

NYC Starter Guide to Opening Your LAUNDRY / DRY CLEANER



Use this guide to help you plan your way to success.
Get started today at nyc.gov/BusinessExpress.

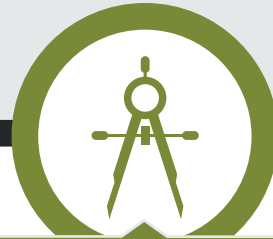


CREATE YOUR BUSINESS

- **Plan your business.** NYC Business Solutions offers free support. They can help you comply with government requirements, save money through incentives, and reach your first customers. Learn more at nyc.gov/bizsolutions.
- **Register your business.** LLCs, Corporations, and LPs register with NY State (on.nyc.gov/state). General Partnerships and Sole Proprietorships register with the County Clerk (on.nyc.gov/clerk).
- **Apply for an Employer Identification Number (EIN)**, also known as a Federal Tax ID. This tracks your business for taxes. If you are a sole proprietor, you may be able to use your Social Security Number instead. Visit on.nyc.gov/ein.
- **Apply for a Certificate of Authority**, or Sales Tax ID, from NY State Department of Taxation and Finance in order to sell products and services. Apply early to avoid delays receiving other permits. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/taxid.
- **Research required insurance**, such as workers' compensation insurance. Some are needed for permits and licenses. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/bizinsurance.



Comply with wage laws to avoid costly fines. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/wage.



PLAN YOUR SPACE

- **Find a location** zoned for your business. The city allows small laundries and dry cleaners in nearly all zones. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/zoning.
- **Consult a design professional** to make sure the space complies with building and operating codes and to plan any changes. Make sure your architect, engineer, or contractor is licensed at on.nyc.gov/hireDOBpro.
- **Sign your lease.** Before signing, talk to a lawyer to make sure the agreement is good for you. Some government benefits require you to apply before signing a lease. Get free legal advice at on.nyc.gov/bizlegaladvice.

Cosmetic changes can add time and paperwork, so consider how each change affects your timeline.



Historic districts and buildings are regulated in ways that slow or limit changes in the design or use of the space. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/landmarks.



Basements often cannot be used as workspace or for other uses beyond storage.



APPLY FOR CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

- **Have your licensed professional draw plans for proposed changes.** The space proposed must comply with regulations of the NYC Department of Buildings and Fire Department. Find a professional at on.nyc.gov/hireDOBpro.
- **Submit plans and required documents.** Only a registered architect or professional engineer may submit plans to the NYC Department of Buildings.
- **Monitor the status of your job's approval** on NYC Department of Buildings BISWeb at on.nyc.gov/bis.

Digital plan submissions and review saves time.

Have your professional use the NYC Development Hub, including for Pro-Cert. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/hub.



Professional Certification or "Pro-Cert" could save you weeks in receiving permits. Pro-Cert allows a professional to self-certify projects without initial review from NYC Department of Buildings. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/ProCert.

Backflow prevention devices must be installed on all water service lines entering a dry cleaner or laundromat. This protects drinking water from contamination. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/backflow.



Large boilers and water heaters, like those used by laundries needing lots of hot water, require a permit to install and a certificate to operate, both from NYC Department of Environmental Protection. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/boilerform.



BEGIN CONSTRUCTION

- **Post approved permits and safety information** on your work site as instructed by agencies issuing permits.
- **Begin construction.** Monitor progress with your licensed professional.
- **Consult your licensed professional about progress inspections and their cost**, which may not be included in your project bid.
- **Arrange for final inspections and sign-off** with your licensed professional and city agencies.
- **Obtain a Certificate of Occupancy**, Temporary Certificate of Occupancy, or Letter of Completion from the NYC Department of Buildings before inhabiting the building. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/CofO.

Canopies must be approved by NYC Department of Transportation. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/canopy.

Signs, if nailed or screwed into the building or if illuminated, must be approved by NYC Department of Buildings. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/DOBsigns.



PREPARE TO OPEN

- **A surety bond** is required by NYC Department of Consumer Affairs for you to get your laundry license. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/laundrylicense.
- **Get a Laundry License** from NYC Department of Consumer Affairs if you wash, dry, starch, or iron for the public, or if you have self-service machines for the public. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/laundrylicense.
- **Get a Laundry Jobber License** from NYC Department of Consumer Affairs if your business will collect laundry for washing, cleaning, or ironing off-site. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/jobberlicense.
- **Request a weights and measures inspection** from NYC Dept. of Consumer Affairs to ensure laundry scales are accurate. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/weightsmeasures.
- **Limit air pollution.** Exhaust from small laundromats is not regulated. Dry cleaning facilities, however, must have a **Certificate to Operate** from NYC Dept. Environmental Protection. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/industrialprocess.
- **Register** boilers, water heaters, and multiple dryers with NYC Department of Environmental Protection online if your facility will have an average heat input of 350,000 Btu/hr or more. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/airpollution.
- **Limit water use.** Laundries that go through an average of 25,000 gallons or more per day, or about 500 washes, may need an **Industrial Wastewater Discharge Permit**. (on.nyc.gov/wastewater). Select others may need to submit a **Wastewater Quality Control Application** (on.nyc.gov/wastewaterapp).
- **Hire a waste carter and post information** on sorting and collection. Office trash can be removed for a fee by NYC Department of Sanitation (on.nyc.gov/officewaste). Lost clothing can be donated (on.nyc.gov/recyclingwaste). Other wastes must be removed by a commercial hauler (on.nyc.gov/carter).

PERC and other hazardous materials must be registered with NYC Department of Environmental Protection, labeled, and disposed specially. Other waste-water and air-related regulations also apply. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/DEPdrycleaner.



OPEN YOUR DOORS

Congratulations! You've opened your doors. Plan ahead to keep things running smoothly.



STAYING OPEN

Show prices and payment options, and **print your business name and address on receipts**. For other tips, read the NYC Department of Consumer Affairs guide "10 Things Every Business Should Know" at on.nyc.gov/10things.

Display licenses and required posters. In particular, make sure you create and post a sign stating "All complaints and Claims for Refunds Can Be Made to ____" and then your business name and its NYC Department of Consumer Affairs license number. Check federal (bit.ly/USposters), state (on.nyc.gov/nyposters), and local sign requirements (on.nyc.gov/dcalaundrylaw).

Renew your business licenses and permits. Note on your calendar when you must begin each renewal. Also check that employees maintain their trade and professional licenses.

Prepare your taxes. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/NYCbiztax.

For comprehensive information, visit **NYC Business Express** at nyc.gov/BusinessExpress.

NYC Business Solutions, a set of services offered by the NYC Department of Small Business Services, can help resolve questions and move your business forward through permit and license approvals. Visit on.nyc.gov/navigate or call **311** and ask for "NYC Business Solutions Navigating Government."

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Provide feedback on this NYC Starter Guide v2:
on.nyc.gov/guidesurvey2