

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT PERMITS/LICENSES MOST COMMONLY REQUESTED BY BUSINESS OWNERS

When do I need a building permit (building, gas, electrical and plumbing)?

You will need to apply to the Municipal Inspections/Building Department for a building permit if you plan to do work that is regulated by the Commonwealth's [Building Code](#). A few examples of work requiring a building permit include the replacement of windows, installing new windows, new interior walls, and re/construction of stairs. In some cases the work you are doing may not require a building permit but it may require a plumbing permit, electrical permit, etc. Before you proceed with any work you should contact the Municipal Inspections/Building Department to discuss your project and inquire as to what type(s) of permits will be necessary. The property owner usually obtains these permits, unless the tenant is responsible for improvements.

The Municipal Inspections Department also:

- **CONFIRMS ZONING:** confirms the zoning for the area in which you would like to locate your business. This ensures that Beverly's zoning by-law permits (by right) the type of business you are proposing or whether it may require a special permit or a use variance.
- **REVIEWS ADA COMPLIANCE:** reviews your plan to make sure it addresses the accessibility needs for persons with disabilities.
- **SHARES PLAN WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT:** In order to confirm that your plan complies with the State's fire safety code the Municipal Inspections Department will share it with the Fire Department and request their input.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Department of Municipal Inspections/Building

502 Cabot Street, Beverly, MA 01915

Phone: 978-921-6025

Website: <http://www.beverlyma.gov/departments/municipal-inspections-building-department/>

When do I need to contact the Sealer of Weights and Measures?

If your business requires the use of a scale to weigh or measure a product before it is sold then you will need the sealer of weights and measures to inspect and seal your scale before you open for business.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Sealer of Weights and Measures

Office located at Beverly Public Library, 32 Essex Street, Beverly, MA 01915

Phone: 978-921-6095

Website: <http://www.beverlyma.gov/departments/sealer-of-weights-and-measures/>

When do I need to get signage approved?

The City's Design Review Board (DRB) reviews and approves most types of exterior signage before a permit is issued by the Municipal Inspections Department.

The City of Beverly's Planning and Development Department staffs the Design Review Board. Please contact this department so that you can discuss the type of signage you are considering along with the requirements of our signage ordinance. Page 5 of this document is a flow chart illustrating the process of applying for a signage permit.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Department of Planning and Development
Beverly City Hall, 191 Cabot Street, 3rd floor, Beverly, MA 01915
Phone: 978-605-2343
Website: <http://www.beverlyma.gov/departments/planning/>

What permits do I need if I am opening a restaurant or any type of business that sells food?

You will need to contact the City of Beverly's Health Department in order to obtain a permit to operate if you plan to open a food establishment. A food establishment is defined by Massachusetts State Regulations (105 CMR 590.002) as an operation that stores, prepares, packages, serves, vends, or otherwise provides food for human consumption.

If one or more components of your plan for the food establishment vary from existing regulations you will need to apply to the Board of Health for a variance. So it is important that you review your plan with the Health Department to make sure that you will be in compliance with all regulations.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Health Department
Office located at the Beverly Council on Aging, 90 Colon Street, Beverly, MA 01915
Phone: 978-921-8591
Website: <http://www.beverlypublichealth.org/>

Whats other types of permits does the Health Department issue?

The City of Beverly's Health Department issues permits for the following (in addition to food service establishments): Title5/Sewage disposal; recreational camps for children; public/semi-public swimming pools; funeral-related activities; handling of recombinant DNA; tanning facilities; keeping of livestock; change of occupancy; body art; tobacco sales; beaches.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Health Department
Office located at the Beverly Council on Aging, 90 Colon Street, Beverly, MA 01915
Phone: 978-921-8591
Website: <http://www.beverlypublichealth.org/>

What type of permit /license do I need if I want to sell alcohol?

If you are planning to participate in any of the following activities involving alcoholic beverages you will need a license: sell; store; transport; import; export; manufacture with the intent to sell; keep for sale and expose for sale.

The City of Beverly's Licensing Board, and the Massachusetts Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission (ABCC), must approve retail license applications and any license changes. There are two types of retail licenses: (1) on-premises, and; (2) off-premises. On-premises alcoholic beverage licenses also known as “pouring” licenses allow the holder to sell alcoholic beverages at retail to consumers. The beverages must be consumed on premises. Off-premises alcoholic beverages licenses may sell alcoholic beverages at retail in their original, sealed packaging. The alcoholic beverage may not be consumed at the store where it has been purchased.

In Massachusetts, each community receives a certain number of retail liquor licenses from the Commonwealth which it is authorized to distribute to local businesses. **You must contact the Clerk of the City's Licensing Board to find out if any of these licenses are available and also receive additional, detailed information regarding the process of obtaining a license.** The website for the ABCC also provides a great deal of information about regulations pertaining to different activities involving alcoholic beverages.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Clerk of the Licensing Board (Martha Lewis)

Beverly City Hall, 191 Cabot Street, 3rd floor, Beverly, MA 01915

Phone: 978-605-2333

Website: <http://www.beverlyma.gov/boards-commissions/licensing-board/>

CONTACT INFORMATION

Massachusetts Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission

239 Causeway Street, Boston, MA 02114

Phone: 1-617-727-3040

Website: <http://www.mass.gov/abcc/>

What is a business certificate?

A business owner should file a “doing business as” certificate if they use any other name than their own legal name for the business.

The [Unites States Small Business Administration](#) provides the following explanation of why you may need to register a “Doing Business As” name.

What is a “Doing Business As” Name?

A fictitious name (or assumed name, trade name or DBA name) is a business name that is different from your personal name, the names of your partners or the officially registered name of your LLC or corporation.

It's important to note that when you form a business, the legal name of the business defaults to the name of the person or entity that owns the business, unless you choose to rename it and register it as a DBA name.

For example, consider this scenario: John Smith sets up a painting business. Rather than operate under his own name, John instead chooses to name his business: “John Smith Painting”. This name is considered an assumed name and John will need to register it with the appropriate local government agency.

The legal name of your business is required on all government forms and applications, including your application for employer tax IDs, licenses and permits.

Do I Need a “Doing Business As” Name?

A DBA is needed in the following scenarios:

- **Sole Proprietors or Partnerships** – If you wish to start a business under anything other than your real name, you’ll need to register a DBA so that you can do business as another name.
- **Existing Corporations or LLCs** – If your business is already set up and you want to do business under a name other than your existing [corporation](#) or [LLC](#) name, you will need to register a DBA.

How Do I Register my DBA name?

The Beverly City Clerk supplies the form you must complete in order to register your DBA. The Clerk's office will need a valid photo identification at the time you submit the form for notarization. The fee is \$25. You may wish to call the City Clerk's office prior to visiting in order to discuss the information that is required on the form. The certificate is valid for four (4) years. If your business is located in your home then the business owner must be listed in the current city census records.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Beverly City Clerk

Beverly City Hall, 191 Cabot Street, 1st floor, Beverly, MA 01915

Phone: 978-605-2329

Website: <http://www.beverlyma.gov/departments/city-clerk/>

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD (DRB) Sign Permit Application Process

Pick up an application at the Planning Department, 191 Cabot Street, or online at <http://www.beverlyma.gov/boards-commissions/design-review-board/applications/>



Design your sign, but **do not have the sign made** until it has been approved by the DRB. The design must comply with the City's Sign Ordinance, available online at <http://www.beverlyma.gov/docs/dm/Sign-Ordinance.pdf>. If you have any questions, contact the Planning Department at 978-605-2346.



Submit **7 copies** of the application, **including the Zoning Enforcement Officer's signature**, and submit to the Planning Department. The schedule of DRB meetings and deadlines for submission can be found at <http://www.beverlyma.gov/boards-commissions/design-review-board/>



Attend the DRB meeting for the application review. The applicant and/or sign maker may attend. The DRB makes a decision, and an approval letter is mailed to the applicant. The DRB must make a decision within 60 days of receipt of the application as per the City Sign Ordinance.



Bring the letter to the Zoning Enforcement Officer to **obtain permit**.



The sign must be built **exactly as approved** by the DRB. Any future changes to the sign will require a new permit.

Make sure you can conduct your type of business on the property by contacting the Zoning Enforcement Officer, Municipal Inspections Department, at 502 Cabot Street.

The application fee is \$2.00 per square foot.

Sandwich board signs require additional approval from the City Council. Please see the following link for more information, <http://www.beverlyma.gov/docs/dm/Sandwich-Board-Application.pdf>