

Borough of Metuchen

Borough Hall - 500 Main Street
Metuchen, New Jersey 08840
Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00AM - 4:00PM
www.metuchennj.org

CONTACTS

Administration

732-632-8509

Clerk

732-632-8508

Planning / Zoning

732-632-8554

Zoning Official

732-632-8514

Building Department

732-632-8515

Construction Official

732-632-8556

Health Inspector

732-632-8504

Public Works Department

732-632-8519

Police Department

732-632-8500 (non-emergency)

Fire Department

732-767-1147 (non-emergency)

Tax Assessor

732-632-8516

Tax Collector

732-632-8512

A summary of key ordinances to be aware of:

§110-5: obtain permits from Borough Hall for a new business and any permanent signage

§110-187: temporary advertising signage is OK (a permit is not necessary); however, you can only cover up to 25% of all storefront windows for no more than 30 days per sales event

§110-195.1: café seating on public sidewalks are encouraged; a permit (at no cost) and public liability insurance is required; always maintain at least six (6) feet of clearance for pedestrians!

§140-4.A: keep property free of broken glass, filth, garbage, trash, litter and debris

§140-4.B: maintain lawn areas, hedges and shrubs from becoming overgrown

§140-4.C: keep building storefront, windows, signs, awnings, etc. neatly painted and in good repair

§140-4.D: remove garbage as often as possible

§140-4.E: sweep as often as necessary to keep sidewalk free of litter, debris, snow, ice, etc.

§118-6: do not sweep litter into the street

§166-3: keep sidewalks free of snow and ice (in the case where ice has formed, thoroughly spread salt or sand) no later than 12 hours of sunlight after snow has fallen or ice has formed. In the case of significant snowfall, place the snow near the curb, still keeping the sidewalk clear, but do not put the snow back into the street!



Brochures printed by the
Metuchen Area Chamber of Commerce

www.metuchenchamberexchange.com

(732) 548-2964



A Step-by-Step Guide to

Opening a New Business in the Borough of Metuchen



- 1 Starting up
- 2 Zoning Review
- 3 Build-out / Alterations
- 4 Additional Resources



Photo source: Image Up Studio

1 Starting up

If you are considering locating your business or opening a business in the Borough of Metuchen, the very first question to ask “is the business an approved use at this location?”

To assist in answering this question, contact the Zoning Official at the Office of Planning & Zoning at Borough Hall.

You should rely on your professionals (i.e.: attorney, accountant, real estate agent, architect, etc.) for legal advice to help you start your business: develop a business plan, obtain necessary financing and prepare a build-out plan.

Prior to signing a lease with the landlord, you should be aware that the Borough of Metuchen requires businesses to obtain a zoning permit.

For additional information regarding starting a business, registration, licensure, certification and more, please contact:

U.S. Small Business Administration
800-827-5722
www.sba.org

NJ Business Action Center
866-534-7789
www.nj.gov/njbusiness

The Metuchen Area Chamber of Commerce is also a great local resource and can be reached at **732-548-2964** or browse to: www.metuchenchamberexchange.com

2 Zoning Review

When you are ready to file for zoning approval, the Zoning Official will require a zoning permit to be submitted for review.

At that time, the Zoning Official will ask for your business plan and if there will be any modifications, whether interior or exterior.

A change in use (i.e.: from a retail store to a restaurant), an intensification of an existing use or façade changes will require additional review by the Zoning Official.

Please be aware that certain uses, changes in use and changes to the building and/or site may require Site Plan Exemption approval or Site Plan approval from the Technical Review Committee, Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment. The Zoning Official will assist you with your application.

Signage

Permits are required to erect, install, paint, alter or relocate any sign. It is especially important that you consult with the Zoning Official with the design (prepared by your sign company) prior to its manufacture and installation.

Contact the Zoning Official for guidelines on permitted size, type and lighting.

3 Build-out / Alterations

Building permits may be required for remodeling or construction, including interior or exterior demolition and construction, electrical, plumbing and fire systems.

It is strongly recommended that you rely on your professionals and consult with the Building Department early in the design process for input on your build-out, even if you believe no changes are necessary.

The Borough of Metuchen cannot recommend design professionals for you; however, the Chamber of Commerce may be able to assist. Be sure to check for references!

Finally, all zoning and building permits require inspections.

Special Requirements for Certain Businesses

Certain businesses and any food-related business should also consult with the Middlesex County Health Department early in the design process.

The Health Department requires and issues licenses for all restaurants and retail stores that handle food.

The Fire Department also requires registration of your business and may require annual inspections.

4 Additional Resources

Congratulations! You have made a great investment and commitment to establishing a business in the Borough of Metuchen.

It is strongly recommended that you consult with the Chamber of Commerce regarding membership, networking, awareness, advocacy and mentoring.

Make sure all permits are closed out and a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) is obtained, if necessary, before opening to the public.

Grand Opening!

Contact the Chamber of Commerce to help support your Grand Opening event!

Consider a soft opening for 1-2 weeks prior to the event to iron out loose ends before the big crowd arrives. Contact the Zoning Official to coordinate the grand opening signage proposal.

Finally, during the normal course of business, be sure to continue to maintain your storefront in a neat and orderly manner. Consider adding flower boxes, planters, and outdoor seating.

Make a good first impression and potential customers will not pass you by!

Good luck!