

HIRE YOURSELF

Advice for Small Business Owners
and Entrepreneurs Looking to Open
Their Own Business



★ Senator Patty Ritchie reports to Oswego County

★ WHAT'S INSIDE ★

- ✓ Start-up advice
- ✓ Where to Find help
- ✓ Small business loans



IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES

Do you know where to find the help your business needs?



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TYPES OF BUSINESSES IN NEW YORK STATE

The most common forms of businesses are **sole proprietor, partnership, limited liability company and corporation**. If you plan to conduct business under a name other than your own, you must register that name. Here is a chart of the most common business entities.

Business Form	Description	Filing Forms
Sole Proprietorship	This is the simplest form of business structure owned by one individual. All business responsibilities and decisions are those of the single owner. The owner has unlimited liability for the business.	Certificate of Conducting Business as a Sole Proprietor. Please file a completed and notarized form with the county clerk in each county in which the business is located. You should have three copies: the original for the county clerk, one for the bank, and one for the business.
Partnership	This is the relationship between two or more individuals or companies that conduct business together. In the absence of a partnership agreement, the New York State Partnership Law sets forth the rights and duties of the partners.	Certificate of Conducting Business as Partners. Please file a completed and notarized form with the county clerk in each county where the business is located. You should have three copies: the original for the county clerk, one for the bank, and one for the business.
Limited Liability Company (LLC)	A Limited Liability Company is an unincorporated business organization of one or more persons having limited liability for the contractual obligations and other liabilities of the business other than a partnership or trust.	The New York Department of State requires the filing of Articles of Organization. An LLC must publish a notice in two newspapers in the county where the business is located each week for six successive weeks specifying the details of the limited liability company within 120 days after filing.
Corporation	This entity is separate and distinct from the individual(s) who own and manage the business. A corporation can sell, buy and inherit property in its own name and is legally endowed with rights, powers and duties to conduct lawful activities. Corporations operate for profit and can raise capital by selling shares of interest in the corporation. A corporation's debts and obligations are distinctly its own.	A Certificate of Incorporation

Source: Governor's Office of Regulatory Reform

SMALL BUSINESS STARTUP ASSISTANCE

New York State Small Business Development Center

The Small Business Development Centers provide expert business advice to both new startups and established businesses. Whether you need to write a business plan, need help with accounting, marketing, financial planning, cost analysis, training, construction management, loan information assistance or teleconferences, the SBDC can help and it's free!

SUNY Oswego SBDC
103 Rich Hall
Oswego, NY 13126-3599
(315) 312-3492

New York Business Development Corporation

NYBDC works in partnership with banks to provide loans to businesses which may not meet the requirements for traditional financing. In many cases, NYBDC includes multiple participations, SBA guarantees, flexible amortization and long-term payouts.

215 Washington Street
Suite 102
Watertown, NY 13601
(315) 785-7907

New York State Tax Guide For New Businesses

The State Tax Department provides a 36-page publication on tax issues that affect new business owners, including types of organizations and tax responsibilities, Federal Employer Identification Numbers, filing requirements for employers, sales and uses tax, miscellaneous taxes and sales tax consequences of purchasing a business. Also included is information on record keeping, accounting, bookkeeping and more. The Department of Taxation and Finance can be reached by phone at (800) 225-5829, or on the Internet at www.tax.state.ny.us. Ask for "Pub. 20."





INSURANCE

Health Insurance

You can obtain health insurance for you and your employees by joining your local Chamber of Commerce and taking advantage of the benefits of group purchasing or contacting your local insurance agent:

Greater Oswego-Fulton Chamber of Commerce
44 E Bridge St., Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 343-7681

Another option is enrolling in **Healthy NY**. The program was designed to help provide health insurance coverage for small business employees and individuals. Program benefits include essential in-patient and outpatient services, physician and surgical services, maternity care and preventative health services, diagnostic and emergency services and a limited prescription benefit.

Eligibility requirements are as follows:

- The business must have 50 or fewer employees who have not had group health insurance coverage during the 12-month period before applying.
- At least 30 percent of the employees must have annual wages at or below \$36,000; and at least 50 percent of the employees, including one employee earning \$36,000 or less, must participate, and
- Employers must contribute at least half of the premium costs.

For more information, including a Healthy NY Consumer Guide, please visit the HealthyNY website at www.ins.state.ny.us, or call 866-healthy (866-432-5849).

Property Casualty Insurance

An essential part of running a small business is ensuring that you have enough insurance coverage to minimize financial risks. Businesses need property and casualty insurance to protect their assets, replace property damage, provide for lost income, cover liability for negligent acts and provide coverage for workers compensation. Just one uninsured loss in any of these categories could devastate a business so it is critical that businesses have adequate insurance coverage to cover the needs of their particular business type.

To obtain more information concerning business insurance, including small business insurance guides, visit the New York State Insurance Department on the Internet at www.ins.state.ny.us

Many small entrepreneurs need help starting up a new business or expanding an existing business. Your business may be eligible for a low interest loan. In most cases you'll be required to put up a share of the financing, but you may be eligible for low interest financing whether your project is \$5,000 or \$5 million

Local Loan Funds in Oswego County

Operation Oswego County (OOC) is a not-for-profit economic development corporation that helps firms access appropriate financing from the federal, state and

local funding sources as well as bank financing which is always the primary source of funds for any project.

Operation Oswego County is a Certified Development Company for the Small Business Administration (SBA) 504 loan program which can fund up to 40% of fixed asset financing for eligible businesses at below market rates.

■ **Micro-Enterprise Program:** Operation Oswego County works cooperatively with SUNY Oswego and the Cities of Oswego and Fulton on helping small businesses get started or to expand. OOC also partners with the Small Business Development Center in providing business counseling.

Federal, state, and local financing programs Operation Oswego can help you with include the following:

- **U.S. Small Business Administration - 504 Loan Program:** Real estate, machinery and equipment
 - **County of Oswego IDA - HUD Revolving Loan Fund:** Real estate, machinery and equipment and working capital may be financed for individuals with low to moderate incomes.
 - **U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development - Small Cities Community Development Block Grant:** Real estate, machinery and equipment, and working capital may be financed where a low-to moderate- income impact is demonstrated.
 - **U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development - Oswego County Micro Enterprise Loan Program:** Real estate, machinery and equipment, and working capital may be financed for Micro Enterprise course graduates from the cities of Fulton and Oswego, or the Oswego County program.
 - **NYS Job Development Authority:** Real estate, machinery and equipment may be financed under the state's established guidelines; no retail or hotel.
 - **County of Oswego Industrial Development Agency - Tax Exempt Industrial Revenue Bonds:** Real estate, machinery and equipment may be financed for manufacturing applicants only.
 - **NYS Empire State Development - Environmental Services Unit:** Real estate, machinery and equipment, and research and development may be funded for waste reduction and recycling projects.
 - **County of Oswego IDA - Taxable Industrial Revenue Bonds:** Real estate, machinery and equipment, and working capital may be financed for any approved project.
 - **Oswego County Civic Facilities Corporation - Civic Facility Revenue Bonds:** Real estate and machinery and equipment may be financed for 501(c)(3) organizations.
 - **County of Oswego IDA- PILOT Economic Development Fund:** Real estate, machinery and equipment and working capital may be financed for approved projects.
 - **County of Oswego IDA - Economic Development Fund:** Real estate, machinery and equipment and working capital may be financed for approved projects.
 - **County of Oswego IDA – USDA Intermediary Relending Program (IRP),** the County of Oswego IDA is an approved lender for the USDA IRP program which can be used to finance working capital and machinery and equipment.
 - **County of Oswego IDA is a designated "non-Traditional lender"** for the USDA Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program
 - **NYS Empire State Development Fund:** Real estate, machinery and equipment and related infrastructure may be financed for eligible projects; no retail.
- CNY Regional Planning and Development Board - Enterprise Development Fund: Real estate, machinery and equipment and working capital may be financed for eligible projects; no retail.
- **Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Program:** OOC can help new and expanding businesses obtain MWBE State designation, as well as other necessary development support City of Fulton Community Development Agency and the City of Oswego also offer loan programs for business projects located in their communities.

Operation Oswego County, Inc.
44 West Bridge Street
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 343-1545

The Minority and Women Revolving Loan Trust Fund Program

The Minority and Women Revolving Loan Trust Fund Program is administered through Empire State Development (ESD) to make low-cost financial assistance available to minority-owned and women-owned businesses that are unable to access traditional financial services. To date, ESDC has capitalized loan pools totaling more than \$3.5 million for 18 community-based economic development organizations located throughout the State. These organizations administer the program at the local level and provide working capital loans of up to \$35,000 and fixed asset loans of up to \$50,000.

To help these businesses survive and grow, the organizations also provide related technical assistance services to minority and women entrepreneurs, such as:

- assistance with completion of loan applications;
- business plan development;
- mentorship and peer group programs; and
- credit union services (where available).

Regional Revolving Loan Trust Fund Program

Empire State Development also created the Regional Revolving Loan Trust Fund through programs that are operated regionally by not-for-profit organizations. This program provides working capital loans and loan guarantees to businesses employing fewer than 100 people. This program offers working capital loans of up to \$75,000 or 50% of the total project cost, whichever is less, and working capital loan guarantees of up to 80% of the loan amount, up to \$80,000. A list of administering corporations is available through the Empire State Development Corporation by visiting its Web site at www.empire.state.ny.us, or by calling 1-800-STATE-NY.

Micro Enterprise Loan Fund

These loans are available to beginning and existing minority and women-owned micro businesses with less than \$100,000 in annual gross revenues. To participate

in this program, businesses must have received, or have been scheduled to receive, business training. The funds may be used for working capital, acquisition of machinery and equipment, revolving lines of credit and seasonal inventory and accounts receivable loans of up to \$7,000.

Source: Small Business Development Corporation

Small Business Incubators

Operation Oswego County manages two incubator buildings with affordable rental space for non-retail, industrial and service businesses to help businesses achieve significant growth and development during the first few years of business with the intention of eventually moving out of the building and into private commercial space.

The Start-up Facility (SUF) in the Oswego County Industrial Park in the town of Schroepfel consists of 10,000 square feet including three receiving docks, and is located immediately off state Route 481, exit 14.

The Business Expansion Center (BEC), located on East Seneca Street in Oswego, is ideal for hi-tech and IT businesses as it was recently wired for computer and telephone network capabilities including 13 offices and two manufacturing spaces. The wiring installation is designed to support 1,000 MBPS (gigabit) in the future if needed. The building also has a receiving dock.

Operation Oswego County, Inc.
44 West Bridge Street
Oswego, NY 13126
Tel: (315) 343-1545
email: oc@oswegocounty.org

SMALL BUSINESS START-UP CHECKLIST

✓ **PERSONAL ASSESSMENT** The first – and most important – thing you should do is a self-evaluation. Knowing your strengths and weaknesses will help you focus on things you do best and where you need improvement.

✓ **WRITING YOUR BUSINESS PLAN** A business plan precisely defines your business, identifies your goals and serves as your business' resume. Basic business plans include a current and projected balance sheet, an income statement and cash flow analysis. It will help you allocate resources properly, handle unforeseen complications and make good general business decisions. Because of the specific financial organization that is included within a business plan, an accurate and exhaustive plan is critical to loan applications.

✓ **KNOW ALL YOUR EXPENSES** You should know all of the on-time and start-up expenses starting a business will endure, as well as the extent of your resources to cover these expenses. Itemize each purchase and research its realistic cost.

✓ **SECURE NECESSARY CAPITAL** This can be in any form, including bank loans, personal savings and family contributions.

✓ **LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS** Determine any legal issues you will need to resolve, including the contracts with vendors and financial institutions and the terms of a lease.

✓ **REGISTERING YOUR BUSINESS** You must decide what type of entity should be set up and register that entity appropriately.

✓ **ESTABLISHING A BUSINESS BANK ACCOUNT** Establish a bank account that is separate from any of your personal accounts. Make sure you have a bank account

that best fulfills your needs, and consider the strength of the bank you use.

✓ **SETTING UP YOUR ACCOUNTING SYSTEM** To determine the success of your business, you must keep records about your sales, inventory, expenses and cash flow. These records help you compare your projected business to your actual results and will be necessary to file taxes at the end of the year.

✓ **ASSESS YOUR REAL ESTATE NEEDS** What type of space do you need? Pay particular attention to the cost of the space compared to similar businesses, as well as the appropriate layout of your business. Make sure you refer to local zoning regulations before you sign a lease.

✓ **IDENTIFY YOUR VENDORS** Identify the companies and organizations that will provide the supplies and services you need to run your business.

✓ **ASSESS YOUR PERSONNEL NEEDS** Identify other positions you will need to fill. Establish job descriptions and qualifications to fill these positions.

✓ **START NETWORKING** Join trade associations and your local Chamber of Commerce to help promote your business and receive advice from other business owners.

✓ **RESEARCH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES** Continue to attend workshops, seminars and counseling services that will help you to fully understand the workings of your business. You will have particular strengths, but you will need to understand every aspect of your business. Hiring advisors such as accountants and attorneys can be a valuable investment in your success.

Source: NYC Business Solutions (www.nyc.gov)