The California Food & Drug Branch issues permits to food manufacturers and wholesalers.

CA STATE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION
P.O. Box 942879, Sacramento, CA 94279
(800) 400-7115
www.boe.ca.gov
The BOE is responsible for administering property tax and sales tax programs.

CA CONTRACTOR’S STATE LICENSE BOARD
9821 Business Park Drive, Sacramento CA 95827
(800) 321-2752
www.cbll.ca.gov
The Contractor’s State License Board licenses and regulates contractors in 43 license classifications.

FRANCHISE TAX BOARD (FTB)
121 Spear St., Ste. 400, San Francisco CA 94105
(800) 852-5711
www.ftb.ca.gov
The FTB is responsible for administering two of California’s major tax programs: Personal Income Tax and the Corporation Tax.

COUNTY AGENCIES

COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER’S OFFICE
555 County Center, 1st Floor, Redwood City CA 94063
(650) 363-4500
www.smcare.org
The County Clerk-Recorder’s Office handles the filing of Fictitious Business Names Statements, provides forms and offers guidance to new business owners.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT
Agriculture, Weights & Measures
728 Hailer St., Redwood City CA 94064
(650) 363-4700
www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/agwm
Business owners with commercial weighing or measuring devices (scales, gas pumps, etc.) or retail price scanner systems must register with the County Sealer of Weights and Measures. Devices and scanner systems are inspected periodically for accuracy.

(Published November 2017. Information subject to change.)

COUNTY AGENCIES CONTINUED

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
2000 Alameda de las Pulgas, Suite 100, San Mateo CA 94403
(650) 327-4200
www.smh.org/coeap
Environmental Health issues permits to businesses that prepare or sell food to the general public, store hazardous materials, generate hazardous or medical wastes, practice body art, or operate a public swimming pool.

PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT
45 County Center, Redwood City CA 94063
Planning (650) 363-4161, Building: (650) 599-7311
www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/planning

BUILDING DIVISION
Issues building permits to owners and/or licensed contractors for property located in the unincorporated area of the county when different types of construction or landscaping is undertaken.

PLANNING DIVISION
Determines if a business use meets the zoning requirements in an area, if a special Use Permit is required and if other zoning requirements apply to the business and/or the property.

TAX COLLECTOR’S OFFICE
555 County Center, 1st Floor, Redwood City CA 94063
(650) 599-5889
The San Mateo County Tax Collector issues business licenses for certain kinds of businesses that are located in the County’s unincorporated area.

SAN MATEO COUNTY
ASSESOR-COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER-ELECTIONS
555 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063
(650) 363-4500
www.smcare.org
Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Starting a Business in San Mateo County

Dear Prospective Business Owner,

If you are starting a business in San Mateo County, I wish you every success in your endeavor.

Part of starting a business is to make it official by advising the appropriate government agencies that you intend to go into business. The agencies that you need to contact will vary based upon the kind of business that you plan to open. Some agencies will license your business, some will collect taxes, and others may inspect and regulate your business for the safety and welfare of the public. It is up to you to contact these agencies, fill out their forms and, in some instances, pay a fee to open the doors of your business.

I wish I could direct you to one office where you could get all of this information. The truth of the matter is—no single place handles all applications, requirements, permits and licenses! That’s why we’ve put together this resource guide, “Starting a Business in San Mateo County.” It lists the basic steps to starting a business. The agencies that you need to contact will vary based upon the kind of business that they plan to open. The website contains the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the state, local and regional agencies that issue the permits and licenses your business may need and links to their web pages.

California Business Portal

The California Business Portal is sponsored by the California Economic Development Partnership. A number of resources are provided, including public and private sources, state and federal agencies, and local private non-profit organizations.

SECRETARY OF STATE’S BUSINESS PROGRAMS DIVISION

www.sos.ca.gov/business

The Secretary of State’s Office maintains more than two million records for business entities in California including a searchable database of those businesses.

Small Business Administration

www.sba.gov

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is an independent agency of the federal government that counsels, assists, and protects the interests of small businesses. It’s mission is to help Americans start, build and grow businesses. The SBA offers advice on getting loans, grants, licenses, tax identification numbers, business planning and more.

City Information

Atherton Town Hall
(650) 752-0529
www.atherton.ca.us

Belmont City Hall
(650) 395-7413
www.belmont.ca.us

Brisbane City Hall
(415) 206-2100
www.brisbaneca.us

Burlingame City Hall
(650) 358-7203
www.burlingame.org

Colma Town Hall
(650) 997-8300
www.colma.ca.gov

 Daly City Hall
(650) 991-8088
www.dalycity.org

E. Palo Alto City Hall
(650) 965-3100
www.epaloalto.org

Foster City Hall
(650) 286-3258
www.fostercity.org

Half Moon Bay City Hall
(650) 726-8270
www.hmbcity.org

Hillsborough Town Hall
(650) 375-7400
www.hillsborough.net

Menlo Park City Hall
(650) 330-6562
www.menlopark.org

Midway City Hall
(650) 259-2352
www.mccaberkeley.org

Pacifica City Hall
(650) 738-7392
www.pacifica.ca.gov

Palo Alto City Hall
(650) 851-1700
www.paloaltovally.net

Redwood City Hall
(650) 780-7124
www.redwoodcity.org

San Bruno City Hall
(650) 616-7058
www.sanbruncity.org

San Carlos City Hall
(650) 902-4408
www.sancarlos.org

San Mateo City Hall
(650) 522-7113
www.sanmateo.ca.us

S. San Francisco City Hall
(650) 877-8505
www.sfmta.com

Woodside Town Hall
(650) 851-6796
www.woodsideca.org

Unincorporated
(650) 599-0889

N/A

San Mateo County

Six Steps to Start a Business

**Step One - Start with a Business Plan**

The U.S. Small Business Administration has a tutorial on how to create a business plan for all aspects of your business such as market analysis, financing, sales, marketing, advertising, and choosing a location. Visit [www.sba.gov/smallbusinessexplorer](http://www.sba.gov/smallbusinessexplorer) for more information.

**Step Two - File for a Fictitious Business Name**

Filing a Fictitious Business Name (FBN) Statement creates an accurate, easy-to-find record of who is responsible for the conduct of the business. You may obtain forms and assistance from the County Clerk’s Office (SIS County Center, 1st Floor, Redwood City). Forms are also available online at [www.smcacre.org/fictitious-businesses](http://www.smcacre.org/fictitious-businesses). The Clerk’s staff has information about requirements and can assist applicants with these steps.

**Step Three - Choose a Business Structure**

Select a business entity type. See [www.sos.ca.gov/business](http://www.sos.ca.gov/business) for a brief overview of the principal types of legal business structures available in California. Consult with an attorney and an accountant before determining your type of business entity.

**Step Four - Obtain a Business License from the City**

Where you will be doing business usually you can purchase a business license from the City Clerk’s Office in City Hall. If your business is located in unincorporated San Mateo County, you can call the Tax Collector’s Office at (650) 599-5989 for more information about obtaining a county business license.

**Step Five - Obtain Tax and Employer Identification Numbers**

The IRS, the State Board of Equalization, the Franchise Tax Board and the Employment Development Department agencies collect state and federal payroll taxes, state sales taxes and Corporate income taxes. Filing requirements are different for each agency.

For more information, go to [www.sos.ca.gov/business](http://www.sos.ca.gov/business) or [www.smcacre.org/fictitious-business-name](http://www.smcacre.org/fictitious-business-name) for more information about requirements and can assist applicants with these steps.

**Step Six - Check Your Resources to Determine What Requirements Your Business May Need to Operate**

Included in this brochure is a partial list of recommended sources to help you get started.

**Resources**

The California Business Portal is sponsored by the California Economic Development Partnership. A number of resources are provided, including public and private sources, state and federal agencies, and local private non-profit organizations.

**Secretary of State’s Business Programs Division**

**CALGOLD - California Government Online**

www.calgold.ca.gov

For more information, go to [www.calgold.ca.gov](http://www.calgold.ca.gov). The CALGOLD website is designed to help business owners find the appropriate permitting information for the type of business that they plan to open. The website contains the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the state, local and regional agencies that issue the permits and licenses your business may need and links to their web pages.

**Title 5: Business Regulations**

The California Business Portal is sponsored by the California Economic Development Partnership. A number of resources are provided, including public and private sources, state and federal agencies, and local private non-profit organizations.