

STARTING A BUSINESS IN DOWNTOWN GERMANTOWN

Congratulations on wanting to start a business in Germantown! The City is providing this new business guide as a service to you to detail all the steps necessary to start a successful business within our downtown. (All newly built businesses outside of our downtown will need to follow a different set of regulations.)

GERMANTOWN PERMITS AND REGULATIONS

The first step in the process of opening a business in Germantown is contacting the Planning and Zoning Department, One Plum Street, (937) 855-7255 for a Business Permit. The Planning and Zoning Department will issue you a Business Permit if the business you are proposing meets two requirements:

1. The proposed business will be located within the Downtown Business District.
2. The business is a permitted use within the Downtown Business District. *

*You can inquire ahead of time as to whether or not the proposed business is a permitted use in our Downtown Business District by calling the Planning and Zoning Department and requesting a copy of the regulations for that district.

A Business Permit must be obtained before any more permits from Germantown can be issued!!!!

The Business Permit is \$30.00.

BUILDING PERMITS AND REGULATIONS

Occupancy Permit

Once you have obtained an approved Business Permit from the City, an Occupancy Permit must also be obtained before you can begin your business. In order to get an Occupancy Permit, you must provide the City with three (3) sets of drawings of the inside of the building you wish to use, showing all walls, ceilings, floors, electrical wiring, plumbing and adjoining occupancies (what businesses are above, beside and/or below your proposed business). You must also show a site plan of sidewalks and streets abutting the proposed business.

These plans do not necessarily have to be done by a professional, but must be very accurate. **However, from our experience, we would recommend that a Professional Architect complete these plans.**

Once you have begun the process of obtaining an Occupancy Permit, the officials in the Building Regulations Department will also inform you of any other permits you may need to have, (depending on what types of changes or additions you are making to the building), such as:

Health Permit

This is required for any type of business that will serve food. This permit and the Occupancy Permit are directly linked. You can't obtain an Occupancy Permit without first obtaining a Health Permit. **You will need to contact the Health Department FIRST!!!**

Building Permit

You will probably need a Building Permit if you are planning any structural changes, heating and cooling changes, addition or removal of any walls or subdividing a room. (Example-Changing a 5,000 sf room into five small offices.)

Mechanical Permit

This permit would be required when any furnace, ventilation, or heating/air conditioning ducting is installed, modified, etc.

Electrical Permit

This is required when any change or addition of electrical wiring is proposed. (Example: Installation of strip lighting, replacing wiring to a furnace or changing of electrical panels.)

Plumbing Permit

A permit is required when any new sanitary drains, gas lines, and any new plumbing is proposed. Also, any time you open a domestic or already existing sanitary or water line will require this permit.

Fire Alarm Systems

This requirement is based on what type of business will exist and how it is arranged. (Examples: Educational facilities, nursing homes, places of assembly will all require fire alarm systems.) Mainly this requirement depends on the number of people that can be accommodated and how the structure is built.

Fire Suppression Systems

This is usually required for commercial cooking systems.

Pressure Piping Permit

This permit is required if you will be utilizing a boiler system or commercial steam heating system. This is an annual permit that must be renewed every year.

The City generally will not require a permit if one isn't necessary. You always need to show any changes being made to a structure. If they are incidental or minor changes, it has been our experience that small changes will not need a permit but you still need to make the inspector aware of the changes that are proposed.

BUILDING PERMIT REVIEW PROCESS

As was stated previously, you will need to first take three (3) sets of drawings to the City offices, One North Plum Street, Germantown, Ohio to start the Occupancy Permit process.

- If you have architect drawings, it must have an original architect stamp/seal to be processed.
- At this time, the City will probably tell you what other permits you will need.

The process to obtain an Occupancy Permit could take anywhere from two to six weeks depending on the accuracy of the content of the plans.

- If your plans are incomplete, the application could be put on hold indefinitely until the plans are corrected to their satisfaction.

Accuracy and Completeness of the plans is the key!!!

Once the three (3) sets of plans are submitted to the City, one copy is forwarded to the Germantown Fire Department for review of compliance with fire protection standards.

- Even though the plans will be forwarded to the Fire Department eventually, do not circumvent the process by giving the plans to the Fire Department without submitting them to the City first. However, someone from the Fire Department will always be available to answer questions before, during and after the permitting process.

The Fire Department will review the plans for the following:

- Fire protection requirements
- Fire Department access and occupant exiting
- Fire protection features/needs
- Compliance with Ohio Fire Code

Once the Fire Department has made their recommendations to the Building Department; they will either issue the proper permits or return to you comments regarding your submittal. If the Building Department issues the permits, you are then ready to open your business.

BUILDING PERMIT COSTS

You can contact the City of Germantown for the charges for each of their permits-they are not listed here because the cost could vary depending on the proposed business.

RELEVANT PHONE NUMBERS AND WEB SITES

City of Germantown
One North Plum Street
Germantown, Ohio 45327

Planning and Zoning
(937) 855-7255

Fire Department
(937) 855-7259

National Inspection
(937) 433-4642

Montgomery County
451 West Third Street
Dayton, Ohio 45402

Auditor's Office-Business Tax
(937) 225-4315

Health Department
(937) 225-4395