

# Business Guide



## How to Start a Business in Hyattsville

July 2015 | Beta

### Thinking of Opening a Business in Hyattsville?

#### Let Us Help You!

This guide is meant to be an overview and reference for business owners looking to re-locate in Hyattsville or potential business owners looking to start a business here. This guide is currently in beta, so please feel free to send any questions, comments, or suggestions to [eisenberg@hyattsvillecdc.org](mailto:eisenberg@hyattsvillecdc.org).

#### Use this **Guide** to:

- Create and register your Business
- Move your Business
- Find a Property to Purchase or to Lease
- Get a quick-and-easy list to register properly with the County and with the City
- Learn of applicable tax incentives, loan providers, and contacts



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## Getting Started: Establishing Your Business

If you are a first time business owner starting a brand new business, your path begins at the federal and state level by registering your business name and obtaining the appropriate tax information.

<p><b>Creating your Business Structure</b></p> <p>If you haven't done so already, establish your business structure in order to apply for the right registration and license. The four most common forms of business structure are <a href="#">sole proprietorship</a>, <a href="#">partnership</a>, <a href="#">corporation</a>, and <a href="#">limited liability company</a> (LLC). <b>Sole proprietorships</b> and <b>general partnerships</b> do not require legal entry formalities other than compliance with state and local licensing requirements. <b>Corporations</b> and <b>LLC's</b> articles of incorporation requirements are located <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	<p><b>Obtaining a Federal Tax ID Number</b></p> <p>Your Employer Identification Number (EIN) may be obtained from the IRS. This number is for tax purposes only. If you have not done so already, you may apply for your EIN online <a href="#">here</a>. You will get your EIN immediately upon completion. For more on how to apply, visit <a href="#">this site</a>.</p> <p><b>Note: You must have an EIN <i>before</i> you can register your business in the State of Maryland.</b></p>
<p><b>Registering Your Business Name</b> <b>DBA = "doing business as"</b></p> <p>If you do not already have an established business name, you may wish to register a <b>trade name</b> with the State Department of Assessments and Taxation. The form is available for download <a href="#">here</a> with three mail-in options of a non-expedited fee (\$25) and an optional expedited fee (\$50). The non-expedited fee can take up to 3 months to be processed. To view existing trade names and determine which names are still available, use the <a href="#">business data search section</a> of the website.</p>	<p><b>Registering for State and Local Taxes</b></p> <p>New Business registration can be completed online from the <a href="#">Comptroller's website</a>. However, paper versions must be submitted if you are applying for alcohol, tax, motor fuel license, or any sales tax exemption.</p>
<p><b>MBE &amp; DBE Certification</b></p> <p>MBE = Minority Business Enterprise DBE = Disadvantaged Business Enterprise</p> <p>To become a certified MBE or DBE, visit the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Office of Minority Business Enterprise (OMBE). Eligibility standards are located online <a href="#">here</a> and application forms are located online <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	<p><b>Obtaining a Maryland Business License</b></p> <p>Applications for a Maryland Business license may be obtained from the Clerk of the Circuit Court in Prince George's County. Essentially, any business that sells a product needs a business license. For more information, visit <a href="#">Maryland Business Licenses Online</a>. You may be able to <a href="#">apply for an license online</a> depending on your business qualifications. For state info, use the <a href="#">BLIS system</a>.</p>

## Section 2: Understanding Property & Zoning Requirements

Understanding the zoning regulations tied to your property can ease the entire application process.

### Finding a Property

The following are resources you can use to find commercial real estate in and near the City of Hyattsville. Please note that some listings may be listed as “Hyattsville” due to a shared zip code, but may not be in the City of Hyattsville borders, but in a nearby area:

- First, ask the Hyattsville CDC – We keep an in-house **Vacant Commercial Property Database** for on-the-ground property and business owner information. We also have a **MRIS Subscription**.
- [Showcase.com](#) – powered by CoStar Group, Showcase.com is an analytics, marketing, and information service provider for the commercial real estate industry.
- [Loopnet.com](#) – a comprehensive resource with over 800,000 property listing.
- [NAI Michael](#) – provides Hyattsville commercial property listings.
- [Restaurant Brokers and Developers, Inc.](#) – a resource specifically for restaurant owners.

There are also property listings specifically targeted for the [Gateway Arts District](#).

### Zoning

Once you’ve found your property, make sure the type of business fits the zoning regulations. **Zoning regulations** determine the types of design and allowable uses within a designated area.

A simple definition of **traditional zoning** is zoning that accounts for residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, and agricultural uses. Zoning and the uses associated with it are laid out in area plans.

**Overlay zones** are superimposed over existing zoning classifications in a designated area and are used to modify certain requirements of the underlying zones. Generally, an overlay zone is less restrictive in order to encourage development. **While traditional zoning still exists underneath, the overlay zone determines allowable uses.**

Property in the City of Hyattsville falls under **three main overlay zone plans**:

1. [The Gateway Arts District Approved Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment](#);
2. [The Prince George’s Plaza Transit District Development Plan](#) (currently being updated); and
3. [The West Hyattsville Approved Transit District Development Plan for the Transit District Overlay Zone](#).

Any property not located within these overlay zones is under regular zoning, which can be determined using PGAtlas.

### Resources

The following resources provide further information on zoning, zoning categories, and where to find use tables:

- Prince George’s County Planning Department [Guide to Zoning Categories](#)
- Instructions on accessing [Zoning Ordinance and Use Tables](#)

## Section 3: Permits & Inspections

As described below, there are two offices that review permits and inspections.

- 1) Prince George's County: [Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement \(DPIE\)](#)
- 2) Then, the City of Hyattsville

The next two pages contain more information on each.

Note, that all permit requests are reported to the City. While the City licenses businesses within the City of Hyattsville, and views fence permit applications and driveway permit applications, **there is no City-based "Permits Office."**

**Building Permits for Hyattsville are strictly a County-regulated function. Just as Zoning is strictly a Park & Planning (M-NCPPC) regulated function.**

### *Is The Property Going to be Developed?*

If so, when a **development plan** is filed within any of our three Development District Overlay Zones, such as a Conceptual Site Plan in either of the two Transit Districts, or a Detailed Site Plan in the Gateway Arts District (where your property is subject to the requirements of the **Gateway Arts District Development District Standards**), the plan is referred statutorily to the City by Park & Planning (M-NCPPC) for comment. If a departure from the "**Development District Standards**" is sought by the applicant, the City's input and position may have significant weight in determining the outcome of the development review.

## Prince George's County: DPIE

### Use & Occupancy

A Certificate of Occupancy (or Use of Occupancy Permit) is now issued by the [Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement](#) (DPIE). A U&O is required when a change of tenant or use occurs at a business property and construction is not required. **Please note that every building and tenant in Prince George's County (with the exception of the City of Laurel) is required to Use & Occupancy permit issued by the County before business operation may begin. Even if you have a U&O from another city, you will need to reapply for Hyattsville.** In cases where a County Business License is required, businesses must obtain a U&O prior to obtaining a business license.

### Use & Occupancy Permit – No Construction

The following items are required for a U&O permit, when no construction is taking place:

- [Property Tax ID Number](#) (which is your Federal EIN)
- Two (2) Site/Plot Plans showing Lot, Building, and Parking

### Use & Occupancy Permit – Temporary

The following items are required for a Temporary U&O:

- Property Tax ID Number
- Two (2) Site Plans
- One (1) Letter from Owner

Site/Plot plans may be obtained from the property owner. If your owner does not have one, legitimate site plans can be obtained by hiring a draftsman (architect/engineer/interior designer).

### Use & Occupancy Inspections

Site inspections can be scheduled via [phone](#) or [online](#).

For your inspection, have your U&O permit package on site and ensure the following:

- Site is in compliance with the site plan
- All equipment is operational and functions properly
- All doors, lights, life safety items, fire extinguishers etc. are in working order
- Remove all debris/trash

### How To Fill Out a U&O

The Use & Occupancy permit is accessible online under the [Permit Application Form](#). Required fields to fill out include, but are not limited to: *property description, work description, owner information and type of permit applied for*. To find site information, you will need to check your property on two other sites – [SDAT](#) and [PGAtlas](#).

The State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT), has a property database you can search using the [Real Property Database Search](#) function. This will provide you with your Lot, Block, Parcel, Grid, Subdivision, and Plat information.

[PGAtlas](#), the County's online mapping system, allows you to search for a property by address or tax number. Here, you can find the Liber, Folio and Zone Code (which corresponds to County Use code in SDAT).

## Walk-throughs

The walk-through permit process is available for the following types of permits:

- **Commercial Tenant Permits** with the accompanying Use and Occupancy Permit, when required; may be limited to the size and type of construction
- Applications for Use and Occupancy Permits **without construction**; this procedure does not apply to buildings erected prior to 1971, properties serviced by private well and septic, or buildings with changes to the proposed use of the original building
- Building Sign Permits
- Fire sprinkler site releases

Properties located in the [Chesapeake Bay Critical Area](#), Historic Sites, and applications determined by any reviewing agency to be inappropriate for the walk-thru process must go through the regular review process.

## City of Hyattsville

### City of Hyattsville Business License

All businesses within the city limits of Hyattsville must fill out a Hyattsville Business License for approval. The form is available for online download [here](#). To apply, you must already have obtained:

1. Use & Occupancy Permit – for questions, call Prince George’s County Permits @ (301) 833-6043
2. [State Trader’s License Number](#) – for questions, call License Bureau of the Comptroller’s Office @ (410) 260-6240
3. MD Business Personal Property/Department Tax ID Number (your Federal EIN) – for questions, call MD Department of Taxation @ (410) 767-1350

### City Business Inspections

After submitting a City Business License application, the Department of Code Enforcement will assign an Inspector to conduct an initial inspection. Additionally, the Department conducts periodic inspections of all businesses located in Hyattsville. If your property does not pass the initial inspection, you will be given a violation notice which identifies all deficiencies, the required corrections, and the date they must be corrected by. **Please note that this notice will be issued to the property owner, but business owners may request a copy of the notice by calling 301-985-5014.**

Click on the following links to learn more about:

- [Business Inspections](#)
- [Business Inspections Checklist](#)
- [Procedure](#), if a violation is found on the premises
- Download the [Commercial Code Compliance Brochure](#) to learn about the City’s property management, public presentation, interiors, exteriors, etc.

## Section 4: Tax Incentives

### Arts & Entertainment District Tax Incentives

Certified arts and entertainment (A&E) businesses (businesses dedicated to the visual and/or performing arts as defined by the State of Maryland) may earn tax abatements for improvements made to their properties, if those improvements are made for arts-related uses.

A [Property Tax Credit](#) may be granted for the increased assessment due to renovations on a manufacturing, commercial or industrial building that is located in an A&E district and is wholly or partially renovated for use by a qualified residing artist or an A&E enterprise. Use our [Real Property Tax Credit Calculator](#) to help you determine your savings. All businesses in the A&E district will be exempt from the state's **Admission and Amusement tax**.

Artists who live and sell their work in any A&E district can claim a tax subtraction for income derived from the sale, publication, production or performance of an artistic work that is created and sold in any A&E district.

### Maryland Business Tax Credits

Maryland businesses can take advantage of multiple types of tax credits, including [Enterprise Zone Tax Credit](#), [Sustainable Community Tax Credit](#), and [Green Building Tax Credit](#). The full list and description of all credits can be found online on the [Comptroller's website](#).

### Prince George's County: Enterprise Zone Tax Credit

An **Enterprise Zone** is an area of a county, city or town in which state and local incentives and assistance are offered to encourage the expansion of existing businesses and the attraction of new business activity and jobs. The county's Enterprise Zone Program is administered by the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation. The Prince George's County Enterprise Zone, encompasses approximately 6,625 acres of commercial property. Learn more about the Enterprise Zone program and download the application form [here](#).

#### To find out whether your property is in the enterprise zone, take the following steps:

1. Go to [PGAtlas](#)
2. Click on "Advanced Mapping"
3. On the upper right hand side of the screen, select the "Map Layers" function (farthest right option)
4. Under the Administrative layer, select Enterprise Zone
5. Use the binoculars to Search by Address for your property
6. Your property will appear under the search bar on the left side. Click the magnifying glass to view property on map. If it is overlaid with green stripes, your property is in an Enterprise Zone.

## Prince George's County: Revitalization Tax Credit

Revitalization/Redevelopment tax credits encourage redevelopment and investment in inner-beltway communities of Prince George's County. The credits are available in all census tracts inside the Beltway where the median household income does not exceed the County's median. Eligible improvements to real property located within these districts shall be allowed a tax credit on County real property taxes. Eligible improvements include:

- construction, reconstruction, or extension of non-residential structures;
- reconstruction or extension of existing residential structures;
- construction or reconstruction of new single-family residential structures that are built on lots on which a residential structure has been razed or demolished within the prior five years, or on vacant lots between adjacent lots with single-family residential structures;
- new construction in developments of less than ten one-family dwellings;
- new construction in developments of ten or more one-family dwellings, or new multi-family units, may be eligible for the tax credit upon resolution of the County Council.

Learn more about the Revitalization Tax Credit program and whether or not you qualify [here](#). The application process is currently under development and will be available soon. In the meantime, contact Tina Schaeffer at the Office of Finance at **(301) 952-5833**.

For information about taxes in Prince George's County, please [visit their site](#).

For information about taxes in the State of Maryland, please visit the [website of the Comptroller](#).

## Section 5: Loans & Working Capital

There are a variety of small business loans and grants available to help you get started, in addition to using your credit union or bank. (If you need more information on lenders and how to get funding, please contact CDC staff directly at (301) 683-8267.

### Prince George's County

#### FSC First

[FSC](#) is a certified microlender in Prince George's County. They disperse funding from many State programs, so while you would fill out an application with the State, chances are you may end up working with one of their officers.

### State of Maryland

#### Neighborhood Businessworks

This [loan program](#) provides gap financing, i.e subordinate financing, to new or expanding small businesses and nonprofit organizations in Sustainable Communities throughout the State (of which Hyattsville is one). Loans are up to \$500,000 or 50% of the total project cost, whichever is less.

#### Microenterprise Loan Program

Run by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), [this program](#) is designed to provide entrepreneurs with flexible financing for microenterprise start-ups and expenses within designated Sustainable Communities. DHCD partners with community-based microlenders to execute the program (re: FSC First). There are some restrictions based on size and annual revenue.

To see a list of more programs from DHCD, follow [this link](#).

#### Maryland Capital Access Program

[MCAP](#) is a credit enhancement program supporting small businesses that enables private lenders to establish a loan loss reserve fund from fees paid by lenders, borrows, and the State of Maryland. Businesses must be located within a Priority Funding Area to be eligible.

#### Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority

The [MSBDF](#) is a lending program for businesses who are unable to obtain adequate business financing on reasonable terms through normal financing channels. The program supports working capital, supplies and materials, machinery and equipment purchases, land acquisition, and real estate improvements.

#### SBA 7(a)

The [7\(a\) Loan Program](#), the General Small Business Loan, is the most common loan program offered by the U.S. Small Business Administration.

## SBA 504

The [Certified Development Company/504 Loan program](#) provides financing for major fixed assets such as equipment or real estate. For more information on finding small business loans, use the [SBA's Loans and Grants Search tool](#).

These are a few of the types of loans that are available to you, but make sure to do your own research as well!

Additionally, make sure to calculate how much your monthly loan payment will be in order to determine how much debt you can take on. For a simple calculation, use this [online loan calculator](#).

## Other Lending Institutions

### Washington Area Community Investment Fund

WACIF is a certified SBA microlender and technical assistance provider to entire DC metropolitan region. To apply, you need to fill out an intake form.

### Local Banks

Most banks also offer their own line of small business loans and business lines of credit. Banks located near/in Hyattsville include:

**Wells Fargo** – 6325 Baltimore Avenue, Riverdale MD 20737

**PNC Bank** – 3521 East-West Highway, Hyattsville MD 20782 (inside Giant)

**Capital One** – 6400 Belcrest Road, The Mall at Prince George's, Hyattsville MD 20782

**BB&T** – 3400 East-West Highway, Hyattsville MD 20781

**Bank of America** – 5416 Queens Chapel Road, Hyattsville MD 20782

## Section 6: Resources

<p><b>Maryland Small Business Development Center</b>  Capital Region Office  7100 Baltimore Ave, #402  College Park, MD 20740  (301) 403-0501  <a href="#">Website</a></p> <p>Provides a wide variety of services, including classes and one-on-one counseling. Many services are free.</p>	<p><b>Neighborhood Business Development Program</b>  100 Community Place  Crownsville, MD 21320  (410) 209-5800  <a href="#">Website</a></p> <p>Provides gap financing for new or expanding businesses for a wide range of needs, including real estate acquisition and working capital. (From home page, click Programs, then Small Business Assistance).</p>	<p><b>Prince George’s Chamber of Commerce</b>  4640 Forbes Boulevard, Suite 130  Lanham, MD 20706  (301) 731-5000  <a href="#">Website</a></p> <p>Membership consists of Prince George’s County businesses.</p>
<p><b>Baltimore-Washington Corridor Chamber of Commerce</b>  312 Marshall Avenue, Suite 104  Laurel, MD 20707  (301) 725-4000  <a href="#">Website</a></p> <p>Covering Prince George’s, Montgomery, Howard, and Anne Arundel counties as well as Baltimore and Washington, DC.</p>	<p><b>Washington Area Community Investment Fund</b>  2012 Rhode Island Ave, NE  Washington, DC 20018  4102 Webster Street  North Brentwood, MD 20712  (202) 529-5505  <a href="#">Website</a></p> <p>WACIF provides small business counseling, seminars, and is a certified SBA microlender to DC, Northern VA, and MD.</p>	<p><b>Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development</b>  401 E. Pratt Street  Baltimore, MD 21202  (410) 767-6300  <a href="#">Website</a></p> <p>Provides specialized financing and incentive resources for small businesses, veteran-owned businesses, minority and women-owned businesses.</p>
<p><b>FSC FIRST</b>  1801 McCormick Drive  Suite 300  Largo, MD 20774  (301) 883-6900  <a href="http://fscfirst.com/">http://fscfirst.com/</a></p> <p>A non-profit that provides small and minority-owned businesses access to capital and financing solutions.</p>	<p><b>Maryland Women’s Business Center</b>  Bowie Business Innovation Center  14000 Jericho Park Road  Bowie, MD 20850  (301) 383-1550 x104  Email: <a href="mailto:info@marylandwbc.org">info@marylandwbc.org</a>  <a href="http://www.marylandwbc.org/">http://www.marylandwbc.org/</a></p> <p>Helps women and men throughout the community start and grow successful women-owned enterprises through training, resources, access to funding, and individual assistance.</p>	<p><b>Microenterprise Council of Maryland</b>  100 Community Place  Crownsville, MD 21320  (410) 514-7776  <a href="http://emicromaryland.com">http://emicromaryland.com</a></p> <p>MCM is a nonprofit network that provides direct services and support to people starting microenterprises with five or fewer employees.</p>

## Section 7: Contacts

### State Department of Assessments and Taxation

301 West Preston St  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
(410) 767-1340

[Website](#)

### Clerk of the Circuit Court

Circuit Court Annex  
14701 Governor Oden Bowie  
Drive  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772  
Phone: (301) 952-3331

[Website](#)

### Mailing Address:

Clerk of the Circuit Court  
Courthouse, 14735 Main St  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

### Comptroller of Maryland, Central Registration Unit

301 West Preston Street  
Baltimore, MD, 21201  
Phone: (410) 260-7980 from the  
Baltimore area  
1 (800) 638-2937 from  
elsewhere in Maryland

[Website](#)

### Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation

500 N. Calvert Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
(410) 230-6000

[Website](#)

### Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)

Office of Minority Business  
Enterprise  
7201 Corporate Center Drive  
Hanover, MD 21076  
(410) 865-1269

[mbe@mdot.state.md.us](mailto:mbe@mdot.state.md.us)

[Website](#)

### Maryland DHCD: Neighborhood Revitalization

100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032  
Phone: (410) 514-7237  
Michael Haloskey  
Director, Business Lending  
Programs

[Haloskey@mdhousing.org](mailto:Haloskey@mdhousing.org)

[Website](#)

### M-NCPPC Prince George's County Planning Department

14741 Governor Oden Bowie  
Drive  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772  
(301) 952-3594

[info@ppd.mncppc.org](mailto:info@ppd.mncppc.org)

[Website](#)

### Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation

1100 Mercantile Lane  
Suite 115A  
Largo, MD 20774  
(301) 583-4650

[Website](#)

### Prince George's Department of Permitting, Inspections, and Enforcement (DPIE)

9400 Peppercorn Place, 1st  
Floor

Largo, MD 20774

Main Phone: (301) 636-2000

Permitting & Licensing Division:  
(301) 636-2050

Inspections Division:  
(301) 636-2080

[Website](#)

### City of Hyattsville Department of Code Compliance

Chris Giunta, Senior Code  
Inspector

4310 Gallatin Street  
Hyattsville, MD 20781  
(301) 985-5014

[cgiunta@hyattsville.org](mailto:cgiunta@hyattsville.org)

[Website](#)

### Hyattsville Community Development Corporation

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4312 Hamilton Street  
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[Website](#)