



Columbia Area Small Business Development Center  
1225 Laurel Street  
Columbia, SC 29201  
Phone: (803) 777-5118  
Fax: (803) 545-0079  
[www.usregionsbdc.com](http://www.usregionsbdc.com)

## Business Contact Information

### Local Requirements

**Business License:** Most municipalities in South Carolina require you to obtain a business license in order to conduct business. License fees vary and are based on sales revenues. If you do not see the municipality where you plan to conduct business below, contact the Town Hall closest to you for information on licensing.

Columbia  
Richland County  
803-545-3345  
[WWW.COLUMBIASC.NET](http://WWW.COLUMBIASC.NET)

Manning  
Clarendon County  
803-435-8477  
[WWW.CITYOFMANNING.ORG](http://WWW.CITYOFMANNING.ORG)

Lexington  
Lexington County  
803-359-4164  
[WWW.LEXSC.COM](http://WWW.LEXSC.COM)

Winnsboro  
Fairfield County  
803-635-4041  
[WWW.TOWNOFWINNSBORO.COM](http://WWW.TOWNOFWINNSBORO.COM)

Cayce  
Lexington County  
803-796-9020  
[WWW.CAYCESC.NET](http://WWW.CAYCESC.NET)

Newberry  
Newberry County  
803-321-1000  
[WWW.CITYOFNEWBERRY.COM](http://WWW.CITYOFNEWBERRY.COM)

West Columbia  
Lexington County  
803-791-1880  
[WWW.WESTCOLUMBIASC.GOV](http://WWW.WESTCOLUMBIASC.GOV)

Sumter  
Sumter County  
803-436-2500  
[WWW.SUMTERSC.GOV](http://WWW.SUMTERSC.GOV)

Camden  
Kershaw County  
803-432-2421  
[WWW.CITYOFCAMDEN.ORG](http://WWW.CITYOFCAMDEN.ORG)

Forest Acres  
Richland County  
803-782-9475  
[WWW.FORESTACRES.NET](http://WWW.FORESTACRES.NET)

Springdale  
Lexington County  
803-794-0408  
[WWW.SPRINGDALESC.COM](http://WWW.SPRINGDALESC.COM)

**Special License:** Some professions and businesses require additional licenses or examinations. Contact the following agency to learn about special permits that may be required for your business.

Department of Consumer Affairs  
PO Box 5757  
3600 Forest Drive  
Columbia, SC 29250  
803-734-4200  
[WWW.SCCONSUMER.GOV](http://WWW.SCCONSUMER.GOV)

Program Assistance Line (PAL)  
PO Box 142  
Columbia, SC 29202  
803-734-2050

**Planning & Zoning:** For information pertaining to whether your business can operate in the chosen location, you must check the local zoning ordinances. This includes Home Business Requirements. This can be done at the addresses given below.

City of Columbia  
1136 Washington St.  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-545-3333

Lexington County  
212 S. Lake Drive  
Lexington, SC 29702  
803-785-8121

Clarendon County  
412 N. Brooks St.  
Manning, SC 29102  
803-435-8672

Richland County  
2020 Hampton St.  
Columbia, SC 29204  
803-576-2175

Kershaw County  
515 Walnut St.  
Camden, SC 29020  
803-425-1500

Fairfield County  
101 S. Congress St.  
Winnsboro, SC 29180  
803-712-6596

Newberry County  
1226 College Street  
Newberry, SC 29108  
803-321-2166

Sumter County  
12 W. Liberty St.  
Sumter, SC 29150  
803-774-1660

If your business will be located in a historic landmark downtown Columbia and you plan to do any physical renovation to the facility, it must first be approved by zoning at 803-545-3333.

**Building & Fire Inspections:** Before you can operate in a specific business location, you must obtain a certificate of occupancy issued by the local building inspections department. An application is made through the business license office. A building inspector and fire inspector will come and look at the business location.

City of Columbia  
1136 Washington St  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-545-3420

Lexington County  
212 S. Lake Drive  
Lexington, SC 29702  
803-785-8130

Clarendon County  
412 N Brooks St  
Manning SC 29102  
803-435-8672

Richland County  
2020 Hampton St.  
Columbia, SC 29204  
803-576-2146

Kershaw County  
515 Walnut Street  
Camden, SC 29020  
803-425-1500

Fairfield County  
117 S Congress St  
Winnsboro, SC 29180  
803-712-6596

Newberry County  
1226 College St  
Newberry, SC 29108  
803-321-2166

Sumter County  
12 W Liberty St  
Sumter SC, 29150  
803-774-1660

**Health Department:** If your business will be involved in food handling, you must contact the county health department in the county where you will do business for requirements on permits.

Richland County  
2000 Hampton Street  
Columbia SC  
803-576-2980

Kershaw County  
1116 Church St  
Camden, SC  
803-425-6012

Fairfield County  
1136 Kincaid Bridge Rd  
Winnsboro, SC 29180  
803-635-6481

Lexington County  
112 West Hospital Drive  
West Columbia, SC  
803-941-0202

Clarendon County  
110 East Boyce Street  
Manning, SC 29102  
803-435-8168

Newberry County  
2111 Wilson Road  
Newberry, SC 29108  
803-321-2171

Sumter County  
105 N Magnolia St  
Sumter, SC 29150  
803-778-6548

**Legal Advice:** You can profit from obtaining competent legal advice when you make many decisions about your business. To locate an attorney in your area or with expertise in special areas, you may contact:

SC Bar Association  
Lawyer Referral Service  
Richland and Lexington: 803-799-7100  
Toll Free: 800-868-2284

<http://www.scbars.org/PublicServices/FindaLawyer.aspx>

**Real Estate:** Be very careful about real estate transactions. Before signing a lease or contract, you should speak with an attorney. To locate a realtor, check the yellow pages or contact:

SC Association of Realtors  
3780 Fernandina Road  
Columbia, SC 29210  
Phone: 803-772-5206  
Toll Free: 800-233-6381  
[www.screaltors.com](http://www.screaltors.com)

**Property Tax:** If your business owns real property, you should check with you county tax assessor's office to find out about property taxes. You may also be liable for state property taxes on inventory and equipment. For more information contact:

SC Department of Revenue  
Property Tax  
301 Gervais St  
Columbia, SC 29214  
803-898-5484  
[www.sctax.org](http://www.sctax.org)

**Employee Recruitment:** There are many ways to locate potential employees, including word-of-mouth, advertising, and employment agencies. There is also a state agency that helps employers locate and train employees or assists business owners in solving employee problems such as absenteeism and turnover.

OneStop Midlands Workforce Center  
[www.midlandsonestop.org](http://www.midlandsonestop.org)

Columbia OneStop  
700 Taylor St  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-737-5627

Lexington OneStop  
714 S Lake Dr  
Lexington, SC 29071  
803-359-6131

Winnsboro OneStop  
1009 Kincaid Bridge Rd  
Winnsboro, SC 29180  
803-635-2292

SC Employment Security Commission  
PO Box 995  
1550 Gadsden St  
Columbia, SC 29201  
[www.sces.org](http://www.sces.org)

**Insurance:** Most small businesses carry insurance to shield their assets and earnings from risks and unexpected hazards. An insurance agent can help you decide what kind of coverage you need. Many agents are listed in the Yellow Pages of the telephone directory or you can contact:

SC State Government Department of Insurance  
300 Arbor Lake Drive Suite 1200  
Columbia, SC 29223  
803-737-6180

[www.sc.gov](http://www.sc.gov)

**Signage:** All signage must be approved by local zoning and building inspection divisions.

**Construction on a building for business:** Construction on a building for business purposes requires a Construction Certificate of Occupancy, which differs from a Certificate of Occupancy.

**Restaurants:** Must submit a seating layout to building inspections for Certificate of Occupancy Approval.

**Imports/Exports:** If your business engages in importing or exporting, you may want to obtain special assistance.

U.S. Department of Commerce  
International Trade Administration  
1835 Assembly Street, Suite 172  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-765-5345  
[www.commerce.gov](http://www.commerce.gov)

**Patents, Trademarks, and Copyrights:** Information on patent laws and inventions is available through Federal bookstores and the Department of Commerce. Patent attorneys and agents can be located through the Yellow Pages of the Telephone Directory. For more information or to register a patent, contact:

U.S. Department of Commerce  
Patent and Trademark Office  
Arlington, VA  
1-800-786-9199  
[www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov)

You can obtain information about trademarks, service marks and business searches if you contact:

Secretary of State  
PO Box 11350 Columbia, SC 29211  
1205 Pendelton St. Suite 525  
Columbia, SC 29201  
Business Filings: 803-734-2158  
Trademarks: 803-734-0629  
Public Charities: 803-734-1790  
[www.scsos.com](http://www.scsos.com)

Copyright Office  
Library of Congress  
101 Independence Ave SE  
Washington, DC 20559  
202-707-3000  
[www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov)

**Census Data:** The South Carolina State Data Center acts as the primary clearinghouse in South Carolina for Bureau of Census products. Assistance is provided on such topics as population estimates and projections, sources of data, census concepts and definitions, and interpretation and use of data. For more information on the South Carolina Data Center, contact:

SC State Data Center: Office of Research and Statistics  
1000 Assembly Street

425 Dennis Building  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-898-9963  
[www.ors.state.sc.us](http://www.ors.state.sc.us)

**Regional Data:** Central Midlands Regional Planning Council is a governmental research and planning agency. It serves the four county region surrounding South Carolina's capitol city of Columbia: Richland, Lexington, Fairfield, and Newberry counties. The council monitors the area's growth and changes, compiles, analyzes, and publishes a wide variety of information on the region. Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments is another source for the Sumter Area. For information contact:

Central Midlands Council of Governments  
236 Stoneridge Dr  
Columbia, SC 29210  
803-376-5390  
[www.centralmidlands.org](http://www.centralmidlands.org)

Santee-Lynches Regional Council of  
Governments  
36 W. Liberty St.  
Sumter, SC 29150  
803-775-7381  
[www.santeelynchescoq.org](http://www.santeelynchescoq.org)

### **State Requirements**

**SC Business One Stop (SCBOS):** The SC DOR has created an online system to provide you with the information you need to get the right business licenses and set up tax accounts. Business One Stop (BOS) is a one-stop-shop for many of the business tax accounts you need including an employer withholding account, unemployment insurance and a sales and use tax license. Visit their website: [www.scbos.com](http://www.scbos.com)

**Sales and Use Tax Permit:** Issued by the Dept of Revenue and Taxation, required if collecting sales tax.

SC Department of Revenue  
301 Gervais St  
Columbia, SC 29214  
Registration: 803-898-5872  
Sales and Use Tax: 803-898-5788  
[www.sctax.org](http://www.sctax.org)

**SC State Retail License:** With an SC State Retail License, a retailer can purchase tax-free. Anyone selling any kind of product needs to obtain this license when securing your sales and use tax permit.

SC Department of Revenue  
Retail License  
301 Gervais St  
Columbia, SC 29214  
803-898-5872  
[www.sctax.org](http://www.sctax.org)

**Dept of Revenue and Taxation (obtaining a state tax number):** Employers are typically responsible for state collections & payments: [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

**State Income Tax Withheld from Employee's Wages:** Proprietorships, partnerships, and corporations with employees are required to file state tax reports.

SC Department of Revenue. 301 Gervais St. Columbia, SC 29214. 803-898-5000  
[www.sctax.org](http://www.sctax.org)

**SC DOR Business Tax Guide:** This helpful tax guide can be found by searching [www.sctax.org](http://www.sctax.org) or by typing [www.sctax.org/Tax+Information/Smallbus/business\\_tax\\_guide.htm](http://www.sctax.org/Tax+Information/Smallbus/business_tax_guide.htm) into your internet browser.

**SC Employment Security Commission:** If you will be hiring anyone in your business, you must notify the ESC. They will inform you of what forms you need to file with their agency.

SC Employment Security Commission. 1550 Gadsden St. Columbia, SC 29201. 803-737-2400  
[www.sces.org](http://www.sces.org)

**Workman's Compensation:** Contact your local insurance agent or:

SC Workman's Compensation Commission  
1333 Main St, Suite 500  
Columbia, SC 29202  
803-737-5700  
[www.wcc.sc.gov](http://www.wcc.sc.gov)

**Alcohol Beverage Service:** If you will be serving or selling alcoholic beverages in the course of doing business, you must contact this agency.

Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and  
Firearms  
1835 Assembly St, Room 309  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-251-4600

SC Department of Revenue  
Alcoholic Beverage Control  
301 Gervais St  
Columbia, SC 29214  
803-737-5000

**Day Care Licensing:** Anyone conducting business involving groups of seniors or children must contact this office to satisfy state requirements.

SC Department of Social Services  
PO Box 1520  
1535 Confederate Avenue Extension  
Columbia, SC 29202  
803-898-7601  
[www.dss.sc.gov](http://www.dss.sc.gov)

**Food or Cosmetic Related Businesses:** If your business will involve the production or packaging of food or cosmetics, you must contact:

SC Department of Agriculture  
1101 Williams Street  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-737-9700  
[www.agriculture.sc.gov](http://www.agriculture.sc.gov)

**State of South Carolina**  
**Occupational & Professional Licensing Boards**

Accountancy 803-896-4492	Funeral Services 803-896-4494	Pharmacy 803-896-4700
Architectural Examiners 803-896-4408	Geologists 803-896-4494	Physical Therapy 803-896-4655
Auctioneers Commission 803-896-4494	Landscape Architects 803-794-9131	Pilotage-Port of Charleston Harbor Pilot 803-896-4830
Barber Examiners 803-896-4491	Law Examiners 803-734-1080	Podiatry Examiners 803-896-4685
Chiropractic Examiners 803-896-4587	Long-term Health Care Administrators 803-896-4544	Psychology 803-896-4661
Contractors 803-896-4586	Manufactured Housing 803-896-4682	Real Estate 803-896-4400
Cosmetology 803-896-4568	Massage/Bodywork Therapy 803-896-4494	Residential Home Builders 803-896-4696
Dentistry 803-896-4599	Medical Examiners 803-896-4500	Social Work 803-896-4665
Engineers and Land Surveyors 803-896-4422	Nursing 803-896-4550	Soil Classifiers 803-734-9131
Environmental Systems Operators 803-896-4430	Occupational Therapy 803-896-4683	Speech, Language, Audiology, Pathology 803-896-4650
Foresters 803-896-4494	Opticianry 803-896-4681	Veterinary Medical Examiners 803-896-4598
	Optometry 803-896-4679	



More registration and licensing requirements can be found in the Blue Pages of your phonebook under “Labor Licensing and Regulation Department of—” or online at [www.llr.state.sc.us](http://www.llr.state.sc.us).

## **Federal Requirements**

**Internal Revenue Service:** For information on federal tax regulations:

Call 1-800-829-1040

Visit [www.irs.ustreas.gov](http://www.irs.ustreas.gov)

Visit the Columbia IRS Office  
1835 Assembly Street  
Columbia, SC 29201

Employers are typically responsible several types of federal collections & payments:

1. Income tax withheld from employee's wages. Proprietorships, partnerships, and corporations with employees are required to file federal tax reports.
2. (FICA) Employer and Employee Social Security Taxes. Every business with one or more employees is required by law to withhold Federal Income tax as well as Social Security Taxes from the wages paid to employees.
3. (FUTA) Federal Unemployment Tax.
4. Obtaining a Federal tax ID Number.

**Immigration and Naturalization Service:** Every employer must have an Eligibility Verification Form (I-9) completed and on file for each employee. For assistance or copies of this form, call INS at 1-800-870-FORM.

**U.S. Dept of Labor:** For information on covered employees, child labor, training, wages, tipped employees, polygraph testing, substance abuse, or hiring & firing, contact:

Employment Standards  
Wage and Hour Division  
1835 Assembly St  
Columbia, SC 29201  
Columbia Office: 803-765-5981  
National Phone Number: 1-866-487-9243  
[www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov)

**Occupational Safety & Health (OSHA):** OSHA requires that if your firm employs more than 10 people, you maintain a record of on the job injuries on OSHA Form 200, which must be available for inspection and retained for five years. For more information contact:

OSHA Information  
1835 Assembly St  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-765-5904  
[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

## **General Business Information**

**Personal Credit:** Before approaching a bank or investor for a loan, it is advisable to know the condition of your credit report. To check on your personal credit report and obtain your credit score, contact one of the three credit reporting agencies below or go online to several independent providers of this service.

Equifax  
[www.equifax.com](http://www.equifax.com)

Experian  
[www.experia.com](http://www.experia.com)

Trans Union  
[www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com)

**Credit Card Merchants:** If you are interested in accepting credit cards from your customers, you begin by contacting your bank's Merchant Bankcard Services, Retail banker. Your banker will instruct you on how to accomplish this. Many sales are lost each year by retailers who do not accept credit cards. You must have a retail site for your business.

### **Obtaining a barcode or Universal Product Code (UPC):**

1. To obtain an application for a Bar Code, contact the Uniform Code Council by calling 937-435-3870 or by emailing [info@gs1us.org](mailto:info@gs1us.org). The website is [www.uc-council.org](http://www.uc-council.org).
2. Fill out the application completely and return it to the Uniform Code Council with the required fee.
3. The fee is dependent on your annual sales.
4. Processing the application takes approximately 10-15 days upon their receipt of application and fee.
5. You will be issued a bar code and instructions for getting the bar code on your product.

## **Columbia Area Business Assistance Programs**

USC Small Business Development  
Center  
1225 Laurel St  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-777-5118  
[www.uscregionsbdc.com](http://www.uscregionsbdc.com)

Small Business Administration  
1835 Assembly St  
Columbia, SC 29201  
Columbia Area: 803-765-5376  
National Phone Number: 800-827-5722  
[www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

Service Corps of Retired Executives  
(SCORE)  
1835 Assembly St  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-765-5131  
[www.score.org](http://www.score.org)

SC Chamber of Commerce  
1201 Main St Suite 1700  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-799-4601  
[www.scchamber.net](http://www.scchamber.net)

Columbia Chamber of Commerce  
930 Richland St  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-733-1110  
[www.columbiachamber.com](http://www.columbiachamber.com)

Lexington Chamber of Commerce  
PO Box 44  
321 S Lake Dr  
Lexington, SC 29072  
803-359-6113  
[www.lexingtonsc.org](http://www.lexingtonsc.org)

SC Department of Commerce  
1201 Main St Suite 1600  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-737-0400  
[www.sccommerce.com](http://www.sccommerce.com)

SC Office of Small and Minority  
Business Assistance  
1205 Pendleton St  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-734-2498  
[www.govoepp.state.sc.us/osmba](http://www.govoepp.state.sc.us/osmba)

Office of the Secretary of State  
Information for Non-Profit Organizations  
Corporations 803-734-2158  
Charities 803-734-1790  
1205 Pendleton St Ste 525  
Columbia, SC 29201  
[www.scsos.com](http://www.scsos.com)

South Carolina Statewide Minority  
Business Development Center  
803-779-0266  
1515 Richland St  
Columbia, SC 29201  
[www.scmdbdc.com](http://www.scmdbdc.com)

Better Business Bureau  
803-254-2525  
1515 Burnette Drive  
Columbia, SC 29210  
[www.columbia.bbb.org](http://www.columbia.bbb.org)