

doing BUSINESS in BEVERLY



FILING YOUR BUSINESS CERTIFICATE

A business certificate is the public record of the name and address of the owner(s) of a business, and is commonly referred to by the name “D.B.A.” (“doing business as”) or “Sole Proprietorship.” Its purpose is primarily for consumer protection and public information. Lenders will typically request a copy of your business certificate as may your landlord.

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 110, §5 states that any person conducting business in the Commonwealth under any title other than the real name of the person conducting the business, whether individually or as a partnership, shall file (a certificate) in the office of the clerk of every city or town where an office of any such person or partnership may be situated. Failure to do so is punishable by a fine of up to \$300 per month of violation so remember to do this!

- In Beverly, the business certificate is valid for four (4) years and then must be renewed
- If your business is located in your home, you must be listed in the current city census records
- Depending on the type of business you’re operating, you may also need to file a business certificate with the MA Secretary of State
- The filing of a business certificate does not protect the name of your business; you must get that protection of your name, logo, symbol, etc from the MA Secretary of State’s office

BEFORE YOU FILE...

- You must know the name of your business and how it will be structured (as that may be part of your business’ legal name); examples are sole proprietorship, LLC, corporation, etc; check out the Small Business Association’s website for advice
- You must know the physical address where your business will be located; note that PO boxes and mailbox numbers are not allowed as your business address

HOW?

Step 1: Download the form from the City’s website:

(<http://www.beverlyma.gov/department/city-clerk/>) or visit the City Clerk’s office

Step 2: Submit the completed form along with a check for the filing fee of \$25; bring a photo ID with you!

Step 3: The Clerk will notarize your certificate and provide you with a copy

KEY CONTACTS and RESOURCES

D. WESLEY SLATE, City Clerk

978.605.2329 or wslate@beverlyma.gov

Located at City Hall at 191 Cabot Street

Mon-Wed: 8:30-4:30, Thurs: 8:30-7:30, Fri 8:30-1

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

MA SECRETARY OF STATE

617.727.7030 or cis@sec.state.ma.us

<http://www.sec.state.ma.us>

SMALL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (SBA)

<http://www.sba.gov>