

Dothan, Alabama



Process Flow Chart

————— how to obtain a —————

Business License

Dothan, Alabama



step 1

Contact the Planning & Development Department



- **Do this BEFORE you make a decision to buy a building or sign a lease!**
- Check the zoning of the property address to make sure it is zoned to support your type of business.



What is your business structure?

Starting a new business will require a decision as to which legal structure your business needs to be. These decisions impact how much you pay in taxes, and the amount of paperwork your business is required to do.

Corporation

Limited Liability Company (LLC)

Sole proprietorship

Partnership



Legal Business Structures

Legal business structure options

Corporation: The law views a corporation as a real, live person. Like an adult, a corporation is treated as a distinct and independent individual who has rights and responsibilities. A corporation must have a legal name. An owner's personal assets are completely separate from the corporation's assets, which means that (except in cases of fraud) if the corporation can't pay its creditors, those creditors can't dip into your personal assets to pay off the company's debts.

Limited Liability Company (LLC): An LLC is like a corporation regarding limited liability, and it's like a partnership regarding the flexibility of dividing profit among the owners. An LLC's key advantage is flexibility — especially regarding how profit and management authority are determined.

Sole proprietorship: The business arm of an individual who has decided not to carry on his or her business activity as a separate legal entity. This is the default when you don't establish a legal entity.

Partnership: A partnership is also called a firm. The term firm connotes an association of a group of individuals working together in a business or professional practice. Partnerships differ from corporations with respect to owners' liability. A partnership's owners fall into two categories:

General partners: Subject to unlimited liability. General partners have the authority and responsibility to manage the business.

Limited partners: Limited partners aren't responsible, as individuals, for the liabilities of the partnership entity. These junior partners have ownership rights to the business's profit, but they don't generally participate in the high-level management of the business.





What will be the activities of the business?

Business activities include any activity engaged in whether for profit or not.

Selling Goods

Performing a Service

Manufacturing a Product

Operating activities are specific to a company's core. Business activities may include manufacturing, distributing, marketing, selling a product or providing a service.





Do I need a Federal Tax ID number?

Find the answer to this question, go to the below website.

www.irs.gov

Then search “EIN”

Click “Apply ONLINE Now”





Obtain a Federal Tax ID number locally

Internal Revenue Service

(800) 829-1040

202 West Adams St., Dothan AL 36303





Do I need to send money (*remit*) sales tax for my business?

Prior to selling taxable goods or offering taxable services in Alabama, a business that has been established within the state is required to register for an Alabama Sales Tax Number

**They will issue a number for your business.*

<http://revenue.alabama.gov/salestax/>





How to register with the State of Alabama to send money (*remit*) for my business sales tax

Register Online https://myalabamataxes.alabama.gov/_/#7

Businesses may register for an Alabama Sales Tax Number online by visiting My Alabama Taxes and following the instructions. The Alabama Department of Revenue recommends all new businesses register online. It's fast, free, and more reliable than other options.

Register by Mail

Businesses may register for an Alabama Sales Tax Number by downloading, completing, and mailing the Department of Revenue Combined Registration/Application (Form COM-101) to the following address: Alabama Department of Revenue, Business Registration Unit, PO Box 327100, Montgomery, AL 36132-7100

If you need assistance with completing the Alabama registration form, call (334)242-1584.

Register in Person

Business owners may register for an Alabama Sales Tax Number in person by visiting a local Alabama Department of Revenue office.



How to Register to pay sales tax



How to register in Dothan City or Houston County to send money (*remit*) for my business sales tax

Register Online: ①

<http://revds.com/taxpayer/select-your-state/alabama/online-filing-registration/>

Businesses must register with Revenue Discovery System (RDS) in addition to the State of Alabama, as RDS is the third party tax collection agent for the City of Dothan and Houston County.

Visit RDS at revds.com and ① click on the “For Taxpayers” button.

On the next page ② click “Select You State” this is located at the top of the page, and then ③ click on Alabama.

Next page, ④ click on Online Filing & Registration , next page ⑤ click business license filing.

Sales & Use Taxpayer Support

Toll Free: (800) 556-7274 (option 1)

Email: support@revds.com

Register by Mail

Businesses may register for by mail:

RDS/MuniServices PO Box 830725, Birmingham, AL 35283-0725



Before applying for a Business License

step 2

Now that you know..

your business structure and the business operation activities, you can complete the application for a business license.

1.) Be prepared to tell the Business License office:

Legal business structure of the company
What will be the activities of business?

2.) Address of where you plan to operate the business.

SEE STEP 1

REQUESTING a
BUSINESS LICENSE



APPLICATION



Find the business license application go to: <http://www.dothan.org>

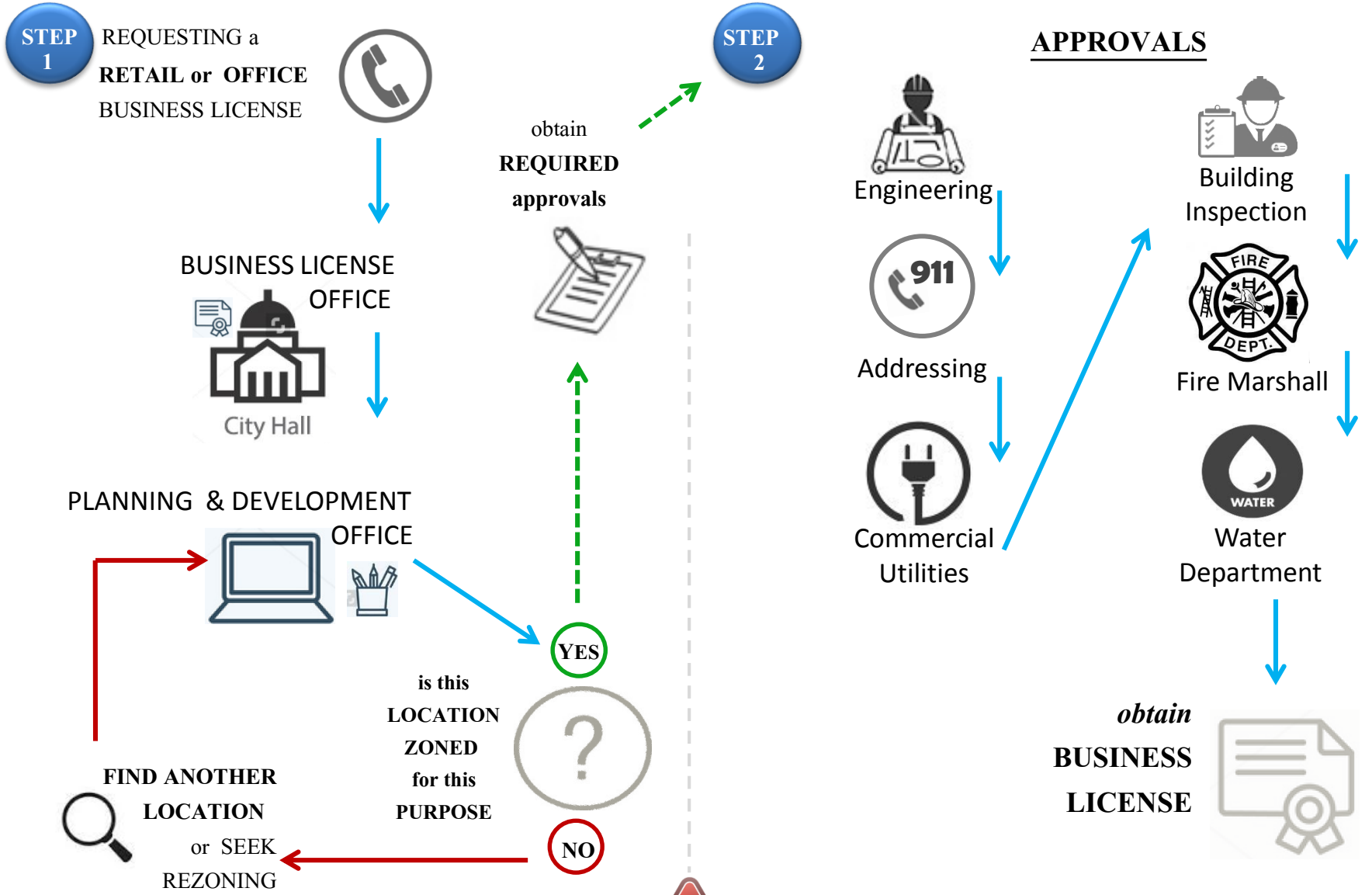
under the tab: “ How Do I, ” Click on “Apply for a Business License”

<http://www.dothan.org/index.aspx?NID=35>

Next.. After the application is completed, you'll be given a compliance form.

If the Business is Located Within the City Limits.

Retail and Office Business License Process Flow



Check Alert page for further information

Food (no Alcohol) Business License Process Flow

STEP 1

REQUESTING a
FOOD SERVICE
BUSINESS LICENSE



BUSINESS LICENSE
OFFICE
 City Hall

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
OFFICE

FIND ANOTHER
LOCATION
or SEEK
REZONING



obtain
REQUIRED
approvals



STEP 2

APPROVALS



Engineering



Addressing



Commercial
Utilities



Building
Inspection



Fire Marshall



Water
Department



Fats, Oils Grease



Health
Department

YES

is this
LOCATION
ZONED
for this
PURPOSE



NO

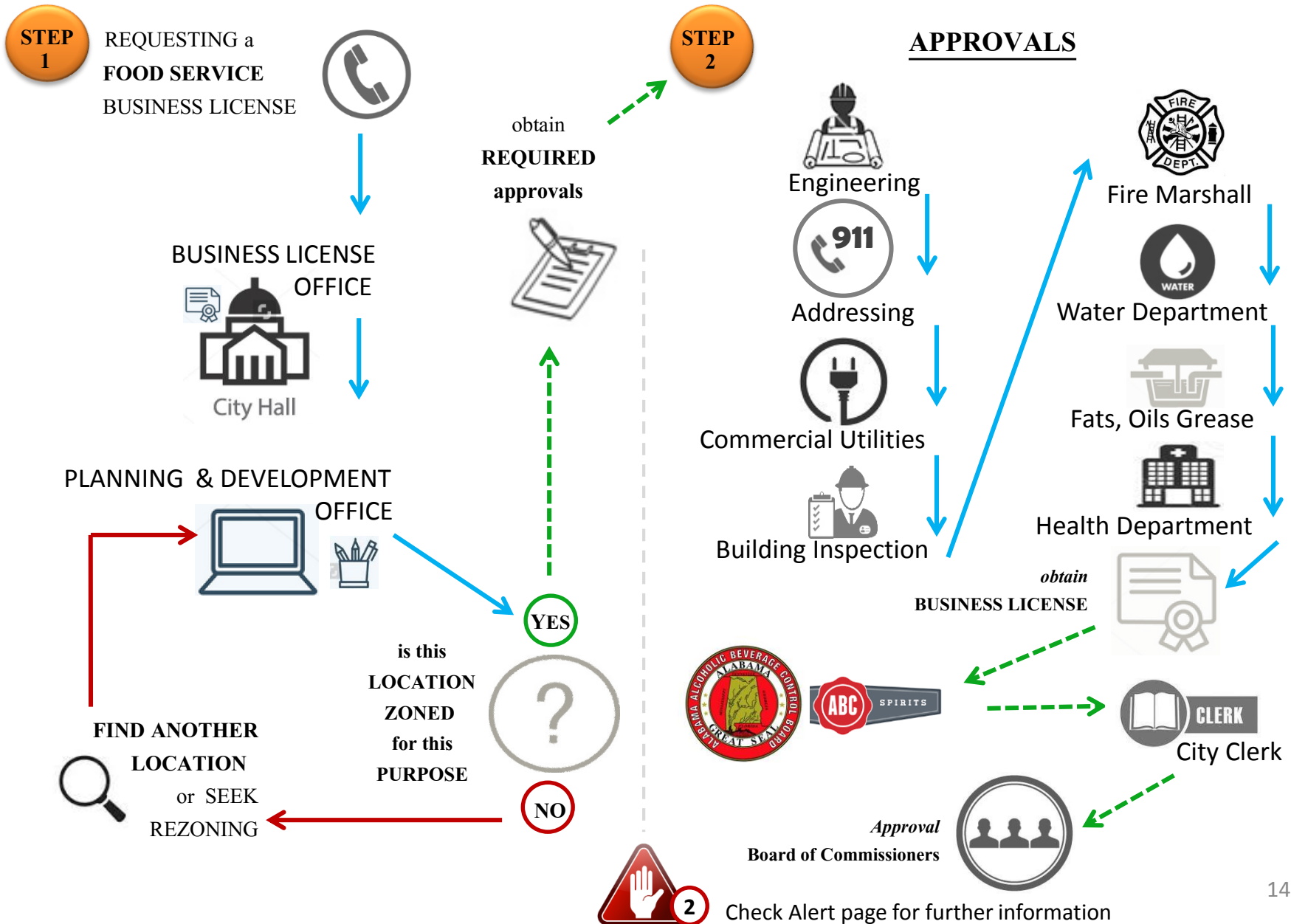
obtain
BUSINESS LICENSE



2

Check Alert page for further information

Food and Alcohol Business License Process Flow



Contact Numbers



BUSINESS LICENSE OFFICE
(334) 615-3166



Fire Marshall
(334) 615-3500



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
(334) 615-4410



Water Department
(334) 615-3217 or Cell
334-726-5164



Engineering
(334) 615-4420



Fats, Oils Grease Trap
(334) 615-4458



E911 Addressing
(334) 615-4420



Health Department
(334) 678-2815



Commercial Utilities
(334) 615-4450



CLERK City Clerk
(334) 615-3160



Building Inspection
(334) 615-4450



Alabama Alcoholic Beverage Control Board
(334) 792-9155

Home Based Office License Process Flow

REQUESTING a
HOME OFFICE
BUSINESS LICENSE



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
OFFICE



APPLICATION
approvals



obtain
**BUSINESS
LICENSE**



- Approved in the Planning Department
- Normally takes 10 minutes
- Documents required:
 - ✓ Drivers License
 - ✓ Renter, Landlord authorization letter needed.



Check Alert page for further information

Home Based – Special Exception Business License Process Flow

REQUESTING a
HOME BUSINESS
LICENSE



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
OFFICE



APPLY for
SPECIAL
EXCEPTION



BOARD of ZONING
ADJUSTMENT
(BZA) Meeting



obtain
BUSINESS
LICENSE



Home Based Business – Special Exception

Trade Work, Lawn care, Etc.

- Approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA)
- BZA meets at 9:00 AM first Wednesday of every month.



Check Alert page for further information

Alert Keys



This is the general process for obtaining your business license for office or retail uses. Some uses may require additional approvals from the separate commissions, boards or outside agencies before your license can be issued. Some uses need Special Exception approval which requires a public hearing before the Board of Zoning Adjustment. The Planning Department will advise if any additional steps or approvals are necessary.



This is the general process for obtaining your business license for food service businesses. Some uses may require additional approvals from the separate commissions, boards or outside agencies before your license can be issued. For instance, if you are selling alcohol, you will be required to obtain approvals from both the Alabama Alcohol Beverage Control Board and the City Commission. Some uses need Special Exception approval which requires a public hearing before the Board of Zoning Adjustment. The Planning Department will advise if any additional steps or approvals are necessary.



Some home based offices are approved in the Planning Department office while you wait. The process generally takes 10 minutes. You will need is a letter of authorization from your landlord if you rent and a copy of your drivers license.



Some home based businesses require Special Exception approval from the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA). The Planning Department will assist you with this process. The BZA meets once a month and final decisions are generally made at that time. There is a fee of \$35 for this service.