)

State of Florida Fictitious Name Registration  
[www.sunbiz.org](http://www.sunbiz.org)

Employer Identification Number  
[www.irs.gov/businesses/small/](http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/)



# Starting a Business in Hernando County Frequently Asked Questions

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# Frequently Asked Questions - Getting Your Business Started

So you've decided to start your own business. Congratulations! Entrepreneurship can be one of the most rewarding experiences of a lifetime as well as pose many challenges. To help get you started we've compiled a list of the most frequently asked questions and concerns. This list does not cover everything so we've also included many reference numbers and website links to assist you in your endeavor.

## Do I need an Occupational License?

Occupational licenses are not required to operate a business in Hernando County.

## What licenses do I need?

A business license, permit or professional license may be required by the State. Please visit [www.myflorida.com](http://www.myflorida.com) to determine the specific requirements for your business.

## Do I need to apply for a fictitious name?

If you are doing business under a name other than your legal name you must apply for a fictitious name. You can apply on-line at [www.sunbiz.org](http://www.sunbiz.org).

## Do I need an Employer Identification Number (EIN)?

An Employer Identification Number (EIN) is also known as a FEIN and is used to identify a business entity. To determine if you need an EIN visit [www.irs.gov/businesses/small](http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small). You may apply for an EIN online.

## What if my business is located within the City of Brooksville?

City and County regulations can vary. If your business will be located within the City limits you should contact the City directly at 352-540-3810 to ensure you understand their specific regulations.

## What legal structure should I use?

A business may be conducted through a variety of legal organizational structures. The four primary types are: Sole Proprietorships, Partnerships, Corporations, and Limited Liability Companies.

Legal requirements and tax regulations for the various types of entities can be complex. It is strongly recommended that you consult with a qualified professional to determine the structure that is best for your business.

## How do I get bonded & insured?

Contact a commercial insurance broker for quotes and requirements.

## Are grant funds available?

Hernando County does *not* offer grants locally for small businesses. Information about federal government grants can be found at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

## Do I need an attorney?

There is no substitute for good legal advice. Generally, before signing any binding document you should have your attorney review it to protect you and your assets.

## What if I still have questions?

The Greater Hernando County Chamber of Commerce is an excellent resource for small businesses. They publish an *Essential Guide to Starting a Business in Hernando County* which can be downloaded from their website [www.hernandochamber.com](http://www.hernandochamber.com). The Chamber also offers various educational and networking opportunities throughout the year. Visit their website or contact the Chamber at 352-796-0697 for an updated calendar of events.

**SCORE** (Service Corp of Retired Executives) provides assistance on a volunteer basis on topics such as writing a business plan, applying for finances, and creating a marketing strategy. Contact **SCORE** at 727-842-4638 or through their website [www.score439.org](http://www.score439.org).

The State of Florida website [www.myflorida.com](http://www.myflorida.com) maintains a comprehensive database of resources for businesses and residents.

## Questions to Ask Before You Sign a Lease or Purchase a Building

Before you purchase or sign a lease on a business property in Hernando County there are a number of important items to verify about the site you have selected to be certain it can accommodate your business. The goal of this section is to help you get off to a quick and successful start.

## How can I verify that the building or property has the correct zoning?

Contact the Hernando County Zoning Department with the address and the proposed use, 352-754-4050. For properties within the City limits of Brooksville contact the Brooksville Community Development Department at 352-540-3810.

## How can I verify if the building meets current development code for my use?

You can contact the Hernando County Development Department at 352-754-4050 to verify if the building is suitable for your intended use. For properties within the City limits of Brooksville contact the Brooksville Building Division at 352-540-3810.

## What are the steps if I need to do interior/exterior renovations or build-outs?

You can contact the Hernando County Development Division at 352-754-4050 for information on the building permit requirements. You may also request a "pre-application" meeting where all of the requirements can be examined prior to submitting for a permit. For properties within the City limits of Brooksville contact the Brooksville Building Department at 352-540-3810.