

Guide to Starting A Business in Saginaw Charter Township

“The business community is the heart of Saginaw Township’s economic growth and prosperity. Saginaw Charter Township is committed to helping new and existing businesses grow and expand”

– Rob Grose, Assistant Manager



HOW DO I APPLY FOR A SAGINAW TOWNSHIP BUSINESS LICENSE?

Getting Started

To prepare yourself before applying for a Saginaw Charter Township business license, you must first decide what type of business you are interested in starting. Prepare a business plan that will suit your short and long term goals.

One of the first decisions that you will have to make as a business owner is how the company should be structured. There is no one legal structure that's best for all small businesses. Whether you're better off starting as a sole proprietor or choosing one of the more complicated organizational structures such as a partnership, corporation or Limited Liability Company (LLC) usually depends on several factors.



DETERMINE YOUR BUSINESS ENTITY

Entity Type	Description
Sole Proprietor	Most small businesses start out as sole proprietorships because this is the simplest type of business organization to establish for an individual starting a business. Under this structure you simply need to comply with any applicable licensing requirements and obtain a “Doing Business As” license if you plan to operate under an assumed name (a name that is not your own); there is nothing else you need to do. This is a good structure if risk and liabilities of your business are low.
Partnership	In a partnership, two or more people share ownership of a single business. Like proprietorships, the law does not distinguish between the business and its owners. While a partnership agreement is not necessary it is strongly advised to clearly set out each partner’s contribution/involvement in the business and what will happen in the event of liquidation.
Limited Liability Company (LLC)	The LLC is a relatively new type of hybrid business structure that is not permissible in most states. It is designed to provide the limited liability features of a corporation and the tax efficiencies and operational flexibility of a partnership. The owners are members, and the duration of the LLC is usually determined when the organization papers are filed.



DETERMINE YOUR BUSINESS ENTITY (CONT.)

<p>“C” Corporation</p>	<p>A corporation, chartered by the state in which it is headquartered, is considered by law to be a unique entity, separate and apart from those who own it. A corporation can be taxed; it can be sued; it can be entered into contractual agreements. The owners of a corporation are its shareholders.</p> <p>The shareholders elect a board of directors to oversee the major policies and decisions. The corporation has a life of its own and does not dissolve when ownership changes. The primary advantage of a corporation is that it provides its shareholders with a right to participate in the profits without any personal liability.</p>
<p>“S” Corporation</p>	<p>Owners who want the limited liability of a corporation and the “pass-through” tax treatment of a partnership or a sole proprietorship will often make the S-Corporation election.</p>
<p>Non-Profit Corporation (NPC)</p>	<p>NPCs are a type of corporate entity that limits payment or distribution of any part of its assets, income, or profit except in conformity with the purposes of the corporation. Members of the corporation may only receive profits in conformity with the purposes of the corporation. Generally, A NPC is created under the Michigan Nonprofit Corporation Act. However, there are many special acts that permit the formation of a wide variety of NPCs. Some purposes for which NPCs are commonly formed are those involving religious, educational, and charitable activities. To create A NPC, Articles of Incorporation must be filed with the Department of Labor & Economic Growth, Bureau of Commercial Services, and Corporation Division. Additional information and assistance is available at the Corporation Division online under Forms and Publications at http://www.michigan.gov/corporations. Copies of forms, statues, and publications are available at that site, or customers may call (517) 241-6470.</p>



Register with the appropriate Government Branch

No matter what type of business you choose to operate, you must register your business with the appropriate government branch.

- **Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)** – If you operate your business as a “C” corporation or a LLC you are required to obtain an Employer Identification Number to file and pay any tax obligation. You may register for a FEIN with the United States Internal Revenue Service.
- **State of Michigan License** – Not every business in Michigan is required to be licensed by the State of Michigan however, it is your responsibility to determine if your new venture requires a state license. You can contact the State of Michigan.
- **Saginaw County Assumed Names** – If you are a sole proprietor or a partnership and you conduct business in Michigan under an assumed name (a name other than your own), file for an Assumed Name Certificate with Saginaw County.
- **Saginaw Charter Township Business License** – Every business is required to be licensed by Saginaw Township. You can contact the Township Clerk’s office to find out if your business needs to submit additional information.



Register with the appropriate Government Branch

Government Branch	Phone	Address	Registration
United States Federal Tax Payer Service www.irs.gov/business/small/article	(313) 628-3722	477 Michigan Ave Detroit, MI 48226	Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)
State of Michigan Michigan Economic Development Corporation www.michigan.org/medc/service/license	(888) 522-0103	300 N. Washington Square Lansing, MI 48913	State Licenses
State of Michigan Michigan Department of Treasury www.michigan.gov/treasury	(517) 373-0888	Michigan Department of Treasury Lansing, MI 48922	Application for Registration (form C-3400)
Saginaw County Office of Saginaw County Clerk www.saginawcounty.com	(989) 790-5251	111 S. Michigan Ave, Room 101 Saginaw, MI 48602	Assumed Names
Saginaw Charter Township Office of Township Clerk www.saginawtownship.org	(989) 791-9830	4980 Shattuck Rd Saginaw, MI 48603	Business Licenses



Apply for a Saginaw Charter Township business license

Unless otherwise exempted by state law, all persons who conduct, engage in, maintain, operate or manage a business or occupation in Saginaw Township are required to obtain a business license. A separate license is required for **EACH BUSINESS LOCATION** in the township. Non-profit organizations will be exempt from the license fee.

An applicant must complete the application detailing business activity, location and ownership. Applications for a business license may be made in person or by mail.

Applicants must have:

A valid driver's license

A Federal Tax Identification number (FEIN)

Document requirements vary by license type.



Clerk's Office: Certify Permitted Business Activity:

The Township Clerk's Office is required to accept business license applications and forward them on to the departments that will give their approval. Business licenses must be renewed each year on December 15th. Township Clerk's Office staff is available to answer questions or aid in the completion of the application during regular business hours, Monday – Friday from 8am to 5pm.

License Application Filing Fee

The Saginaw Township Clerk's Office will review your license application for accuracy and completeness. Payments can be made by cash, money order, or check payable to the Township Clerk in the amount of \$10.00.

License Inspections

Some business licenses require that the business establishment undergo and pass inspection from various township departments prior to obtaining a license. Common inspections are: building, fire prevention, and background checks. You should be prepared for any inspection when you file your application. You may check the status of the application by contacting the Township Clerk's Office.

License Inspections Denial

In the event that the business did not pass any or all inspections, it is imperative that all violations are corrected. The business owner should contact the Township Clerk's Office or the inspecting department(s) to arrange for reinspection.

License Approval

After inspections are completed and approved, licenses are printed by the Clerk's Office and signed by the Clerk. Current license(s) must be posted in a conspicuous location within the business establishment.

Operating a Business without a License

The Saginaw Charter Township Code of Ordinances mandates that no business activity may take place without first obtaining the required license(s). A pending license application does not allow you to operate. Failure to comply can result in enforcement action.



**For assistance regarding business development
please contact:**

Bridget Smith, Planner
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(989) 791-9865

Saginaw Charter Township
Zoning and Planning
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