Business License
General Information

Who is required to obtain a business license?

All persons and business entities located or doing business in the City of Novato are required by City ordinance to obtain a business license. A new business license is also required if a business changes location or ownership. For most businesses the business license fee is a fixed rate depending on the number of employees.

Where do I get information and apply for a business license?

City of Novato
Finance Department
922 Machin Avenue
Novato, CA 94945

From 101 exit DeLong Avenue
Turn right at Machin Avenue.
☎ Tel: (415) 899-8917
Fax No. (415) 899-8215
Monday – Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
For same day approval, please come between 9:00 a.m. to 11:00.
Forms of payment accepted: Cash or Check

The application can also be downloaded from our website:
www.novato.org/doingbusiness

What information do I need to provide in order to apply for a business license?

To obtain a business license, you will be asked to complete an application form. If the business is located in Novato, you will also need a zoning approval or a Home Occupation Permit from the Planning Division. In addition, some businesses may need a permit from the Police Department.

Where do I go to get a zoning approval or a Home Occupation Permit?

The City’s zoning ordinance regulates land uses. Some businesses are not allowed in certain areas or may require a use permit. If you plan to operate a business in your home, a Home Occupation Permit is required in addition to obtaining a business license.

Contact the Planning Division for more information:
City of Novato
Community Development Dept., Planning Division
922 Machin Avenue
Novato, CA 94945
☎ (415) 899-8989
Counter Planning Schedule:
Monday to Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 11:00

Remodeling/ Construction and Sign Permits

Any remodeling or construction planned for a business may require a building permit. Before doing any construction, check with the Building Division. If you plan to put up or change a sign, first contact the Planning Division. A sign permit may be required.

Public Health

All food service businesses, e.g., restaurants, snack bars, delis, catering and grocery stores must be licensed by the County of Marin Environmental Health Services.

If you plan to serve or sell alcoholic beverages, a license is required from the State Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control and a Use Permit is required from the Planning Division.

Fictitious Business Names (DBA)

Any name used other than your own name (i.e., John Doe, Consulting) must be filed with the Marin County Clerk’s office.

Retail Sales Permit

Sales or Use Tax may apply to your business activities.

You can obtain more information by contacting the State Board of Equalization.

Tax Identification Numbers

If you are planning to have employees, you will need an employee tax ID number from the Federal and State governments. Contact IRS and EDD.

BUSINESS LICENSE
HELPFUL INFORMATION

Business License Application
City of Novato Finance Division
922 Machin Avenue
Novato, CA 94945
(415) 899-8917
Monday to Friday - 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
City Offices Closed on Alternating Fridays
www.novato.org

Home Occupation Permit
City of Novato Planning Division
922 Machin Avenue
Novato, CA 94945
(415) 899-8989
Monday to Thursday - 9:00 a.m. to 11:00

Building Permit / Business Signs (exterior)
City of Novato Community Development
922 Machin Avenue
Novato, CA 94945
(415) 899-8989
Monday to Thursday - 9:00 a.m. to 11:00

Fictitious Name Registration
County Business License - County of Marin
Marin Civic Center
Room 234, 3501 Civic Center Drive
San Rafael, CA 94913 Hrs: (9-4)
(415) 473-6152
www.marincounty.org

Food Business Marin County.
Environmental Health Services
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 236
San Rafael, CA 94903-4175
(415) 473-6907
California Secretary of State  
111 Capitol Mall Rm 312  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 657-5448  
Limited Partnerships  
www.ss.ca.gov

California Department of Consumer Affairs  
400 R Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 445-1254  
(800) 952-5210  
www.dca.ca.gov

California Alcoholic Beverage Control  
50 D Street, Suite 130  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
(707) 576-2165  
www.abc.ca.gov

State Board of Equalization  
State Resale Permit/ Sales Tax/  
Sale of Business  
50 D St Rm 230  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
(707) 576-2100  
www.boe.ca.gov

California State Contractors Board  
50 D Street, #105  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
(800) 321-2752  
(707) 576-6759  
www.cslb.ca.gov

Federal Employer Identification Number  
Internal Revenue Service  
(800) 829-4933  
www.irs.gov

Board of Barbering and Cosmetology  
P.O. Box 944226  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2260  
(800) 952-5210 or (916) 575-7281  
www.barbercosmo.ca.gov

Novato Chamber of Commerce  
807 DeLong Avenue  
Novato, CA 94945  
(415) 897-1164

Better Business Bureau  
510 16th St., Ste 550  
Oakland, CA 94612-1584  
(510) 238-1000 or (866) 411-2221  
www.goldengatebbb.org

California Tax Service  
Identification Number  
Small Business Assistance Center  
www.taxes.ca.gov/small_business_assistance

Agricultural / Weights and Measure  
County of Marin  
(415) 473-6700

Waste Management Division  
County of Marin  
799 Northgate Dr # 100 San Rafael ca 94903  
(415)473-6647

Child Care/ RCFE/ Adult Care  
California Department of Social Services  
(408)324-2126  
(510)286-0379  
www.ccdld.ca.gov

Occupations that require Police Permit in  
addition to a business license:

- Charitable Solicitation
- Commercial Solicitation
- Escort Service
- Massage Establishment/Technician
- Pawn Shop/Second Hand Dealer
- Taxi Companies or Drivers
- Private Police, Security Guards, Night Watchmen,  
  Private Detectives
- Weapons Dealer Permit

For questions regarding the permit, please contact the  
Police Department, (415) 899-7008.

Police Permits for occupations listed above:  
Apply at City of Novato  
Finance Department  
922 Machin Avenue  
Novato, CA 94945  
(415) 899-8917

City Offices (excluding Police) are  
Closed on alternating Fridays