

## Business Start-up Checklist

Before establishing your business in Portland, you should be aware of a variety of Federal, State, and municipal governmental resources that can assist you. The following list can be used as a general reference guide:

- ✓ **Business Advocacy and Assistance:** Contact the **Economic Development Division** in Room 308, City Hall, telephone 874-8683, for comprehensive business assistance programs, services, and financial incentives. This office can also assist you if you're starting a business and need help or business development counseling on how to plan and launch a business, market what you're selling, manage finances, and more.
- ✓ To operate as a **sole proprietorship or partnership**, you must **file a d/b/a ("doing business as")** with the Portland City Clerk's office, Room 203, telephone 874-8557. In order to file, you must show a picture identification.
- ✓ If you wish to **incorporate**, or if you want to determine whether your company name is in use and protected by **trademark, service mark, or incorporation**, contact the Secretary of State's Bureau of Corporations at (207) 624-7736 or online at <http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/corp>.
- ✓ If you will be hiring **employees**, you will need to:
  - ✓ Obtain a **federal employer identification number** from the Internal Revenue Service Office (FORM SS-4, EIN). This can be done online at <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=102767,00.html> or call the toll-free Business and Specialty Tax Line at 1-800- 829-4933.
  - ✓ Register your business for **unemployment tax** by either calling the Maine Department of Labor at 287-3176 or by going online and printing an application at <http://www.maine.gov/labor/unemployment/tax.html> and click on "UI Tax Forms" under "Table of Contents", then click on "Forms for Employers" and then click on "Registration Form."
  - ✓ Obtain **workers' compensation insurance** coverage for your employees. Check with the company that provides you with business insurance. Information regarding the Workers' Compensation Act can be obtained by contacting the Maine Workers' Compensation Commission at (207) 287-3751, or toll free (Maine only) at 1-888-801-9087, or by accessing its website at <http://www.state.me.us/wcb>.
- ✓ To determine whether you need a **state license** or permit to conduct your business, call the State's Business Answers line at 1-800-872-3838 in-state or 1-800-541-5872 out-of-state, or online at <http://www.maine.gov/businessanswers>.
- ✓ To determine whether your business is required to hold a **municipal business license**, please refer to the business license section of the "Doing Business in Portland Guide" online at <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/planning/startgrow.asp> or contact

Business Licensing out of the City Clerk's office at 874-8557.

- ✓ To determine **compliance** with Portland's **Land Use ordinances**, check with Portland's Code Enforcement Division, Room 315, City Hall, 874-8703 or 874-8693. The Land Use Ordinance can be viewed on line at <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/planning/planning.asp> and click on and click on "Codes, Regulations and Ordinances" and then click on "Land Use Code".
- ✓ To apply for a **State of Maine Sales Tax Identification Number** if you plan to sell a taxable product or service, contact the State Bureau of Taxation at (207) 624-9693. You can access the application online at <http://www.state.me.us/revenue/salesuse/homepage.html> and click on "Application for Tax Registration". This application is also used to register for State of Maine income tax withholding.
- ✓ To determine compliance with the **Occupational Safety and Health Act**, contact the Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards, at (207) 624-6400 or online at [http://www.maine.gov/labor/labor\\_stats/publications/charwork/](http://www.maine.gov/labor/labor_stats/publications/charwork/)
- ✓ For information on **real estate** and **personal property tax assessments**, contact the Tax Assessor's office in Room 115, City Hall, telephone 874-8486, or online at <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/assessors/assessors.asp>.
- ✓ For **registration of vehicles**, including special arrangements for fleet registration, contact the Treasury office in Room 102, City Hall, telephone 874-8862, or online at <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/treasury.htm>.
- ✓ During your site selection process, contact the Finance Department, City Hall, telephone 874-8856, to determine any **outstanding taxes or sewer fees on the property**. **Any** outstanding fees **will** affect your ability to obtain any licenses or permits for your business.
- ✓ Contact the Parking Division in Room 20, City Hall, telephone 874-8498, for parking regulations, as well as assistance with your **business parking needs**, or go online at <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/parking/parking.asp>.