

# **CITY OF HAMTRAMCK COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT GUIDE TO OPENING AND IMPROVING A BUSINESS**



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The guide features key components from each city department to follow the necessary steps regarding operating a business in the city. See table of contents below for guidance on each process. See Key Contact section for direct contact information for each department. **Important:** Refer to the city's website for most recent applications (*Google search may not provide the updated versions of applications*).

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# OPENING A NEW BUSINESS

## Overview

*Below is a quick overview of the steps to open a new business. Note that this is the process for a business that does not require a site plan review. The following pages explain these steps with more detail. For contact information of each department, see the contact sheet at the end of this guide. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact the Community and Economic Development (CED) Department.*

1. Find a site for lease or purchase. Do your own research to understand where there are vacancies in the city. Feel free to reach out to the CED team to see if they know of any vacancies.
2. Receive zoning approval with the CED team if your potential business location complies with the zoning ordinance. A zoning ordinance regulates business activities by location. The location of your business must allow for your business activities.
3. Determine if any additional planning or zoning review is required. Site plan reviews are required if you are demolishing a building, constructing, or structurally altering a building, or changing the previous business use of the building. Façade review is required if you are changing the frontage of a commercial building. Contact CED Department.
4. Apply for a Certificate of Occupancy (C of O) with the Building Department. A C of O is a certificate that indicates a building meets all city codes and is safe to occupy. Whenever a business changes ownership or changes business activity, a C of O is required.
5. If you are adding a new sign on your building, fill out a Sign Permit Application.

6. Apply for a Business License with the City Clerk. In order to submit a complete application, you will need to:

- a. Register your Tax ID with the State of Michigan: <https://www.michigan.gov/taxes>.
- b. Register your business name with the Wayne County Clerk: <https://www.waynecounty.com/elected/clerk/assumed-names.aspx>.

7. Visit the Office of Treasury to find out if you owe money in personal or real property taxes. If applicable, pay your debt.

8. Visit the Office of Income Tax to see if you owe money in income taxes. If applicable, pay your debt. Fill out an Income Tax application for your business.

9. Receive formal zoning approval regarding your Certificate of Occupancy from the Building Department.

10. Schedule the first round of inspections with the Building Department. There are five different inspections: building, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, and fire. Building Department coordinates with the Fire Department to schedule fire inspections.

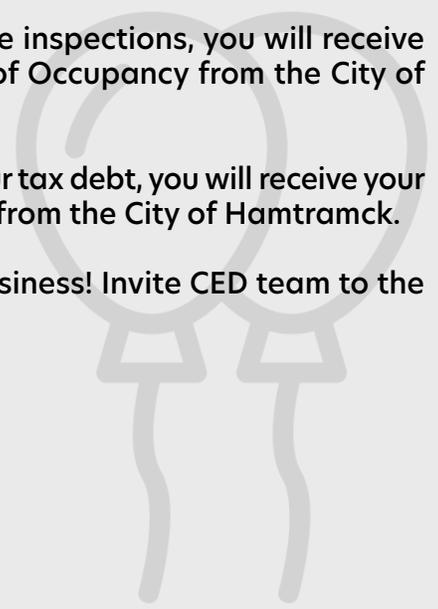
11. Address any concerns from the Building and Fire Department during your first round of inspections. You may need a work permit to address these concerns. Contact the Building Department.

12. Schedule your second round of inspections by contacting the Building Department.

13. If you pass the inspections, you will receive your Certificate of Occupancy from the City of Hamtramck.

14. If you paid your tax debt, you will receive your business license from the City of Hamtramck.

15. Open your business! Invite CED team to the grand opening.



# Community and Economic Development Department

*Below are questions that the CED Department can help you answer. If you need further assistance or clarification, refer to the Key Contacts Table.*

## *What kind of business can I open?*

Like most cities, Hamtramck has a Zoning Ordinance that describes what types of businesses can operate within city limits and where. The city is divided into several zones, with certain types of businesses allowed or prohibited in each.

Check out the zoning map at this link to find out what zoning district your business is in: <https://hamtramck.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Zoning-Map.pdf>. Confirm the zoning of your business and allowed uses with the CED team before moving forward.

It is wise to verify that your planned business is suitable for your chosen location before getting too far along in the process; contact the CED Department for more information.

## *Do I need a Site Plan?*

In every district, site plan review is required whenever a structure is demolished erected, converted to other use or structurally altered. Special land uses also require site plans. The zoning ordinance outlines what is needed in a site plan.

If you are changing the facade on a building within the Central Business District, you must turn in a Façade Improvement Review Application and get approval from Plan Commission.

## *So, when can I open?*

You can open your business once you have received your Certificate of Occupancy, business license, and all other county or state approvals.

The Community and Economic Development Department is here to help you along the path to opening your new business! Every small business in Hamtramck is important and we want to help you be successful.

# Building Department

*Below are questions that the Building Department can help you answer. If you need further assistance or clarification, please refer to the Key Contacts Table.*

## *Do I need a Building Permit?*

Before beginning any project that alters your building or property, assume that you need a permit. A few examples of when building permits are needed, building, electrical, and plumbing projects. Any changes to the outside of a building, including signs, also require approval. Contact the Building Department to find out what permits are needed.

Certain types of businesses require additional permits from the state of Michigan or Wayne County. It is your responsibility as the business owner to complete the appropriate process.

## *What is a Certificate of Occupancy?*

A Certificate of Occupancy is a permit that allows you to open your building for business. You must apply for a new "C of O" when you open a new business or if your business changes name or location. The Certificate of Occupancy is issued by the Building Department once all final building, plumbing, electrical, mechanical, and fire safety inspections have been successfully passed.

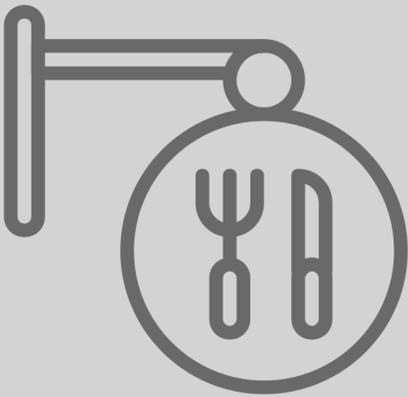
## *Do I need to have my business inspected?*

Yes, most new businesses will need certain inspections before they can receive a Certificate of Occupancy. Once you have secured a location for your business, your contractor must secure all necessary permits for work that is being done on the building. Your facility must pass building, plumbing, electrical, and fire safety inspections in order to qualify for a C of O.

If you wish to schedule an inspection, apply for a permit, or have questions about the process, please refer to the Key Contacts Table.

### *Can I install a sign?*

Signs are regulated by the Zoning Ordinance and permitted through the Building Department. Find the sign application in the appendix and reach out to the Building Departments for questions about the requirements and process at <https://hamtramck.us/building/> or by visiting their counter at city hall.



## Office of the Clerk

*Below are the questions that the City Clerk can help you answer. If you need further assistance or clarification, please refer to the Key Contacts table.*

### *Where do I need to register my business?*

Before your business can open, you will need to ensure you have properly registered your business with the correct levels of government.

#### **Municipal**

You must apply for a business license from the City of Hamtramck. This is done via the City Clerk. See the next section for more information.

Certain businesses will require additional applications, state licenses (see the next section for this list), or background checks. Businesses that need to fill out an additional application with the city include home-based businesses, rental properties, and street vendors. It is your responsibility as the owner of the business to complete the appropriate process at the state or county level.

#### **County**

You must register your business's name with the Wayne County Clerk. Visit <https://www.waynecounty.com/elected/clerk/assumed-names.aspx> for more information.

#### **State**

You must apply for a Tax ID number from the State of Michigan. Visit <https://www.michigan.gov/taxes> for more information and to apply.

#### **Federal**

You will likely need to apply for an EIN (Employer Identification Number) from the IRS. Visit <https://sa.www4.irs.gov/modiein/individual/index.jsp> to learn more, determine whether you need an EIN, and apply. Not all businesses need an EIN, so check the IRS website to find out whether you will need one.

### *Where and how do I get a business license?*

Business licenses are issued by the City Clerk's Office. The application is available on the City of Hamtramck website, by contacting or visiting the City Clerk's Office, or in the appendix.

When you have completed the application, return it to the Clerk's Office by mail or in person. Once the Clerk has received your application, the City of Hamtramck will begin to process your application. The City will confirm that you do not owe any unpaid personal back taxes, property taxes, or personal property taxes. If you do have unpaid back taxes as listed, you will be asked to pay them before your new business license application can be approved.

Certain businesses will require additional applications, state licenses (see the next section for this list), or background checks. Businesses that need to fill out an additional application with the city include home-based businesses, rental properties, and street vendors. It is your responsibility as the owner of the business to complete the appropriate process at the state or county level.

## Income Tax

*Below are questions that Income Tax Department can help you answer. If you need further assistance or clarification, please refer to the Key Contacts Table.*

### *Do I need to pay income taxes?*

All Hamtramck business owners are subject to income tax on their business earnings and must file a City of Hamtramck Corporation, Partnership, or H1040 with Federal Schedule C tax return yearly. You must also file your City of Hamtramck individual income tax return yearly. All Hamtramck business owners with one or more employees are required to withhold taxes from their employee's paychecks and forward the payment to the Hamtramck Treasurer. Hamtramck residents pay 1% and non-resident employees who work in Hamtramck pay 0.5%.

### *Where do I file and pay my income taxes?*

#### **OPTION 1**

Income tax returns and payments (Check or money order only) can be sent to:

The City of Hamtramck - Income Tax

*P.O. Box 209  
Eaton Rapids, MI 48827*

#### **OPTION 2**

Put the tax return and/or payment in one of the drop boxes located inside or outside City Hall, 3401 Evaline, Hamtramck, MI 48212. Be sure to include your contact information with your payment and address the envelope to "Income Tax." No stamp is needed. Only check or money orders are accepted.

#### **OPTION 3**

Bring tax return to the Income Tax Department inside of City Hall, 3401 Evaline, Hamtramck, MI 48212. Payments are received at the Treasurer's window.



## How do I set up income tax accounts?

**First**, fill out and send in the H-SS-4 Hamtramck New Business/Withholding Registration Form. There are instructions included as to where to send after filling this out. Filling out and returning this form will initiate the set up the business tax account and the withholding tax account based on the Business Tax ID # with the City.

**Next**, follow the instructions with the H-941/501 for payroll withholder. After reading the instructions, determine whether you need to send payments on the H-941 quarterly or H-941 monthly withholding schedule vouchers.

All of these forms are located on the City's website under *Income Tax department*. They all include where and when to send the payments.

**Last**, determine whether your business is a corporation, partnership, or other and then view the forms for filing on the City's website under Income Tax Department so that you are prepared to file each year by April 30th.

## Assessor

*Below are questions that the CED Department can help you answer. If you have any questions, please refer to the Key Contacts Table.*

### *Do I need to pay property taxes?*

Business owners who own their building will pay Real Property taxes. Required taxes may also include personal property tax. An exemption from the personal property tax is available for small businesses with less than \$80,000 of personal property; exemption from this tax requires the owner to file an exemption affidavit with the City Assessor's office before February. It is only necessary to file once.

Property taxes can be paid at the Treasurer's window, the DivDat kiosk at the entrance to city hall, or via DivDat at Hamtramck.us or <https://tinyurl.com/HamtramckDivDat>. Your mortgage company may also allow you to pay with an escrow account.

## Notes



# MAINTAINING A BUSINESS

## Overview

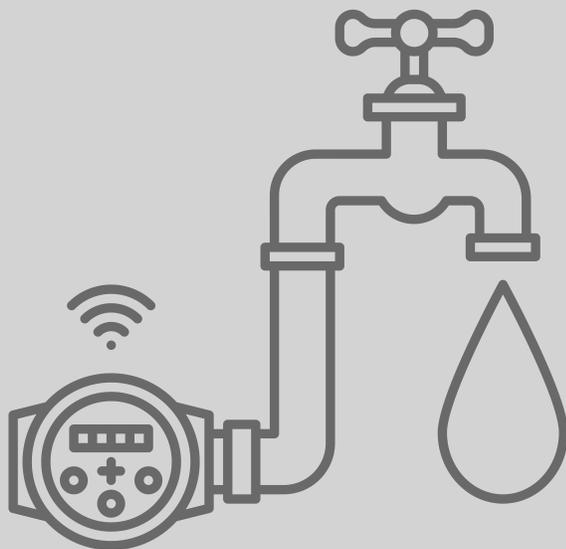
Steps to maintaining a business may vary with individual situations. This section highlights all of the information that city departments can help with maintaining a business!

## Department of Public Services

Below are questions that the Department of Public Services can help you answer. If you need further assistance or clarification, please refer to the Key Contacts Table.

### How do I pay for water and sewer?

Utility bills are sent to the property owner. If you're the property owner, you can pay your bill at the Treasurer's window, the DivDat kiosk at the entrance to city hall and many other locations in metro Detroit, on the city website, by placing payment in the drop box outside City Hall, or by mailing payment to City Hall - City of Hamtramck Treasurer, 3401 Evaline, Hamtramck, MI 48212. If you are not the property owner, talk to your landlord about who is responsible for the bill.



## Trash and Recycling Collection Services

Below are questions and answers regarding trash and recycling collection services.

### Who picks up my trash?

Business owners are required to have a dumpster or garbage can and need to set up their own service agreement with a trash company. Priority Waste is a local company in Hamtramck that can provide this service for a fee. Their number is (586) 228-1200. You may also choose another contractor.

### How can I get a dumpster?

Dumpsters may be rented from Priority Waste or a company of your choosing. Visit their website ([prioritywaste.com](https://prioritywaste.com)) or call (586)228-1200 for more information. Business owners may also purchase their own dumpster. Check with the building department to see whether your dumpster requires a permit by visiting <https://hamtramck.us/building/> or refer to the Key Contacts Table.

### What can I do with bulk trash items?

Priority Waste offers the option to drop off bulk items at 3900 Christopher St. On Saturdays. Bulk items include, but are not limited to, items such as fixtures and furniture, household appliances, storm doors and windows, toilets and sinks.

### What are recycling services?

Priority Waste provides free recycling drop-off of plastic water bottles, cardboard and paper at 3900 Christopher St. 24/7.



## Fire Department

*Below are questions that the Fire Department can help you answer. If you need further assistance or clarification, please refer to the Key Contacts Table for Fire Department information.*

*When are fire inspections conducted and what is needed?*

The city of Hamtramck conducts fire inspections yearly. A fire inspection is added when an annual occupancy inspection is scheduled with the building department.

## Office of City Clerk

*Below are questions that the City Clerk can help you answer. If you need further assistance or clarification, please refer to the Key Contacts Table for the Office of City Clerk contact information.*

*How do I keep my business license updated?*

Business licenses must be renewed every year by April 30. The Clerk's office sends out renewal paperwork each spring, which must be returned to their office by April 30. Failure to renew may result in a ticket being issued to the business owner.

## Community and Economic Development

*Below are questions that the CED Department can help you answer. If you need further assistance or clarification, please refer to the Key Contacts Table for CED information .*

*Am I in the Downtown Development Authority?*

The Hamtramck Downtown Development Authority district includes all of Joseph Campau, as well as a few properties across each side of the alley from Joseph Campau on the side streets. DDA businesses pay a slightly higher tax rate but are eligible for benefits like the Sign and Façade Improvement Grant. Contact the DDA manager by visiting <https://hamtramck.us/dda/> or calling (313) 800-5233 ext. 818 to set up an appointment to learn more. The DDA Board meets the third Wednesday of each month at 6:05pm, at City Hall or via zoom during the pandemic.

## Code Enforcement Department

*Below are questions that the Office of Code Enforcement can help you answer. For questions about tickets or how to keep your property up to code, refer to the Key Contacts Table for department contact information. The ordinance is available at this link: <https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/hamtramck/latest/overview>.*

*Why do I keep getting tickets?*

Hamtramck has a code of ordinances that regulates the standards for properties. When property owners violate this code (i.e. not shovelling the snow, letting weeds grow uncontrollably, building disrepair) they receive a ticket.

*Can I receive a visual aide of these regulations?*

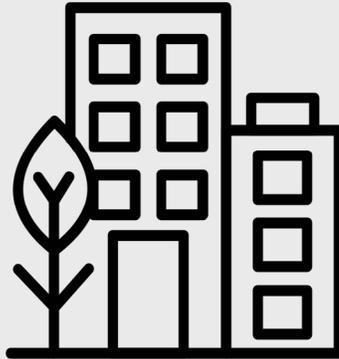
Yes, see below!



# Code Enforcement Continued

## HELP PRESERVE OUR BUILDINGS!

IF YOU SEE GRAFITTI OR DAMAGED PROPERTY, FILE A REPORT AT 313.800.5281 EXT.50.



## KEEP HAMTRACK BEAUTIFUL!

KEEP SIDEWALKS, ALLEYWAYS & LAWNS FREE OF TRASH, WEEDS AND VEGETATION.



To volunteer for clean-ups, join our Beautification Commission by e-mail [rquerro@hamtramckcity.com](mailto:rquerro@hamtramckcity.com)

## KEEP HAMTRAMCK SAFE THIS WINTER!

FOR EVERYONE'S SAFETY, MAKE SURE YOUR SNOW AND ICE ARE REMOVED FROM SIDEWALKS WITHIN 12 HOURS OF SNOWFALL.



# IMPROVING AND EXPANDING A BUSINESS

## Overview

*The sections below highlight all the information that the city is here to help you when improving and expanding a business in Hamtramck!*

## Building Department

*Below are questions that the Building Department can help you answer. If you need further assistance or clarification, please refer to the Key Contacts Table.*

### *What do I need permits for?*

Before beginning any project that alters your building or property, assume that you need a permit. Permits are needed for building, electrical, and plumbing projects. Any changes to the outside of a building, including signs, also require approval. Contact the Building Department to find out what permits are needed.

### *What do I need inspections for?*

Inspections are needed whenever a permit is pulled or a business applies for a certificate of occupancy. You will need to call the building department to schedule inspections as work progresses.

### *When do I need a new certificate of occupancy?*

Certificate of occupancy are needed when a new business opens when there is a transfer of business ownership, when there is a transfer of property of ownership and when there is a location change.

### *How often do I need new permits?*

You need new permits whenever an existing permit is closed out by the building department. A permit is closed when a final inspection is passed or no work has been done on the project for six months. Contact the Building Department for questions.

## Community and Economic Development Department

Below are questions that the CED Department can help you answer. If you need further assistance or clarification, please refer to the Key Contacts Table.

### *Does my expansion project need a site plan?*

In every district, site plan review is required whenever a structure is demolished, erected, converted to other use or structurally altered. The zoning ordinance outlines what is needed in a site plan and you can also contact the CED department for details.

If you are changing the façade of a building within the central business district, you must turn in a Façade Improvement Review Application and get approval from the Plan Commission.

## THANK YOU!

**That's it for the overview of how to open, maintain and expand your business in the city of Hamtramck! If you have any more questions, reach out to the Community and Economic Development Department!**

# KEY CONTACTS

Department	Topics	Phone	Email	Website
<b>Community and Economic Development</b>	Business support, planning and zoning, economic development incentives,	313.800.5233 ext. 326	ced@hamtramckcity.com	<a href="https://hamtramck.us/community-and-economic-development-ced/">https://hamtramck.us/community-and-economic-development-ced/</a>
<b>Building Department</b>	Permits Registration Signage	313.800.5233 ext. 814	building@hamtramckcity.com	<a href="https://hamtramck.us/building/">https://hamtramck.us/building/</a>
<b>Office of the City Clerk</b>	Licensing Applications Fee Schedule	313.800.5233 ext. 821	rfaraj@hamtramckcity.com	<a href="https://hamtramck.us/clerk/">https://hamtramck.us/clerk/</a>
<b>Income Tax Department</b>	Taxes Tax Forms Payroll	313.800.5233 ext. 363	incometax@hamtramckcity.com	<a href="https://hamtramck.us/income-tax/">https://hamtramck.us/income-tax/</a>
<b>Office of the Assessor</b>	Tax Assessing Exemptions Property changes	313.800.5233 ext. 319	assessing@hamtramckcity.com	<a href="https://hamtramck.us/assessor/">https://hamtramck.us/assessor/</a>
<b>Code Enforcement Department</b>	Regulations Codes Tickets Fees	313.800.5233 ext. 813	code@hamtramckcity.com	<a href="https://hamtramck.us/code-enforcement/">https://hamtramck.us/code-enforcement/</a>
<b>Office of the City Manager</b>	City Affairs Inquiries	313.800.5233 ext. 361	kangerer@hamtramckcity.com	<a href="https://hamtramck.us/city-manager/">https://hamtramck.us/city-manager/</a>
<b>Department of Public Services</b>	Parking Meters Construction Maintanance	313.800.5233 ext. 306	srahman@hamtramckcity.com	<a href="https://hamtramck.us/public-services/">https://hamtramck.us/public-services/</a>
<b>Fire Department</b>	Inspections Fire Safety	313.305.4503 ext. 824	firemarshal@hamtramckcity.com	<a href="https://hamtramck.us/fire/">https://hamtramck.us/fire/</a>
<b>Department of Public Safety</b>	Parking Tickets Public Safety	313.800.5281 ext. 327	mgarbarino@hamtramckcity.com	<a href="https://hamtramck.us/police/">https://hamtramck.us/police/</a>

## GLOSSARY

### Certificate of Occupancy

A Certificate of Occupancy is issued as required by the Michigan Building Code where a building permit has been issued and completed in compliance with current codes.

### Land Use

Land use is the characterization of land based on what can be built on it and what the land can be used for.

### Zoning

Zoning is a tool that most cities use to govern "uses" (e.g. residential, commercial, or industrial), the size of buildings, and how buildings relate to their surroundings, including other buildings, open spaces, and the street.

### Permitted Uses

Refers to a property owner's use of property and structures in manners consistent that is listed as permissible in the zoning district in which his or her property is located.

### Special Land Uses

Uses that may be permitted within a zoning district subject to special conditions and standards

### Site Plan

An accurately scaled drawing showing the existing conditions on a unit of land, including property lines, and detailing the location of any proposed and existing development, such as structures, paving, and uses of land.

### Façade

All of the external faces of a building.

