



## Starting a Business ?

Inside you will find helpful information to get your business started on the right track to being a successful business!

Checklists

Resource Guides

Website addresses

Test your potential as an Entrepreneur

## Welcome to Aztec, New Mexico

A desirable place to live, work and play; rich in history and small town values!

The City of Aztec is here to help with your business needs from Economic Development, Zoning, Licensing, Utilities. The City of Aztec provides many services to our citizens and businesses.



Are you thinking of starting or relocating a business in the southwest? Or maybe you need to grow or sustain your locally owned business? **Four Corners Economic Development can help you do just that!** (505)566-3702



To provide a foundation for a vibrant business community focused on increasing awareness by creating a culture of participation, promotion and interaction. 505-334-7646.



### The Center for Workforce Training - 505-3226-3311

Partnering to deliver affordable training that builds your career! Every business can benefit from high-quality training, and now, more than ever, having a training partner is critical to help organizations adapt to changes in the workplace and the economy.

**Enterprise Center- (505) 566-3699**

*Ideas are like seeds. They need room to grow.*

**The Enterprise Center is here to help your ideas grow!**

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## Is Entrepreneurship For You?

Starting your own business can be an exciting and rewarding experience. It can offer numerous advantages such as being your own boss, setting your own schedule and making a living doing something you enjoy. But, becoming a successful entrepreneur requires thorough planning, creativity and hard work.

Consider whether you have the following characteristics and skills commonly associated with successful entrepreneurs:

- **Comfortable with taking risks:** Being your own boss also means you're the one making tough decisions. Entrepreneurship involves uncertainty. Do you avoid uncertainty in life at all costs? If yes, then entrepreneurship may not be the best fit for you. Do you enjoy the thrill of taking calculated risks? Then read on.
- **Independent:** Entrepreneurs have to make a lot of decisions on their own. If you find you can trust your instincts — and you're not afraid of rejection every now and then — you could be on your way to being an entrepreneur.
- **Persuasive:** You may have the greatest idea in the world, but if you cannot persuade customers, employees and potential lenders or partners, you may find entrepreneurship to be challenging. If you enjoy public speaking, engage new people with ease and find you make compelling arguments grounded in facts, it's likely you're poised to make your idea succeed.
- **Able to negotiate:** As a small business owner, you will need to negotiate everything from leases to contract terms to rates. Polished negotiation skills will help you save money and keep your business running smoothly.
- **Creative:** Are you able to think of new ideas? Can you imagine new ways to solve problems? Entrepreneurs must be able to think creatively. If you have insights on how to take advantage of new opportunities, entrepreneurship may be a good fit.
- **Supported by others:** Before you start a business, it's important to have a strong support system in place. You'll be forced to make many important decisions, especially in the first months of opening your business. If you do not have a support network of people to help you, consider finding a business mentor. A

business mentor is someone who is experienced, successful and willing to provide advice and guidance. Read the [Steps to Finding a Mentor](#) article for help on finding and working with a mentor.

Still think you have what it takes to be an entrepreneur and start a new business? Great! Now ask yourself these 20 questions to help ensure you've thought about the right financial and business details

## 20 Questions Before Starting

Ask yourself these 20 questions to make sure you're thinking about the right key business decisions:

1. Why am I starting a business?
2. What kind of business do I want?
3. Who is my ideal customer?
4. What products or services will my business provide?
5. Am I prepared to spend the time and money needed to get my business started?
6. What differentiates my business idea and the products or services I will provide from others in the market?
7. Where will my business be located?
8. How many employees will I need?
9. What types of suppliers do I need?
10. How much money do I need to get started?
11. Will I need to get a loan?
12. How soon will it take before my products or services are available?
13. How long do I have until I start making a profit?
14. Who is my competition?
15. How will I price my product compared to my competition?
16. How will I set up the legal structure of my business?
17. What taxes do I need to pay?
18. What kind of insurance do I need?
19. How will I manage my business?
20. How will I advertise my business?

## Steps to Starting a Business

Starting a business involves planning, making key financial decisions and completing a series of legal activities. These steps can help you plan, prepare and manage your business.

**Step 1: Get Business Assistance and Training.** Take advantage of free training and counseling services, from preparing a business plan and securing financing, to expanding or relocating a business.

**Step 2: Write your Business Plan.** A good business plan will help you map out how you will start and run your business successfully.

**Step 3: Choose a Business Location.** Contact the City of Aztec Community Development Department before purchasing or leasing a location. Get advice on how to select a customer-friendly location and comply with zoning laws.

**Step 4: Finance Your Business.** Find government backed loans, venture capital and research grants to help you get started.

**Step 5. Choose a Business Name and Logo:** If you are planning on using a website then you should consider registering your trade name and logo with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. You can do the basic research at [www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov) but will ultimately have to do a formal filing. The last thing that you want to happen is to receive a letter from a lawyer tell you to stop using the name you have chosen as it is trademarked.

**Step 6. Choose and Register your Legal Structure:** The choices of legal structure for a business are, Sole Proprietorship, Partnership, Limited Partnership, Limited Liability Partnership, Corporation, Limited Liability Corporation. The legal structure is registered with the Secretary of State who clears the name only in the state. [www.sos.state.nm.us](http://www.sos.state.nm.us)

**Step 7. Obtain your Federal Employers Identification Number from the IRS:** The application forms, SS-4 are available at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

**Step 8. Register and Obtain you CRS tax number.** Available online at [www.tax.newmexico.gov/Businesses/Gross-Receipts/Pages/Register-Your-Business.aspx](http://www.tax.newmexico.gov/Businesses/Gross-Receipts/Pages/Register-Your-Business.aspx) Applications are also available at the City of Aztec Utility/Business Office.

**Step 9. Establish a Business Bank Account.** If you plan to accept credit/debit cards it may be necessary to setup a Merchant Account.

**Step 10. Register your Business with the City of Aztec.** Applications are available at the City of Aztec Utility/Business Office or online at <http://www.aztecnm.gov/business/licenses.htm>

**Step 11. Obtain necessary permits or certifications.** Permits are required for any sign, fire inspections are a requirement when obtaining a new business license within the City Limits of Aztec. Other permits and certifications with entities including construction industry division, financial services, manufactured housing, alcohol and gaming may be required. The Aztec Business Center webpage has more information.

**Step 12. Insurance Coverage:** Check with your insurance agent for proper insurance coverage.

**Step 13. Report New Hires to the New Mexico New Hires Directory.** Federal and State law requires employers to report newly hired and re-hired employees in New Mexico to the New Mexico New Hires Directory. <http://newhire-reporting.com/NM-Newhire/default.aspx>

**Step 14. New Mexico Workforce Solutions:** As soon as you start paying employees you need to fill out form ES802 online at [www.dws.state.nm.us/formes\\*802](http://www.dws.state.nm.us/formes*802)

**Step 15. Follow the law when you hire:** The U.S. Department of Labor website at [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov) lists federal rules governing workplace safety, wages and hours and nondiscrimination. Find rules for New Mexico – such as state minimum wage – at the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, [www.dws.state.nm.us](http://www.dws.state.nm.us)

**Step 16. Employees:** If you have employees contact the IRS and New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Office or your accountant for the appropriate forms and rates for State Unemployment Tax (SUTA), Federal Unemployment Tax (FUTA), Federal Income Tax (FIT), State Income Tax (SIT), Social Security Withholding (FICA), Medicare withholding, Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Form I-9 for Employment Eligibility Verification.

**Step 17. Check with an Attorney:** Regarding leasing agreements, contracts, patents, copyrights, intellectual property and licensing agreement requirements.

**Step 18. American with Disabilities Act (ADA):** Determine the necessary guidelines for compliance with Title I and Title III of the Act. The latest information can be obtained at [www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm)

# THE BUSINESS PLAN

You should have a good business plan in place to have a successful business. Below is an outline of what a good business plan should include:

## Business Idea

- Before you can begin writing your business plan, you need an idea of what type of business you'd like to start.

## Market Analysis

- Research case studies, read books on your business and speak with other entrepreneurs to gather information about common trends, mistakes, growth, profitability and costs in your industry.

## Competitor Analysis

- Part of your business plan should include information about your competition. Research the areas you plan to serve, as well as your competitors, to see how they operate and what they offer. Think about how you will stand out from the competition to develop a unique selling proposition.

## S.W.O.T. Analysis

- Consider your businesses **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats and how they may affect the way you operate. This analysis will help you when it's time to come up with goals and objectives.

## Legal

- Name and register your business. Decide on a legal entity; you can opt to run your business as a sole proprietorship, partnership, limited liability Corporation, limited liability partnership, a "c" corporation or an "s" corporation.

## Mission Statement

- Think of a descriptive two-sentence statement to describe your business. Consider the services and products you will



provide, as well the experience you'd like consumers to have as a result of what you offer.

## **Marketing Plan**

- The marketing plan should include information about your target market and how consumers will get your product. Be sure to consider where your product will be sold, how it will be sold, at what price it will be sold, who will buy it and their incentives for buying.

## **Financial Plan**

- The financial plan comprises a balance sheet, statement of cash flow, an income statement and a cash management report. The plan presents the current financial situation of a business and also projects future financials.

## **Operating Plan**

- When putting together your operating plan, consider resources you'll need to make your business function day-to-day. Think about raw materials, employees, suppliers and vendors you may use.

## **Exit Strategy**

- An exit strategy is necessary, as it helps you guide your business and helps investors understand your long-term goals. Some possible exit strategies include: dissolve the business, liquidate the business, go public or pass the business on to a family member.

## **Evaluation**

- Think of ways to evaluate the successes and failures of your business. Typically, the goals and objectives you put in place for your business will serve as benchmarks.

## **Executive Summary**

- The executive summary offers a one-page review of your business, highlighting all of the key points of your business. It must be clear and concise, and is best written last, so to incorporate all the important points.

# FAQ's - Frequently Asked Questions related to business licensing, sign permits and zoning in the City of Aztec

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## **QUESTION: Who needs to have a business license with the City of Aztec?**

**Answer:** Any person proposing to engage in business within the city shall apply for a business license and shall pay a business registration fee for each outlet, branch or location within the city prior to engaging in business. Persons who do not have a physical address for business activity conducted in the city shall register with the city if their business includes regular visits by one (1) or more agents of the business to locations inside the city limits to conduct or solicit business, to service customers, to deliver goods or otherwise engage in ANY regular business activity which is subject to taxation or is mentioned and regulated in any portion of this article. Certain types of businesses will need to provide further certifications and state licensing. Examples of those businesses include Child Day Care, Body Art Establishments', and Food Service.

## **QUESTION: Does a non-profit business need to apply and pay for a business license?**

**Answer:** Non-profit organizations, small scale charity organizations and individuals who plan to conduct business or vend goods or services to the general public shall register with the city but shall be excused from the requirement to pay a registration fee, so long as the activity is strictly for charitable fundraising purposes (description of fundraising event may be required). Continuing organizations such as churches, clubs, school groups and fraternal organizations are excused from the requirement to register if they are organized and chartered under the laws of the State of New Mexico or any other state; proof of charter is required.

## **QUESTION: Do I have to get a permit for my business sign?**

**Answer:** Yes, applications for a sign permit must be submitted to the Community Development Department for review and approval. There are fees associated with obtaining a sign permit. Business owners are responsible for maintaining their sign(s) in good structural and visual condition at all times. Sign regulations (i.e. maximum area and number of signs allowed per business) vary based on the land use zone designation associated with the property. business owners should apply for a sign permit prior to purchasing signs for their business. Business owners should refer to Chapter 20 of Aztec Municipal Code (available on the City website at [www.aztecnm.gov](http://www.aztecnm.gov);) for additional information on Sign Regulations or should contact the Community Development Department at (505) 334-7604.

## **QUESTION: How much does a business license cost?**

**Answer:** The cost for most business licenses is \$35.00.

**QUESTION: Does the business license need to be displayed?**

**Answer:** Yes, the license issued to each business shall be exhibited in a prominent place of the business, visible to customers at all times.

**QUESTION: How long will it take to receive my business license?**

**Answer:** Following the submission of completed business license applications and renewal applications to the City of Aztec, applications may take up to one week to process. Business Licenses will be mailed out to the address provided on the application. A request to pick up the business license will be accepted if request is made at time of application.

**QUESTION: When does a business license expire?**

**Answer:** All business licenses expire on December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. Business licenses are issued for the period January 1 through December 31 of each calendar year, or from the date in which the business started to December 31 of the calendar year.

**QUESTION: How does a business renew a business license?**

**Answer:** All businesses with active licenses will receive a license renewal letter in mid-December of each year with information on the renewal process. The business license fee is due on January 1 of each year; business licenses that have not been renewed by March 15 become delinquent. Business registrations that are not filed timely shall be charged an additional fee of ten dollars (\$10.00) and subject to termination of business if not renewed by April 30 of each year.

**QUESTION: What if I want to sell my crafts or food at local events in Aztec (i.e. Fiesta Days, Founders' Day, etc) that only occur one weekend out of the year?**

**Answer:** A One Day Vendor Permit (good for up to 3 consecutive days) may be purchased from the City for a fee of \$10 per day. Businesses selling food shall provide proof to the City of Aztec that they have been approved by the New Mexico Environment Department for food preparation and sales.

**QUESTION: How many sidewalk sales may a business conduct a year?**

**Answer:** Sidewalk sales are limited to three (3) days in duration, may not be conducted more than two (2) times per year, must be held adjacent to the business conducting the sale, and cannot cause disruption of pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Any objects placed in the public Right-of-Way (i.e. Sidewalks) without express approval from the City is prohibited.

**QUESTION: Are Business License Applications available online?**

**Answer:** Yes, the Business License Application, Renewal Application, One Day Vendor Permits and Business Registration Change Forms are available by visiting our web-site at [www.aztecnm.gov](http://www.aztecnm.gov); click on City Services then click on Utility Customer Service to download the forms (requires Adobe Reader).

## **Startup Resources**

There are a number of available programs to assist startups, micro businesses, and underserved or disadvantaged groups. The following resources provide information to help specialized audiences start their own businesses.

Section for left blank for notes:

**Aztec Chamber of Commerce**

Provides business support services and workforce training to members; coordinates ribbon cuttings for new businesses; provides referrals for accountants, attorneys, etc.

(505) 334-7646

[www.aztecchamber.com](http://www.aztecchamber.com)

**City of Aztec – Community Development Department**

Oversees land use and sign code, liaison economic development project applications.

(505) 334-7604 [www.aztecnm.gov](http://www.aztecnm.gov)

**City of Aztec – Business Licensing/Utility office.**

Connect Utilities to your new business location. Obtain business license applications and information.

(505) 334-7670 [www.aztecnm.gov](http://www.aztecnm.gov)

**City of Aztec Finance Department**

Registers prospective vendors for the City and issues Bids and Requests for Proposals. (505) 334-7656

[www.aztecnm.gov](http://www.aztecnm.gov)

**City of Aztec – Library**

Resource library, free web access, copying, scanning and conference rooms. (505)334-7657

[www.azteclibrary.org](http://www.azteclibrary.org)

**City of Aztec – Visitor Center**

Provides relocation packets for new residents, free phone books and area information to visitors.

(505) 334-9551 [www.aztecnm.com](http://www.aztecnm.com)

**Enterprise Center**

The Enterprise Center provides incubator space to help businesses grow; shared conference and office services.

(505) 566-3699

[www.sjc-enterprisecenter.com](http://www.sjc-enterprisecenter.com)

**NM Economic Development Department**

Provides business support and various tax incentives to qualifying businesses that export a good or service from their region. (505) 827-0300

<https://gonm.biz/>

**NM Taxation and Revenue Department**

Your source for everything tax-related in New Mexico. (505) 325-5049

[www.tax.newmexico.gov](http://www.tax.newmexico.gov)

**San Juan College Center for Workforce Training**

Provides training in a variety of areas, including HR management and customer service.

(505) 566-3501

[www.sanjuancollege.edu/WorkforceTraining](http://www.sanjuancollege.edu/WorkforceTraining)

**Four Corners Economic Development**

Assists economic development based companies with relocation and expansion, to include tax incentives and workforce training.

(800) 854-5053

[www.4cornersed.com](http://www.4cornersed.com)

**Small Business Development Center**

Provides small businesses confidential assistance with business planning, financing, workforce training, marketing, etc.

(505) 566-3528 [www.nmsbdc.org](http://www.nmsbdc.org)

**NM Workforce Solutions**

Information resource for workforce/employment regulations impacting businesses; online job postings.

(505) 327-6126 Farmington Office

<http://www.dws.state.nm.us>

## **We Listen!**

Aztec's City Manager, listens to members of our community, and our citizens. If you have concerns or comments please contact our offices.

Decisions about our services and rates are not made in a corporate boardroom located across the country. They are made **here in Aztec** by members of the **City Commission**. As customers and citizens of the City of Aztec, you have a direct say with what happens in the City of Aztec.

The **City Commission** meetings are open to the public. Meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday each month at 6:00 p.m.

### **City Commission**

Victor C. Snover – Mayor

Rosalyn A. Fry – Mayor Pro-em

Austin R. Randall

Mark E. Lewis

Michael A. Padilla Sr.

#### Board Meeting Schedules

##### Economic Development-

Meets on: Third Thursday of each month at 8:00 am

Meeting Place: Commission Room of City Hall

##### Library

Meets on: Second Wednesday of every other month (Jan, Mar, May, July, Sept, Nov) at 5:30 pm


Meeting Place: Public Library

##### Lodgers' Tax

Meets on: Third Monday of January, March, **May**, July, and Sept. at 2:00 pm

Meeting Place: Commission Room of City Hall

Visit for City of Aztec Website at [www.aztecnm.gov](http://www.aztecnm.gov). A great resource for businesses, find out what is happening throughout the City. You can find information relating to all City services, links to many area organizations such as Aztec schools, San Juan County Government, to name a few; there are links for tourism and relocation.



## Welcome to Aztec, New Mexico

A desirable place to live, work and play; rich in history and small town values!

Starting a business is an exciting proposition, but it's also an incredibly challenging undertaking. Explore the topics in this brochure to learn the aspects of starting a business, plus find information you need to succeed.

**The City of Aztec offers this information because we want all businesses in Aztec to be successful.**

### City of Aztec ~ Department Telephone Directory

|                        |          |
|------------------------|----------|
| Administration         | 334.7600 |
| Animal Control         | 334.6819 |
| Business Licensing     | 334-7670 |
| Community Development  | 334.7604 |
| Electric               | 334.7667 |
| Finance                | 334.7653 |
| Library                | 334.7657 |
| Motor Vehicle          | 334.7690 |
| Municipal Court        | 334.7640 |
| Parks/General Services | 334.7664 |
| Police                 | 334.7601 |
| Public Works           | 334.7660 |
| Senior Center          | 334.7616 |
| Utility Office         | 334-7670 |

Hours of Operation (some offices may vary)  
Monday through Thursday 7:00am to 6:00pm (closed Fridays)



CITY OF AZTEC  
201 WEST CHACO ~ AZTEC, NM 87410

[www.aztecm.gov](http://www.aztecm.gov)

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