



Starting And Growing
A Business In

CONYERS & ROCKDALE COUNTY

Why Start A Business?

- ✓ Personal Growth
- ✓ Passion
- ✓ Community





WELCOME

Thinking About Starting a Business?

Starting your own business is exciting and challenging. It takes vision, determination, and resources. This guide was created to help answer common questions and point you in the right direction as you begin your journey.

Take time to review the materials. Understanding both the business landscape and your own goals is key to long-term success.

If questions come up, don't hesitate to reach out. The Chamber of Commerce is here to connect you with the right resources and support.

We're proud of your ambition and look forward to supporting you along the way!

Best wishes,

Katy Zahradnik
President
Conyers-Rockdale Chamber of Commerce



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NOTICE: *The contents of this publication are presented for informational purposes only and should not be considered in any way legal or professional assistance. We encourage you to seek the advice and counsel of a licensed professional when dealing with legal and financial matters.*

While care has been taken to provide accurate, up-to-date information, the information presented has been collected from numerous sources and is subject to errors and changes and should be further researched for updates and accuracy.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Is Entrepreneurship For You?

Starting a small business comes with risk, but smart planning can boost your odds of success. Before diving in, take a moment to assess your readiness:

- **Are you a self-starter?** No one's going to push you. You'll need to set goals, manage time, and follow through every day.
- **Can you work with all kinds of people?** You'll deal with customers, vendors, staff, and professionals. Can you handle tough personalities and tricky situations?
- **Are you comfortable making quick decisions?** Business owners often make high stakes calls under pressure with no one to fall back on.
- **Do you have the stamina?** Starting a business takes long hours, emotional resilience, and serious commitment.
- **Are you organized?** Poor planning sinks businesses. Good systems for money, time, and operations make all the difference.
- **Can you stay motivated?** Even the most passionate entrepreneurs hit rough patches. Will you push through burnout and setbacks?



What is an entrepreneur?

- Someone who organizes and maintains a business venture
- Someone who takes on the risk and does what he/she wants in order to make a profit
- Someone who can coordinate the resources available to meet a need

SCORE SELF BIZ QUIZ

Are you the type of person who should open their own business?
Take this short quiz and see how your score adds up.

MOTIVATION		Disagree										Strongly Agree									
1	I constantly see business opportunities or ideas with potential commercial value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	I like growing or building businesses or taking ideas and making something of them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3	I regularly come up with new ideas on doing things better or more efficiently	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4	I can find solutions to challenges or problems	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5	I can find the help, assistance or resources I need to be successful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6	I am a dynamic person providing vision, hope and energy to those with whom I work and partner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7	I am a hard-working person. I do what it takes to succeed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8	I can adapt to changes & surprises quickly and successfully	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9	I can successfully manage risk associated with creating and growing a business	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10	I thrive on learning. I am constantly seeking new information that can help me with my business.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	I am motivated by success and driven to do well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
12	I believe in working with others who can help me make my dream a reality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CAPACITY RELATED TO BUSINESS SKILLS																					
<i>Consider yourself and Other Members of Your Management Team</i>																					
13	Ability to assess market opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
14	Ability to develop products or services	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
15	Ability to provide products or services	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
16	Marketing and communications capacity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
17	Fiscal management	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
18	Ability to acquire financial capital	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
19	Personnel or team, development & management	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
20	Ability to develop and sustain partnerships	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
21	Quality Control	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CAPACITY TO NETWORK AND PARTNER																					
22	I am comfortable seeking information from others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
23	I regularly network to gain information for my business	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
24	I have extensive resource network I am constantly building	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
25	I am comfortable with partnerships	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
26	I have two or more partnerships associated with my business	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
27	I have learned how to deal with the challenges of partnering	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SUPPORT FROM FAMILY AND COMMUNITY																					
28	I am challenged and happy in my work building a business	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
29	There is a good balance between my work and personal life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
30	Family and friends are supportive and encourage me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
31	My community is supportive of me and my undertaking	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
32	My community is actively helping me build my business	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

SCORE SELF BIZ QUIZ

Are you the type of person who should open their own business?
Take this short quiz and see how your score adds up.

Questions	Total Points	Value Factor			Points
1 – 2		X		=	
3 – 12		X		=	
13 – 21		X		=	
22 – 27		X		=	
28 – 32		X		=	
			TOTAL POINTS		

Scoring:

0 to 25 pointsLow Potential

26 to 50 pointsSome Potential

51 to 75 pointsModerate Potential

76 to 100 pointsHigh Potential

Source: Center for Rural Entrepreneurship

1 Year Entrepreneur Checklist

Careful, advanced planning can ensure the success of your venture.
Below is a suggested one-year plan.

ONE YEAR BEFORE START-UP

- Refine your ideas in writing. Determine exactly where you want to go.
- Decide what business you want to start. Be specific in your business definition.
- Assess the impact on your family and personal life. How will this affect your relationships? Will your family support the use of finances and time?
- Begin research. You must determine if there is a need for your product. This research can be performed by students, professionals, or even on your own.
- Build your personal skills by taking formal management/business courses. Contact Georgia State University Perimeter College, Georgia Piedmont Technical College or other institutions for options.
- Contact the Small Business Development Center for assistance in writing a business plan and other business start-up services.
- Contact GA Dept. of Labor for info on educational seminars on labor/safety issues.
- Be sure to contact the Conyers-Rockdale Chamber of Commerce and ask about the Entrepreneurial Academy.

SIX MONTHS BEFORE START-UP

- Determine the focus of your business. What do you want to specialize in?
- Start writing your business plan.
- Define your target market. Who is your clientele? Who should you aim advertising towards?
- Research business and trade organizations. Most areas of business have agencies and organizations set up to facilitate business. Take advantage of what these groups have to offer.
- Start looking for the best location for your business. How much space do you need? Would your business be better suited downtown or in the rural part of the county? Is a store-front location needed, or can you work from home? Location can make or break a business. Conduct the search on your own or contact a real estate agent.

1 Year Entrepreneur Checklist Cont.

FOUR MONTHS BEFORE START-UP

- Name your business. Be careful in deciding on a name, be aware that someone may already be using the name. Have a few back-up ideas. You can check to see if a name is being used by contacting the Georgia Office of the Secretary of State.
- Make a final selection of the business location. Make sure that the location you choose is within your budget and fits into your business plan. Cheaper rent may cost you more in the long run. Remember: Location, location, location.
- Select outside advisors. It will be beneficial to have people to call on to listen to your ideas, problems, and plans while providing feedback. These people should be able to provide you with guidance and constructive criticism. They should be people knowledgeable in business.
- Set up a network of mentors. Select people who can help by giving insight and ideas.
- Choose your business' legal form. Will you be a partnership, sole proprietorship, or corporation? Legal form should be chosen very carefully as it can impact your business in many ways.
- Set up bookkeeping, accounting and office systems. How are you going to operate your office? If you are going to keep your own books, make sure your skills are adequate. Will you need to hire a bookkeeper/bookkeeping firm?
- Seek demographic information on your targeted customer base. Gather secondary info.
- Continue working on your business plan.

THREE MONTHS BEFORE START-UP

- Determine your cash needs. How much money do you need for a start-up? What will be your monthly variable and fixed cost? What is your break-even point? These are all questions that must be answered. You must estimate your cash flows.
- Review preliminary financial objectives. How much profit do you expect to make? Are you planning on making investments? What is your intended cash flow?
- Decide on pricing strategy. After determining your variable & fixed costs, decide what your markup rate will be. You need to consider demand and competitive factors in setting price.

1 Year Entrepreneur Checklist Cont.

THREE MONTHS BEFORE START-UP Cont.

- Forecast sales. Contact SBDC or others in your field to help you forecast accurately.
- Determine your company's employee needs. How many people do you need on your staff? This is important to decide as it affects your requirements for insurance, cash flow, etc.
- Project your cash flow. Write out estimated statement of all revenues and expenditures. This statement should cover one calendar year. Also project your net cash flow for the entire year.
- Continue working on and refining your business plan.

TWO MONTHS BEFORE START-UP

- Prepare your marketing plan. How are you going to market your product and how much will it cost? Are you going to use publicity? Are you going to use paid advertisement? You must decide how you will go about introducing your business to the public.
- Get your business license. (See occupational tax pg. 22)
- Review non-financial objectives (public image, legal questions). How do you want the public to see your business? Are you a family establishment or geared more toward adults? What form is your business taking? Do you have all legal documents needed?
- Prepare a preliminary balance sheet. Contact the SBDC for assistance.
- Secure necessary financing. Whether through a private lender or through other sources, you must obtain the necessary amount of start-up capital.
- Secure insurance coverage if applicable. (See Labor/Safety pg. 34)
- Determine advertising, promotion, and public relations strategies.
- Order opening inventories. Talk to your suppliers for estimated opening needs.
- Complete improvements to your facility.
- Start your hiring process. (See Labor/Safety pg. 34 and Hiring pg. 37)
- Refine your business plan.

1 Year Entrepreneur Checklist Cont.

ONE MONTH BEFORE START-UP

- Fine tune your cash flow budget.
- Prepare for your grand opening. The Conyers-Rockdale Chamber of Commerce can be of assistance in planning your events. Be creative but practical.
- Set up your office and displays in advance. The look of your space sets the tone for your business, so plan it carefully. Don't leave this for the days before opening.
- Review your final checklist.
- Hire your staff. (See Labor/Safety Pg. 34 and Hiring pg.37)
- Make sure everything works. It's better to discover any equipment issues in advance so you can make repairs and be ready to open on time.
- Create marketing, promotion, and opening plans. Advertise on social media, local newspapers, radio, and TV if possible. Word of mouth is your best and most affordable publicity—spread the word!

START-UP AND AFTER

- Budget your time wisely as a new business owner. Make the most of your available time by reading time management materials or consulting someone who manages time effectively.
- Keep improving your product/service. Identify what works well and enhance it, while addressing any issues to minimize problems. An improved product will only attract more customers.
- Listen to your customers, advisors, and vendors. Customers drive cash flow, so gather their feedback to improve your product. Advisors are there to guide you, so trust their advice. Vendors, with their experience, can offer valuable cost-saving or profit-boosting ideas.
- Check cash flow budget against actual performance.
- Maintain good communication with your bankers and vendors. Keeping the lines open increases the likelihood of receiving help when needed.
- Continue to improve the 5 Cs of credit (Character, Collateral, Capacity, Capital, and Condition).
- Stay in touch with investors, understand repayment terms, and ensure timely payments. Fulfill all obligations, as you may need to contact them again later.
- Check cost of living budget. If you are drawing money from the company for living expenses, be sure to take only what is necessary. Stick tightly to your budget.
- Consider delaying your grand opening/ribbon cutting for a couple of weeks to ensure everything is running smoothly and any issues are addressed.

Business Plan

A business plan defines your business, sets goals, and acts as your firm's resume. Key components include a balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow analysis. It helps allocate resources, manage challenges, and make informed decisions. A well-organized plan is essential for loan applications, outlining how you'll repay borrowed money. It also informs sales teams, suppliers, and others about your operations and goals.

The following outline of a typical business plan can serve as a guide, which you can adapt to your specific business. Breaking the plan into several components makes the drafting process more manageable.

Introduction

- Give a detailed description of the business and its goals.
- Discuss the ownership of the business and the legal structure.
- List the skills and experience you bring to the business.
- Discuss the advantages you and your business have over your competitors.

Marketing

- Discuss the products/services offered.
- Identify the customer demand for your product/service.
- Identify your market, its size and locations.
- Explain how your product/service will be advertised and marketed.
- Explain the pricing strategy.



Business Plan Cont.

Financial Management

- Explain your source and the amount of initial equity capital.
- Develop a monthly operating budget for the first year.
- Develop an expected return on investment & monthly cash flow for the first year.
- Provide projected income statements and balance sheets for a two-year period.
- Discuss your breakeven point.
- Explain your personal balance sheet and method of compensation.
- Discuss who will maintain your accounting records and how they will be kept.
- Provide “what if” statements that address alternative methods to problems that may develop.

Operations

- Explain how the business will be managed on a day-to-day basis.
- Discuss hiring and personnel procedures.
- Discuss insurance, lease or rent agreements, and issues pertinent to your business.
- Account for the equipment necessary to produce your products or services.
- Account for production and delivery of products and services.

Concluding Statement

- Summarize business goals and objectives, express your commitment to the success of your business.
- Once you have completed your business plan, review it with a friend or advisor.
- When comfortable with the content and structure, make an appointment to review and discuss it with your lender. The business plan is a flexible document that should change as your business grows.

Feasibility & Marketing Strategy

Is Your Business Idea Feasible?

Answer the following questions regarding your idea. Give complete, well thought out answers to these questions. If you are unsure about or answer no to any of the following questions, then you should rethink your idea.

- What type of business do you plan to start?
- What kind of product/service do you plan to offer?
- Will your product/service satisfy a need yet unfilled?
- Will your product/service have a competitive edge based on price, location, quality, selection?

Researching Your Markets

It is recommended that you research your potential market demand for your product or service. First, determine what questions you need answered. The following are ideas on where to find the information you need.

Primary Data:

- Your experience
- Experiences of people you know
- Survey potential customers to determine their wants/needs
- Observe similar businesses
- Interview suppliers, vendors, bankers

Secondary Data:

- Visit your public library
- Contact trade associations (*i.e. trade shows and trade journals*)
- Contact the Georgia State University's Perimeter College, Georgia Piedmont Technical College, Conyers-Rockdale Chamber of Commerce and the SBDC. See *the Resource Directory for contact information pg. 42 and 43.*
- Use various search engines on the Internet (*i.e. Google, Bing, etc.*)

Feasibility & Marketing Strategy Cont.

Marketing Your Business

In order to properly market your product, you need to answer the following questions. This information can be used to help you develop your marketing plan. Contact the SBDC for more information on constructing this plan.

- Who are my customers? *(This determines your target market)*
- Where are they?
- How many are there? *(This indicates your market size)*
- What are their needs?
- Who are my competitors?
- How does my competition do it? *(One method of marketing/dealing with competition is the end-run strategy. In this strategy you adopt your competitors' strategy with the intention of making it better)*
- How can I reach them? *(The distribution of your product is very important. Where your product is located can affect how well it sells)*
- How much will they pay? *(The pricing of your product is also very important. You must take into consideration what your competitors charge)*
- What are the market trends? *(What are people buying? It is important to be aware of market trends. This relates back to knowing your customers' needs. Try to distinguish between trends and fads.)*
- What are the technological trends? *(Businesses must embrace digital transformation, social media, e-commerce, and data analytics to stay competitive.)*



**Small Business
Development Center**
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Georgia State University
75 Piedmont Ave NE # 700, Atlanta, GA 30303
404-413-7830
www.georgiasbdc.org

Determining Cash Needed To Start a Business

****To determine these amounts, get estimates from suppliers, contractors, professionals and/or government authorities to ensure accurate amounts.*

Expense Category	Estimate of monthly expenses based on sales of \$ ____ projected per year	Estimate of cash needed to start (Column 1 X ____ of Months)
Manager/ Owner Salary		
All Other Salaries/ Wages		
Rent (Building Equipment)		
Advertising		
Office Expenses		
Telephone		
Internet		
Other Utilities		
Insurance		
Taxes, Inc. Soc. Security		
Maintenance/ Repairs		
Legal/ Professional Fees		
Loan Payments		
Miscellaneous		
One Time Start-up Costs		
Fixtures & Equipment		
Decorating & Remodeling		
Installation of Fixtures/ Equipment		
Starting Inventory		
Deposits for Utilities		
Legal/ Professional Fees		
Licenses & Permits		
Ad/ Promotion For Grand Opening		
Other		
Subtotal		

Visit the U.S. Small Business Administration's Website for more helpful tools on calculating start-up costs.

Demographic Information

A variety of free demographic information is available on the Internet. This information breaks down population by different categories such as age, sex, race, income and education. It can be used to help identify the number of people who may use your product or services.

Procurement Doing Business With the Government

The Small Business Administration (SBA) offers financial, technical, and management support to help small businesses secure government contracts. Visit the SBA website to learn how your business can compete for federal contracts, explore programs designed to assist you, discover where to get help, and access annual contracting data.

Source: Small Business Association - www.sba.gov



Legal Aspects of Starting A Business

Deciding what form of legal entity your business will take is an important decision. This will have an impact on the future of your business including your protection under the law, and the rules and regulations (for example, federal and state taxes) that will apply to you.

It is recommended that before you enter into any of these four forms of business that you contact an attorney, CPA, or other qualified individual. Speaking with someone informed about the legal entities of business will reduce the risk of mistakes in the business setup. You can probably do the necessary paperwork and procedures yourself, but it makes sense to leave it up to the professionals. Also, contact the Small Business Development Center for more information.

THERE ARE FOUR BASIC FORMS THAT A NEW BUSINESS CAN TAKE:

- Sole Proprietorship
- Partnership (General or Limited)
- Corporation (C or S)
- Limited Liability Company (LLC)

A **SOLE PROPRIETORSHIP** is usually owned and operated by one person. Under the law, it is not actually considered a legal entity. It is instead considered an extension of the person who owns the business. This individual has sole ownership of assets, but is also solely liable for the debts of the business.

A **PARTNERSHIP** can be formed in two ways. A general partnership is comprised of two or more individuals who join to start a business. Each person has proportional ownership of the business assets and proportional liability for business debts. Each person also has authority in running this business. A partnership agreement can be drawn up to alter each person's particular liability. However, despite this document, creditors may collect from each and every member of the partnership (this may include personal assets).

Legal Aspects of Starting A Business Cont.

A **LIMITED PARTNERSHIP** is made up of one or more general partners as well as one or more limited partners. Limited partners contribute capital and share in profits/losses. These limited partners, however, take no part in the running of the business and are not held liable for the organization's debts.

Whether taking part in a general or limited partnership, it is advisable that you draw up a partnership agreement. This document will detail each partner's rights and their responsibilities. Partnerships are required to file both federal and state income tax. While the partnership is not typically taxed, each partner reflects charges for the partnership on his/her personal tax returns.

A **CORPORATION** is an entity, which must be approved by state of Georgia through the Office of the Secretary of State. A corporation must file federal, state, and local taxes on its operations. One advantage to a corporation is the protection from liability afforded to shareholders. However, when an organization is small, creditors may require personal guarantees of predominant owners. Another advantage to the corporation is the ease of raising capital through the sale of common or preferred stock.

A disadvantage of the corporation is that the organization's income will essentially be taxed twice (once for the business, and again on the shareholders personal income tax after collecting dividends). There are two types of corporations: C and S.

The **C CORPORATIONS** have their own tax identification numbers and pay their own taxes. The **S CORPORATION** is the opposite. It is not taxed as if it is a corporation at all. Instead, it is taxed similarly to a partnership. Its gains and losses are reflected on the personal income tax of the shareholder. The S corporation does not provide protection from liability to its shareholders. (The distinctions between S and C corporations can be complicated. It is very important that you consult with someone who is knowledgeable on the subject before making a decision.)

Legal Aspects of Starting A Business Cont.

In order to incorporate your business, contact the Office of the Secretary of State. You will then reserve your corporation's name. The incorporation process must be completed within 90 days. The Office of the Secretary of State will instruct you in the completion of all documents needed. You will be required to pay an incorporation fee every year by April 1.

The Office of the Secretary of State

214 State Capital
Atlanta, GA 30334
470-240-5060
www.sos.ga.gov

This incorporation process includes publishing your intent to incorporate in the local newspaper's legal publication. Newspapers do charge for this service. To publish your intent to incorporate, contact:

The Rockdale Citizen

Advertising Department
920 Green St SW Suite A1
Conyers, GA 30012
770-483-7108
Email: Access@rockdalecitizen.com
www.rockdalenewtoncitizen.com

An attorney can usually perform the necessary procedures for you for several hundred dollars. How much it will cost depends on the attorney and your business.

The **limited liability company (LLC)** is one that is owned by two or more persons known as members. It is a mixture of other forms of organization. This form combines some of the partnerships, corporations, and S corporation's best features. Similarly to a corporation, you must reserve a name and file the articles of incorporation. You and your fellow members should write an operating agreement to control the conduct of the business.

Legal Aspects of Starting A Business Cont.

An LLC provides limited liability protection for its members, similar to shareholders in a corporation, and offers the benefit of pass-through taxation, meaning that the company's profits and losses are passed on to its members, avoiding double taxation. LLCs are recognized in all U.S. states and many foreign countries, and they are allowed to conduct interstate business, though they may need to register in each state they operate. While the LLC form of organization is relatively new compared to corporations, the tax rules for LLCs are well-established. Some states may limit the duration of an LLC, requiring a specified term, but many allow for a perpetual existence. When establishing an LLC, it is important to ensure that the correct tax classification is chosen to maintain pass-through treatment, particularly if opting for an election to be taxed as an S-Corporation.

Licensing and Permit Information

Occupational Tax Registration (also known as business license)

If you plan to operate a business in the state of Georgia, you must obtain a city or county business license. All commercial, home-based, and non-profit businesses must obtain a business license in order to operate within Rockdale County and the City of Conyers. You should discuss the details of your situation with the licensing department. The fee for a license is contingent on the location, type, and size of your business. Rockdale County occupational taxes range upward from \$100 and can be based on a percentage of estimated gross receipts. City of Conyers occupational tax fees range between \$225 - \$305 based on profitability ratio/tax class for the type of business, profession, or occupation. They are completely dependent on what business you will be in and where your business will be located.

If your business will be located within the Conyers City limits:

City of Conyers

Department of Planning and Inspection Services

901 O'Kelly Street

Conyers, GA 30012

770-929-4280

770-929-4292 (fax)

Email: Planning@conyersga.gov

www.conyersga.com/government/planning-inspection-services

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

If your business will be located outside the city limits:

Rockdale County

Planning & Development

1117 West Avenue SW

Conyers, GA 30012

770-278-7100

Email: Businesslicense@rockdalecountyga.gov

www.rockdalecountyga.gov/planning-and-development/

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Zoning

Once you have chosen a tentative location for your business, contact the city zoning department if the location is within the city limits, or county zoning department if the location is outside city limits to determine the permitted uses of that location. If you find the current zoning classification of your potential location does not allow for your business, you may file an appeal for rezoning. In order to file this appeal, contact the appropriate zoning office. This process typically takes about 60 days, as the case must go through a public hearing and receive approval from the Board of Commissioners. DO NOT INVEST ANY MONEY IN A LOCATION UNTIL ZONING HAS BEEN THOROUGHLY RESEARCHED!!!

The appropriate office of Planning and Zoning can help you determine if your location and type of business are in compliance with ordinances. You will be required to submit your business plans to the zoning office to determine if the business complies/can be adapted to comply with the following:

- Current zoning classification
- Building setbacks
- Off street parking availability and service entrance requirements
- Buffer yards or required screening
- Lot area minimum
- Sign regulations

Sign permits are required for air/gas filled devices, balloons, temporary banners, and any mounted/free-standing signs. Applications are filed through the zoning office. For specific information about signage, call the appropriate planning and zoning office.

City of Conyers Zoning Office:

City of Conyers
Planning and Inspection Services
901 O'Kelly Street
Conyers, GA 30012
770-929-4280
770-929-4292 (fax)
Email: Planning@conyersga.gov
www.conyersga.com/government/planning-inspection-services
Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Rockdale County Zoning Office:

Rockdale County Planning & Development
Zoning Administrator
1117 West Avenue SW
Conyers, GA 30012
770-278-7100
Email: planningandzoning@rockdalecountyga.gov
www.rockdalecountyga.gov/zoning-administration/
Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Building Construction & Renovation

A building permit must be obtained for both new construction and renovations as well as additions to existing commercial and residential buildings. Before you may construct a new facility or renovate an existing one, submit building plans from a design professional to be reviewed and approved before a building permit will be issued. Once you have obtained a building permit, complied with the regulations pertaining to the area you are in, and construction is complete, your facility will be inspected. You will then apply for a Certificate of Occupancy. Without this certificate, it is illegal for your business to reside in the facility.

If the building is within the city limits of Conyers, contact:

Department of Planning & Inspection Services

901 O'Kelly Street

Conyers, GA 30012

770-929-4280

Email: Planning@conyersga.gov

www.conyersga.com

If the building is in Rockdale County outside of the city limits of Conyers, contact:

Rockdale County Planning & Development

1117 West Avenue SW

Conyers, GA 30012

770-278-7163

Email: inspections@rockdalecountyga.gov

www.rockdalecountyga.gov/planning-and-development/

Health Permits

If your business is to involve food processing, handling, storage, or distribution, you must obtain permits from the Rockdale County Health Department, which handles the permits for the entire county and city. If you are unsure if your business needs a permit, contact the Health Department.

Rockdale County - Environmental Health Department

1329 Portman Drive, Suite F

Conyers, GA 30094

770-278-7340

www.gnrhealth.com

Trade Name Registration

In the State of Georgia, every person, firm, or partnership that conducts business has two options regarding trade name registration: 1) the business name must include the last name of the individual owner of the business. 2) If using a fictitious name (one not including the last name of the individual owner), the fictitious name must be registered in the office of the clerk of the Superior Court of the county where the business is located. A corporation or limited liability company will not need to file this registration, as it will already be registered with the office of the Secretary of State. The filing fee is \$162.00. Contact:

Office of Clerk of Superior Court

922 Court Street
Conyers, GA 30012
770-278-7900
www.rockdaleclerk.com

The Clerk's office will provide the necessary paperwork for completing your Trade Name registration. Similar to publishing your intent to incorporate a business, you must also publish a notice of your Trade Name registration in a local newspaper. You are required to file an affidavit of publication once the notice has been published. The notice of your Trade Name registration must be published once a week for two consecutive weeks in the legal section of a newspaper that is qualified to publish legal notices. The current fee for this process is approximately \$40. To run your legal advertisement, contact:

The Rockdale Citizen

Advertising Department
920 Green St SW Suite A1
Conyers, GA 30012
770-483-7108
Email: Access@rockdalecitizen.com
www.rockdalenewtoncitizen.com

Trade Name Registration Cont.

Failure to register a trade name in Georgia does not invalidate contracts signed by the unregistered entity. However, the court has the authority to assess additional costs or penalties against a business that fails to register its trade name at the time an action is filed. While registering a trade name helps avoid potential penalties or complications in legal actions, it does not automatically prevent the business from being liable for court costs in every situation. If you're unsure whether your business needs to register a trade name, you should contact the Clerk's office for guidance.

To file your Trade name registration, contact:

Office of Clerk of Superior Court

922 Court Street

Conyers, GA 30012

770-278-7900

www.rockdaleclerk.com



Trade Name Registration Cont.

Federal Licensing

Most new small businesses likely will not require any type of federal licensing to conduct business, unless you will be engaged in one of the following activities:

- Rendering investment advice
- Making alcohol products
- Making tobacco products
- Preparing meat products
- Making or dealing in firearms

You will need a federal permit to start large operations such as a television station, radio station, common carrier, or producer of drugs or biological products. The aforementioned businesses are all heavily governmentally regulated. For information on federal licensing for these types of businesses, contact:

The U.S. Department of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms

2600 Century Parkway NE
Atlanta, GA 30345
404-417-2600
www.atf.gov

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration

60 8th Street NE
Atlanta, GA 30309
404-253-1175
www.fda.gov

The U.S. Federal Communications Commission

Toll-Free Voice:
1-888-CALL FCC (225-5322)
www.fcc.gov

Trade Name Registration Cont.

State Licensing

Many licensing regulations should be considered when establishing a business or practicing certain regulated occupations in Georgia. Contact the Secretary of State's office for a listing of all occupations that require state licensing. Before applying, you would be well advised to check the current licensing regulations through the office of the Secretary of State, the county and the city.

For information, contact:

Georgia Secretary of State

Licensing Boards Division

214 State Capitol

Atlanta, GA 30334

470-240-5060

sos.ga.gov/licensing-division-georgia-secretary-states-office

*** As of March 31, 2025, the Georgia Secretary of State's Office no longer publishes a physical "Blue Book" for business registration. However, they offer a comprehensive online resource titled "Consolidated Registration Information for Businesses," which serves a similar purpose. This digital packet includes request forms for various governmental departments and agencies essential for starting your business in Georgia. It also provides important contact information, such as phone numbers, addresses, and website links for offices and departments crucial to business operations.*

Taxes

STATE OF GEORGIA

Sales and Use Taxes

Every business that sells tangible personal property, such as merchandise, to customers is required to obtain a seller's permit. This is issued from the state sales tax agency. (There are some businesses, however, that are exempt from this requirement.) Typically, a separate permit must be obtained for every business in which property subject to sales tax is sold. If selling to a retailer, wholesalers and manufacturers usually do not have to collect sales tax on the goods they sell. This, however, is contingent on whether the retailer holds a valid seller's permit and can provide a resale certificate.

Similarly, retailers are not required to pay sales tax on items you purchase for resale. You may purchase blank resale certificates at office supply stores. If state law requires that your business collect sales and use tax, you must keep detailed records of your gross receipts from sales/rentals. These records must include all sales/rentals whether or not you believe them to be taxable. Your records must also include evidence of all deductions you claim on sales/use tax returns. In addition, you must record the total purchase price of all tangible personal property acquired for sale, lease, or consumption. Sales tax forms must be filed monthly. The taxes must also be paid on a monthly basis. You can contact the Georgia Department of Revenue to petition for special permission to pay/file quarterly.

Contact:

Georgia Department of Revenue

Sales & Use Tax Division
1047 Summit Grove Drive
Building 100, Suite 101
Watkinsville, GA 30677
706-389-6977
www.dor.georgia.gov

Taxes Cont.

State Excise Taxes

In addition to federal excise tax, you may be responsible for collecting state excise tax as well. The categories are comparable to the federal categories. Alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, motor carriers, and trucks with more than two axles are included in the taxed categories. You should contact the Georgia Department of Revenue for complete information.

For information on state excise taxes, contact:

Georgia Department of Revenue

Sales & Use Tax Division
1047 Summit Grove Drive
Building 100, Suite 101
Watkinsville, GA 30677
706-389-6977
www.dor.georgia.gov

Estimated State Income Taxes

The State of Georgia also requires that you pay estimated state income taxes. The payment dates for estimated state tax are the same as those for federal payments. The Form 500ES should be completed for sole proprietorships or partnerships. The Department may assess penalties for several reasons, such as late filing, late payment, or otherwise not complying with tax requirements. Multiple different penalties may be assessed simultaneously. Penalties vary by tax type, and the rate of the penalty is set by law.

Taxes Cont.

FEDERAL

Federal Excise Taxes

There are some forms of business on which the U.S. government requires additional taxation. This will be a tax that you are responsible for collecting. This tax does not come out of your pocket. Typically, it is added to the sale price of your product or service. Form 720, Quarterly Federal Excise Tax Return is used to file most federal excise taxes. Federal excise taxes can be broken into nine general categories of products and services.

They are:

- Motor vehicle use tax (vehicles greater than 55,000 lbs. gross weight)
- Retailers tax (certain types of fuels)
- Retail excise tax on the sales of the following: Heavy trucks/trailers, tires and tubes, recreation equipment (e.g. fishing/hunting supplies), firearms and ammunition
- Air transportation tax (if you are transporting people by air, you have to collect this tax)
- Communications taxes (e.g. on telephone or teletype services)
- Wagering taxes
- Taxes on U.S. mined coal
- Environmental taxes (imposed on petroleum products, various chemicals, and hazardous wastes)
- Alcohol, firearms, ammunition, and tobacco taxes

Be sure to contact the IRS for complete information on federal excise taxes.

The Internal Revenue Service information of almost every kind may be obtained at www.irs.gov
1-800-829-4933

Utilities

Establishing Water and Sewer services

To establish water and sewer service you must contact the Rockdale County Department of Water Resources

You will be required to pay a deposit. This deposit is refundable after demonstration of a history of prompt payment, or at the closing of your final bill. The amount of your deposit is dependent on the size of your water meter and estimated water use. To sign up for service you must present a copy of your lease agreement or closing statement and Driver's License or valid Georgia ID with SS#.

To establish service contact:

Rockdale Water Resources

958 Milstead Ave.

Conyers, Georgia 30012

770-278-7400

Email: Rwrfeedback@rockdalecountyga.gov

www.rockdalewaterresources.com

To establish garbage service at a location within the City of Conyers, one must contact:

Public Works and Transportation

Commercial Sanitation

1124 Vaughn Street

Conyers, GA 30012

770-483-4411

www.conyersga.com/government/public-works-transportation

To establish garbage service at a location outside the limits of the city of Conyers one must contact a private collector to make arrangements and obtain prices for collection.

Establishing Gas Service

To establish gas service, contact a local provider or search online for available gas companies in your area. As rates, minimum deposits and contractual arrangements vary among the companies. Minimums may be based on types, size and number of gas fixtures and estimated usage.

Utilities Cont.

Electrical Service

Conyers and Rockdale County has three vendors of electrical power. Each provider serves all customers within state assigned areas. There is a free choice of provider, however, if the business is of a certain size. You may learn of the area provider to which you are assigned, or whether your business size entitles you to a choice of provider by contacting any of the providers or the Georgia Public Service Commission.

A deposit will be assessed for each business that begins service. The deposit amount for a business (unlike a residential deposit) varies from business to business and is based upon building space and/or power consumption requirements.

To establish electrical service, contact one of the three providers to determine your assigned area provider, or information as to your eligibility for choice of provider.

The three providers are:

Snapping Shoals EMC

14750 Brown Bridge Road
Covington, GA 30016
770-786-3484
www.ssemc.com

Walton EMC

842 Highway 78 NW
Monroe, GA 30655
770-267-2505
www.waltonemc.com

Georgia Power

1-888-655-5888
www.georgiapower.com

Labor and Safety Regulation Information

Educating Yourself on Labor/Safety Issues

The Georgia Department of Labor is available to provide consultation to new businesses in the state. The local and state departments offer educational seminars and presentations throughout the year. These classes cover a wide range of labor-related topics such as labor laws, labor issues, prevailing wages, unemployment insurance, benefits, and employment services. It would be advisable to contact the local Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) office regarding these classes. These seminars are intended to provide you with all the information you need to prepare you for the employment aspects of running a business. You should begin these classes up to one year before your intended start-up.

Georgia Department of Labor

774 Jordan Lane, Bldg. #4
Decatur, GA 30033-5755
Virtual Agent 877-709-8185
TTY/TTD 404-486-6476
www.dol.georgia.gov

OSHA

The issuing and enforcing of occupational and safety health regulations is handled by the United States Department of Labor. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is the federal agency which administers these policies. The requirements put forth by OSHA include posting notices to employees and maintaining accurate records of employee injuries. OSHA will provide you with information on all requirements as well as related publications. OSHA policies and regulations must be posted in the workspace where all employees may see.

In addition to OSHA, the U.S. government also supports the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), the Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS), and the Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA), which oversees pension and welfare benefit plans

Occupational Safety and Health Administration

2296 Henderson Mill Road NE, Suite 200
Atlanta, Georgia 30345
770-493-6644
www.osha.gov

Employer Tax Responsibilities

Income Taxes

Businesses with employees must pay employer taxes and withhold employee taxes for both the State and Federal governments. These should be deposited in any Federal Reserve Bank. You will be given a coupon book to accompany your deposits. These deposits are required monthly or quarterly. The Georgia and US Departments of Revenue will determine your time of payment. You will be required to withhold Social Security and Medicare taxes. In addition to this withholding, the employer must pay a matching amount. You should consult the current year tax calendar for present percentages.

Georgia Department of Labor Atlanta Office

223 Courtland Street NE

Atlanta, GA 30303

877-709-8185

www.dol.georgia.gov

Unemployment Insurance Taxes

Federal Unemployment Insurance Tax is the employer's responsibility. This is not withheld from employee wages. Consult the Employer's Tax Guide for more information on the various taxes that you will be required to pay. The Employer's Tax Guide is a booklet designed to help you with all aspects of taxation. Contact the Georgia and US Departments of Labor and Revenue to receive the Employer's Tax Guide and other relevant information. See contact information listed above.

If you are a sole proprietor, you are not required to pay withholding. You are however required to pay self-employment tax. Contact the Internal Revenue Service for complete details.

Workers' Compensation Insurance

Workers' Compensation insurance is required of any business with more than three employees. The rates vary with the business type and the risk level. For more information, contact the State Board of Workers' Compensation.

State Board of Workers' Compensation

270 Peachtree Street NW

Atlanta, GA 30303

800-533-0682

www.sbwc.georgia.gov

Drug Free Workplace

Your business can become eligible for 7.5% discount on your Workers' Compensation Insurance Premiums. This is possible through the DRUGS DON'T WORK PROGRAM. Visit our website for more information on this program.

Drugs Don't Work

Conyers-Rockdale Chamber of Commerce
936 Green Street SW
Conyers, GA 30012
770-483-7049
www.conyers-rockdale.com

Georgia Chamber of Commerce
270 Peachtree St NW, Suite 2200
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-223-2264
www.gachamber.com/affiliate/the-council-on-alcohol-and-drugs/



Application, Hiring, and Termination Process

There are basic ground rules to hiring and firing employees. There are legal requirements to acquiring or terminating employees. If handled incorrectly, personnel issues can result in legal problems. These legal problems can be large enough to shut down your business. It is important to make sure all your bases are covered. In addition to the do's and don'ts listed below, contact the Georgia Department of Labor for more on correct hiring and firing policies.

Application and Hiring

DON'T:

- Ask obvious questions. Do not ask questions regarding sex, age, race, etc. or anything related to these areas. These are sensitive areas and cannot be used as discriminating factors. Some applicants may believe that all gathered information is used. It is for this reason that you should not ask these questions. It is best to avoid these topics so as to eliminate all possibility of legal problems.
- Write on the job application form. Any notes taken during interviews should be made on photocopies or other paper. This allows you to preserve the original application without marring it for your permanent records.

DO:

- Limit your interview questions to job duties. There is no reason to ask questions that do not apply to the responsibilities of the position. You may ask if an applicant has any barriers to completing the duties. Do not ask questions like, "Do you have children?" or "Are you married?" Small talk is acceptable if the interviewer is careful. Do not venture into conversation that might produce seemingly discriminatory information.
- Make sure all company procedures follow employment statutes. Have your advisors or attorney review your system for application, hiring, and termination before you begin hiring and periodically thereafter.
- EDUCATE YOURSELF!!!! The best way to prevent problems is to be familiar with the law. When you are in doubt about any issue concerning labor or safety, contact the Georgia Department of Labor. See the Resource Directory for contact information.

Application, Hiring, and Termination Process Cont.

TERMINATION

DO's:

- Review company policies. If you have not yet developed company policies regarding application, hiring, and termination, call the GDOL. Make a checklist of your procedures. Make sure that you have followed the rules in the firing process. If you have not completed your checklist, YOU SHOULD NOT TERMINATE THE EMPLOYEE YET. Take care to finish all steps in the process to alleviate any questions and possible legal repercussions.
- Have a stated code of expected employee behavior. Many employers face problems due to unclear expectations of conduct. It is easier to prove reasons for termination if such a code is in place. This documentation will be helpful if you are faced with paying restitution because it will show that you had sufficient cause to terminate the employee.
- Conduct an exit interview. This allows you to tie up any loose ends. Final paychecks can be issued, and company property (e.g. keys, paperwork, and files) can be returned. Ask the employee what he/she liked or disliked about your company. Ask for feedback on aspects of your company of which this person has knowledge. This person might be a bit more forthcoming with problems or constructive criticisms than someone who still works there.
- Keep termination of an employee between you (management) and the employee. The fired employee will appreciate your discretion in this matter. Termination should not be discussed with other employees. Privacy can help you avoid harsh feelings and legal repercussions.
- Have employees sign a release. If you are offering the fired employee severance pay or anything else of value, have him/her sign a release of liability to the company. This may protect you in case of legal action.

Application, Hiring, and Termination Process Cont.

Where to Find Your Labor Force

There are many resources through which one can find employees. The first things that typically come to mind are the classified advertisements in local newspapers. You can place ads in these publications for week long and even month long periods. Contact the publication you wish to use for more specific information. The Georgia Department of Labor is an agency that can assist you in finding employees. For more information on how the GDOL can help you, call 877-709-8185. You may wish to ask about the Job Training Partnership Act.

Other places you might contact are local universities and technical colleges. Some of the colleges also offer a Job Placement service for students.

Financing Information

When starting a business, one important consideration is where to obtain capital to back your venture. Most start-up businesses require a capital contribution by the entrepreneur, usually 20%. The remaining financing may be available from local banks or may require private investors. There are several Small Business Administration loan programs available to businesses, all of which require bank participation. These loan programs, however, are not guaranteed. They are all subject to change based on the SBA's current budget.

- **SBA Low Doc.** This program provides financing for small businesses through guaranteeing a percentage of the bank's loans to the business. The maximum loan is \$150,000 and not more than an 80% guarantee. The loan is administered by the bank and is termed "Low Doc" because documentation has been greatly reduced and red tape is at a minimum. Eligible expenditures are for land and building, machinery and equipment, inventory, and working capital.
- **SBA Guaranteed Loan Program 7(A).** This program provides financing to small businesses through guaranteeing a percentage of the bank's loan to the business. Eligible expenditures are for land and building, machinery and equipment, working capital, and some restructure of existing debt. The maximum SBA will guarantee is \$5 million and not more than 75% of the total loan.
- **SBA 504 Loan Program.** This program provides financing for small business through a low interest, fixed rate, long-term loan. The Small Business Administration takes a second lien position behind the bank. Eligible expenditures are for land and building, long-life machinery and equipment. The maximum the SBA will finance is \$5.5 million.

Financing Information Cont.

While each of these programs has specific requirements for eligibility, there are certain standards that must be met for all loan programs. A loan applicant must be of good character; show the ability to operate a small business successfully, and have a reasonable amount of his/her own resources to invest to withstand possible losses. In addition, the following will likely be required:

- Credit Report
- Collateral adequate to secure the debt.
- Appraisals required on real property used as collateral
- Personal guarantees required of those persons (or companies with 20% ownership)
- Secondary collateral may be required
- Personal financial statements & financial statements of business (if applicable)

How To Apply

You must first seek financing from a bank or other private source. If that is available at reasonable terms, the SBA cannot make the loan. Take your business plan to your banker and discuss your financial needs. Then, contact the UGA Small Business Development Center (706-542-2762) to check eligibility for SBA assistance.

International Trade

International trade can be challenging but offers great opportunities. While most start-ups won't engage in it, those interested in exporting or importing can benefit from resources like the U.S. Export Assistance Center for federal export support and the Georgia Department of Economic Development's International Trade Division for helpful information and assistance.

Georgia Department of Economic Development

International Trade Division
75 5th Street NW, Suite 1200
Atlanta, GA 30308
404-962-4000
www.georgia.org

United States Export Assistance Center

230 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 1725
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-331-0100
www.trade.gov

Resource Directory

When starting a business, it is important to have a diverse base of information sources. One way to ensure success is through education. The more you know about your field, the better off your business will be. The following is a list of potential resources for information.

City of Conyers Government Offices: 901 O'Kelly Street, Conyers, 770-483-4411, www.conyersga.com

Georgia Piedmont Technical College: 495 North Indian Creek Drive, Clarkston, 404-297-9522, www.gptc.edu

Georgia Department of Labor: 223 Courtland Street NE, Atlanta, 877-709-8185, www.dol.georgia.gov

Georgia Tech's Economic Development Team: Office of Institute Relations, 756 West Peachtree Street NW, Coda Building, Suite 1203, Atlanta, 404-385-5967, www.gov.gatech.edu

Rockdale County Government Offices: 958 Milstead Ave. Conyers, 770-278-7100, www.rockdalecountyga.gov

UGA Small Business Development Center: Offers a wide range of free business consulting services for potential business owners including assistance in starting a business, obtaining financing, and developing marketing and managerial plans. 382 East Broad Street Athens, 706-542-2762, www.georgiasbdc.org

Conyers-Rockdale Chamber of Commerce: Promotes economic growth in the community through a variety of programs and services. Can serve as your connection to the existing economic and political community. 936 Green Street SW, Conyers, 770-483-7049, www.conyers-rockdale.com

Nancy Guinn Memorial Library: 864 Green Street SW, Conyers 770-388-5040, www.conyersrockdalelibrary.org

Higher education institutions offer an ever-changing calendar of short courses as well as credit courses in business, management and entrepreneurship. These include Georgia State University's Perimeter College, with multiple campuses, 770-278-1200 (Newton Campus), Georgia Institute of Technology, 404-894-2000, as well as the Continuing Education Center at the University of Georgia 706-548-1311 (Athens Campus)

Other Resources

•**Better Business Bureau:** This agency's area office address is 200 North Point Center E #510, Alpharetta, 404-766-0875, www.bbb.org.

•**Secretary of State's Office:** This office is determined to ensure the success of small business in the state. A variety of information can be obtained through this office. Located at 214 State Capitol, Atlanta, 470-240-5060, www.sos.ga.gov

•**Internal Revenue Service:** Located at 2888 Woodcock Blvd. Atlanta. Call 844-545-5640 or visit their website www.irs.gov to locate the office most convenient to you for the assistance or advice you need.

•**Minority Business Development Agency Regional Office:** Located at 75 5th Street NW #300, Atlanta, 404-894-8150, www.mbda.gov

•**Small Business Administration:** Located at 233 Peachtree Center Ave NE, Atlanta, 404-331-0100, www.sba.gov

•**Department of Labor:** This office can provide you with information on OSHA. Located at 774 Jordan Lane, Bldg. #4, Decatur, Virtual Agent 877-709-8185, www.dol.georgia.gov

•**University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service:** Located at 1127 West Avenue SW in Conyers, 770-278-7373, www.extension.uga.edu

Other Web Based resources for entrepreneurs

Kauffman Foundations Resources for Entrepreneurs www.entreworld.org

Price Waterhouse Cooper www.pwc.com

The Wall Street Journal Entrepreneurship www.wsj.com

Microsoft Small Business Solutions www.microsoft.com

Glossary Of Terms

Assets - Resources, owned or controlled by a company, that have future benefits. These benefits must be quantifiable in monetary terms.

Balance Sheet - A list of a company's assets, liabilities, and owner's equity at a particular point in time.

Break Even - The unit volume where total revenue equals total cost; there is neither profit nor loss.

Capacity - The amount of goods or work that can be produced by a company given its level of equipment, labor, and facilities.

Capital - The funds necessary to establish or operate a business.

Cash Flow - The movement of money into and out of a company; actual income received and actual payments made out.

Cash Flow Statement - A presentation of the cash inflows and outflows for a particular period of time. These flows are grouped into major categories of cash from operations, cash investing activities, and cash-financing activities.

C Corporation - A type of business structure that is treated as a separate legal entity from its owners for tax purposes.

Collateral - Assets pledged in return for loans.

Conventional Financing - Financing from established lenders, such as banks, rather than from investors; debt financing.

Debt Financing - Raising money for a business by borrowing, often in the form of bank loans. (See Conventional Financing above)

Debt Service - Money being paid out on a loan; the amount necessary to keep a loan from going into default.

Disbursements - Money paid out.

Equity - Shares of stock in a company; ownership interest in a company.

Expenses - Outflows of resources to generate revenues.

Glossary Of Terms Cont.

Fixed Costs - Those costs that are not responsive to changes in volume over the relevant range of time.

GDOL - Georgia Department of Labor.

Income Statement - A matching of a company's accomplishments (i.e. sales) with effort (expenses from operations) during a particular period of time. (Revenues - Expenses = Net Income)

Leasehold Improvements - The changes made to a rented store, office or plant, to suit the tenant and make the location more appropriate for the conduct of the tenant's business.

Letter of Intent - A letter or other document by a customer indicating the customer's intention to buy from a company.

Liabilities - Commitments to payout assets (typically cash) to or render services for creditors.

Licensing - The granting or permission by one company to another to use its products, trademark, or name in a limited, particular manner.

Liquidity - The ability to turn assets into cash quickly and easily.

Market Share - The percentage of the total available customer base captured by a company.

Net Worth - The total ownership interest in a company, represented by the excess of the total amount of assets minus the total amount of liabilities.

Partnership - A legal relationship of two or more individuals to run a company.

Profit Margin - The amount of money earned after the cost of goods or all operating expenses are deducted; usually expressed in percentage terms.

Pro Forma Statements - A financial statements detailing management's predictions.

Receipts - Funds coming into the company; the actual money paid to the company for its products or services; not necessarily the same as a company's actual receipts.

SBA - Small Business Administration

Glossary Of Terms Cont.

SBDC - Small Business Development Center

S Corporation - A special type of corporation that elects to have its income, losses, deductions, and credits pass through to its shareholders for tax purposes.

Sole Proprietorship - Company owned and managed by one person.

Variable Costs - Those costs that are directly responsive to changes in volume over the relevant range of time.

Venture Capitalists - Individuals or firms who invest money in new enterprises.

Working Capital - The cash available to the company for the ongoing operations of the business.

State Issued Licenses

State Board of Accountancy

Certified Public Accountant
Registered Public Accountant
Foreign Accountant
Accounting Firms

State Boards of Architects

Architects
Interior Designers

Georgia Athlete Agent Commission

Athlete Agents
Board of Athletic Trainers
Athletic Trainers

Georgia Auctioneer Commission

Auctioneers
Auctioneer Corporations
Non-resident auctioneers
Non-resident corporations

State Board of Barbers

Master Barbers
Teachers
Apprentice
Schools
Shops

State Board of Chiropractic Examiners

Chiropractors

Construction Industry Licensing

Boards Conditioned Air Contractors
Electrical Contractors
Low Voltage Contractors
Master Plumbers
Journeyman Plumbers
Utility Contractors
Utility Manager
Utility Foreman

State Board of Cosmetology

Master Cosmetologist
Teachers
Instructor Trainee
Esthetician
Apprentice
Schools
Shops
Manicurists

Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage Therapists

Professional Counselor
Associate Professional Counselor
Master Social Worker
Clinical Social Worker
Marriage and Family Therapist
Assoc. Marriage and Family Therapist

Georgia Board of Dentistry

Dentists
Dental Hygienists

Board of Examiners of Licensed Dietitians

Dietitians

State Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors

Professional Engineer
Engineer-in-Training
Land Surveyor
Land Surveyor-In-Training

State Board of Registration For Foresters

Foresters

State Issued Licenses Cont.

State Board of Funeral Service

Funeral Director
Embalmer
Establishment
Apprenticeship

State Board of Registration for Professional Geologists

Professional Geologist

State Board of Hearing Aid Dealers/Dispensers

Hearing Aid Dealer Hearing Aid Dispenser

State Board of Landscape Architects

Landscape Architects

State Board for the Certification of Librarians

Librarian

Composite State Board of Medical Examiners

Acupuncture
Paramedic
Cardiac Technician Teacher
Institutional & Provisional
Physician (MD & DO)
Osteopath Respiratory
Therapist

State Board of Nursing Homes

Administrators
Nursing Home
Administrator in Training

Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapist
Occupational Therapist Assistant

State Board of Dispensing Opticians

Opticians

State Board of Examiners in Optometry

Optometrists

State Board of Pharmacy

Pharmacists Intern
Retail Pharmacy
Hospital pharmacy
Wholesaler Manufacturer
Research Approvals
Pharmacy Schools
Nuclear Pharmacists
Pharmacy Clinics
Nuclear Pharmacies
Prison Clinic Pharmacies

State Board of Physical Therapy

Physical Therapists
Physical Therapy Assistants

State Board of Podiatry Examiners

Podiatrists

Board of Examiners of Licensed Practical Nurses

Licensed Practical Nurses

Board of Private Detectives and Security Agents

Private Detectives
Employees
Private Security Guards
Private Detective Businesses
Private Security Businesses
Weapon Permits
Training Instructors
Classroom Firearms
Classroom & Firearms

State Issued Licenses Cont.

State Board of Examiners Of Psychologists

Psychologists

Georgia Board of Nurses

Registered Nurses

Licensed Undergraduate Nurses

Advanced Practice

State Board of Examiners for Speech Language Pathology and Audiology

Speech Language Pathologists

Audiologists

Speech Language Pathology Aide

Paid Clinical Experience

Fellow

State Board of Registration of Used Motor Vehicle Dealers and Used Motor Vehicle Parts Dealers

Used Motor Vehicle Dealers

Used Motor Vehicle Parts Dealers

Used Motor Vehicle Dismantlers

Salvage Yard Dealers Rebuilders

Salvage Pool Operators

State Board of Veterinary Medicine

Veterinarians

Faculty Licensee

Animal Technicians

State Board of Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant and Operator and Laboratory Analysis

Public Water Supply System

Operator (Class I, II, III, IV)

Biological Wastewater Treatment System

Operator (Class I, II, III, IV)

Industrial Wastewater Treatment System
Operator

Water or Wastewater Lab. Operator

Wastewater Collection System Operator