

### About this Guide:

This is a starting point - a way to gauge your progress and identify the next steps for your business. Please take advantage of the contact information provided to ask questions.

These processes and resources are subject to change, and your unique business may require additional steps. It is always a good idea to seek out mentors who have been in your position before. Fees are not included on this brochure but do apply to some of the steps within.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

**Detroit BizGrid**  
[www.DetroitBizGrid.com](http://www.DetroitBizGrid.com)

**Build Institute**  
[www.BuildInstitute.org](http://www.BuildInstitute.org)  
(313) 265-3590

**Motor City Match**  
[www.MotorCityMatch.com](http://www.MotorCityMatch.com)  
(844) 338-4626

**Zoning & BSEED Permit Applications**  
<https://aca-prod.accela.com/DETROIT>

**Building Safety Engineering and Environmental Department**  
[www.DetroitMI.gov/BSEED](http://www.DetroitMI.gov/BSEED)  
(313) 224-2733

DISCLAIMER: The proposed work must be performed under the latest applicable codes and requirements of the City of Detroit and the applicant must take full responsibility for all code compliance, fees and inspections related to the installation/work performed.

## RETAIL & OFFICE SPACE



## Starting Your Own Office or Retail Space

Your guide through the licensing and permitting process in the city of Detroit. If your retail space will serve food, please look for the Restaurant Guide as well.



**Buildings, Safety Engineering & Environmental Department**



**Buildings, Safety Engineering & Environmental Department**





# Step 1

## Do The Research

Before you invest in a property, research city codes and thoroughly investigate whether or not the space meets your needs.

- Create a business plan and research funding opportunities.
- Meet with community groups and local experts.
- Consult a qualified real estate broker for guidance when looking for a location.
- Make sure your proposed use is allowed in your location's zoning district. Check [www.zoning.detroitmi.gov](http://www.zoning.detroitmi.gov). If not, you can petition to change the use.
- Research Landlord and Tenant responsibilities if you plan to lease your space.

**Phone Numbers:**  
**BSEED: (313) 224-0484**  
**Zoning Counter: (313) 224-1317**  
[www.zoning.detroitmi.gov](http://www.zoning.detroitmi.gov)



# Step 2

## Submit Your Plans & Schedule Inspections

Once you've gathered all of the information that you need, it's time to plan and execute any necessary construction.

- Hire an architect or engineer registered as such in the State of Michigan to prepare your building plans.
- [Apply online](#) for any required Zoning Reviews & receive approval to continue to permit applications
- If your business requires construction or renovations, you will need to [apply online](#) for a building permit with BSEED.
- Submit your building plans to BSEED Plan Review and make any necessary changes until you are approved.
- Secure a building permit from BSEED, and then you may start any necessary construction.
- Schedule and pass the required inspections.
- Apply for a Certificate of Occupancy or Certificate of Compliance with BSEED.

**Phone Numbers:**  
**Health Department Food Safety: (313) 876-4000**  
**BSEED Plan Review: (313) 224-3233**  
**BSEED Inspections: (313) 224-3202**



# Step 3

## Get Ready to Open!

Once you've passed the necessary city inspections, you are almost there!

- Complete the Business License Center Checklist and apply for a Business License if necessary.
- Work with other agencies to obtain the necessary licenses as applicable (ex: The Public Works Department if any of your renovations or uses will affect the street or sidewalk).
- Schedule and pass the necessary inspections annually to maintain compliance with city codes.

**Phone Numbers:**  
**Business License Center: (313) 224-3178**  
**Michigan Liquor Control Commission: (866) 813-0011**  
**Public Works Department: (313) 224-3935**