



# Food & Beverage Services Small Business Guide

**Please note, this document is to be used only as a guide and a single source of resources list.**

**Official approvals must be obtained by appropriate parties throughout the planning and development process.**

# CREATE YOUR BUSINESS

- Create a plan for the type of food and/or beverage services you would like to open. The [Small Business Centre](#) will be able to assist with any business planning needs.
- When starting a business you will need to choose a legal structure that will suit your business needs (i.e. Not for Profit, Limited Liability Company, Corporation, etc.).
- After confirming your business structure, visit [Service Ontario online](#) or in person to register your business name. You will also need to obtain your Master Business License.
- It is best to identify what permits and licenses you will be required to obtain. [BizPal](#) will be able to help your new business produce a personalized list of business permits and licenses you will need for all levels of government while starting up or growing your business.
- Apply for a Business Number. [The Canada Revenue Agency's Business Registration Online](#) is an online self serve application for registering for a Business Number. The site will also help with other program accounts including, Corporation income tax, GST/HST, and payroll.
- Research the insurance you will need (i.e. employment insurance, workers compensation, etc.). Some of these insurance are required for permits and licenses. Visit [The Canadian Business Network](#) for assistance on business insurance.
- Become familiar with provincial and municipal laws governing food safety. All food and beverage businesses in the Municipality of Lakeshore MUST notify the [Windsor-Essex Health Unit](#) (WECHU) of their intentions to operate. A Public Health Inspector (PHI) from WECHU will review the food and beverage premises regulations with the owner before and during the opening of the business. You will need to arrange a pre-opening inspection with the PHI.
- In order to avoid delays and complications apply for your Liquor License early (if you plan to have alcohol on the premises). Visit [Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario](#) to download your Liquor License application. You can also call 1-800-522-2876.

# PLAN YOUR SPACE

- Submit a [Pre-consultation Request Form](#) to book a pre-consultation for your business prior to confirming any purchase or lease of the business location. This step can save time, money, and disappointment later in the process by knowing all about the location of your future food and beverage services business. You can also reach the [Municipality of Lakeshore's Planning Department](#) by calling 519-728-1975 ext. 276 or in person at 419 Notre Dame Street, Belle River, Ontario, N0R 1A0.
- Locating in a Business Improvement Area? The [Belle River BIA](#) may have programs available for façade improvements, or broken windows that you may be eligible for.
- You may wish to have a licensed professional review your plan before any construction. Please remember cosmetic changes can add time, paperwork, and additional costs, make sure you consider the impact of all changes on your budget and timeline. Make sure you check your kitchen's grease interceptor, or plan to install one. All commercial kitchens **MUST** capture grease from sinks, floor drains, and other fixtures to prevent clogged pipes and sewer backups. For more information on [kitchen grease disposal](#).
- Once being cleared by the planning department in your pre-consultation, move forward with signing a lease or purchasing the space for your new food and beverage business.
- View the [Municipality of Lakeshore's Inspector's Checklist](#) for help with what Building, Fire, and Public Health inspectors are often looking for.
- Speak with the Division Leader of Economic Development and Mobility about the potential for incentives and cost reductions available through the Municipality of Lakeshore. The Division Leader of Economic Development and Mobility can be reached by email at [ecdev@lakeshore.ca](mailto:ecdev@lakeshore.ca) or by phone at 519-728-2700 ext. 250.

# APPLY FOR BUILDING PERMIT

- Construction requirements will be determined by the type of food and/or beverage service you plan to open, as well as the type of food and/or beverage you plan to serve. The [Windsor Essex Health Unit](#) has created a guide and checklist to help with construction needs.
- Cooking on a gas stove or with gas ovens will require a range hood and fire suppression system, consult a Fire Inspector if you are unsure what is needed. Visit the [Municipality of Lakeshore Fire Prevention](#) for more information.
- Submit all completed building permit applications to [building@lakeshore.ca](mailto:building@lakeshore.ca).
- For more information, visit [Building Permits](#) or call 519-728-2818 ext. 1 for additional help.

# BEGIN CONSTRUCTION

- Once all plans are approved your Building Permits will be issued. ***All permits must be displayed at the worksite at all times.***
- Begin Construction. Make yourself aware of [your rights](#) when hiring a contractor to avoid construction overruns.
- Mandatory inspections will be required throughout construction. Your building permit will have a list of required mandatory inspections for the project. Please be aware you are required to book these inspections yourself. If you have hired a contractor make sure they are aware of the requirement to book these inspections to avoid time delays and unexpected charges. You can book an inspection appointment by calling 519-728-2818 ext. 1.
- Will you be installing a sign on the outside of the business, ensure you are complying with the Municipality of Lakeshore's [Sign By-law](#).



A top-down view of a bowl of ice cream. The bowl is filled with a light-colored ice cream base, topped with a generous dollop of white whipped cream. A single bright red cherry with a long red stem is perched on top of the whipped cream. Dark chocolate sauce is drizzled in a decorative pattern over the ice cream. Golden-brown, chunky nuts are scattered throughout the bowl. The bowl is set on a light-colored, marbled surface.

***CONGRATULATIONS!***

Continue to plan ahead to keep things running smoothly.

# REMAINGING OPEN

- Remember to schedule equipment maintenance and renew your licenses and certifications.
- Inspections can happen at any time throughout the year. Be ready for random inspections. Avoid violations that are risky for customers and employees to save you time and money.
- Ensure you have posted your prices. Make sure the business sales receipt show the business name and address.
- Visit [Canada Revenue Agency](#) to learn more about preparing your income tax returns
- If the business owns the property, be prepared to pay property taxes. For more information about [Property Taxes](#).
- Any future updates to the business property will require a new building permit. Contact the [Building Department](#) to learn more.