

## PERMITS

### Retail/Commercial/Industrial Occupancy

Prior to signing a lease/purchase agreement, contact the Planning Department (440) 974-5740 to confirm that your business is permitted at the proposed location. If the zoning is suitable, discuss specific development standards with the Planning Department that may apply to your business (Occupancy Permit, Conditional Use Permits, parking requirements, Sign Regulations, Design Guidelines and Performance Standards).

Permits - [www.cityofmentor.com/live/permits](http://www.cityofmentor.com/live/permits)

### Design Guidelines

[www.cityofmentor.com/work/planning-zoning](http://www.cityofmentor.com/work/planning-zoning)

#### Helpful Design Considerations

**Conditional Use Permits (CUP)** – Required for outdoor dining, auto related businesses, drive-thru windows and other uses.

**Parking** – Number of spaces, lighting, and landscaping.

**Signage** – Size, number, color, and lighting of signs.

**Design Guidelines** – Requirements for Old Village, Industrial, Commercial, Retail and Residential districts.

### Building Permits

If you plan to make tenant improvements, renovations, or new construction, contact the Building Department to determine what plans need to be submitted and/or permits obtained at (440) 974-5785.

### Lake County Health Department

If your business intends to prepare and/or sell food, you will need a Health Department permit, contact them at (440) 350-2543 for more information.

[www.lcghd.org](http://www.lcghd.org)

### Home-Based Business

If you are planning to operate your business out of your home, you will need to meet the definition of a "Home Occupation" or secure a CUP. The Planning Department (440) 974-5740 can explain the requirements.

[www.cityofmentor.com/wp-content/uploads/ED.HomeOccupation2010.pdf](http://www.cityofmentor.com/wp-content/uploads/ED.HomeOccupation2010.pdf)

### Vendor License

Required to make a taxable retail or service sale in Ohio. Contact the Lake County Auditor's Office at (440) 350-2531

[www.lakecountyohio.gov/auditor/License/VendorLicenses.aspx](http://www.lakecountyohio.gov/auditor/License/VendorLicenses.aspx)

## BUSINESS INCENTIVES

### Mentor Incentive Grant (MIG)

Multi-year performance grant based on a business's investment and the amount of new payroll taxes created. The more a business exceeds the initial payroll threshold, the more it benefits for the Mentor Incentive Grant.

[www.cityofmentor.com/wp-content/uploads/MIG-Guidelines-Application.pdf](http://www.cityofmentor.com/wp-content/uploads/MIG-Guidelines-Application.pdf)

### Mentor Economic Development Grant (MEDG)

A one-time grant for businesses that do not qualify for a MIG, but are investing in the City and expanding payroll. Grants between \$1,000 and \$10,000 are based on the amount of investment and new payroll taxes created.

[www.cityofmentor.com/wp-content/uploads/MEDG-Guidelines-Application.pdf](http://www.cityofmentor.com/wp-content/uploads/MEDG-Guidelines-Application.pdf)

### Community Reinvestment Areas (CRA)

Targeted reinvestment areas provide property owners real property tax exemptions for new construction or remodeling that increases property valuations. [www.cityofmentor.com/work/economic-development/business-incentives](http://www.cityofmentor.com/work/economic-development/business-incentives)

### Mentor Economic Assistance Corporation

MEACO is a Certified Development Corporation whose mission is to advance economic opportunities by providing low cost lending solutions (SBA 504 Loan Program and the Mentor Small Business Loan Program).

[www.meacoweb.com](http://www.meacoweb.com)

### International Trade

Mentor can assist companies expand or develop new export markets. From one-on-one counseling to market research and detailed compliance

guidance, we have the expertise to help you explore import/export expansion strategies.

[www.cityofmentor.com/work/economic-development/international-trade-programs](http://www.cityofmentor.com/work/economic-development/international-trade-programs)

### Lake County Ohio Port & Economic Development Authority

Provides various unique economic development tools for project financing and job creation. Call (440) 357-2290 for more information.

[www.lcport.org](http://www.lcport.org)

## UTILITIES

### Water – Aqua Ohio

[www.aquaamerica.com/our-states/ohio.aspx](http://www.aquaamerica.com/our-states/ohio.aspx)

Customer Service (877) 987-2782

Business Development (330) 356-2343

### Electric – First Energy

[www.firstenergycorp.com/fehome.html](http://www.firstenergycorp.com/fehome.html)

Customer Service (800) 589-3101

### Natural Gas

#### Dominion East Ohio Gas

[www.dom.com/residential/dominion-east-ohio](http://www.dom.com/residential/dominion-east-ohio)

Customer Service (800)362-7557

#### Orwell Natural Gas Company

[www.orwellgas.com](http://www.orwellgas.com)

Customer Service (800) 832-6164

### Sewer – Lake County Sewer District

[www.lakecountyohio.org/utilities/UtilitiesHome.aspx](http://www.lakecountyohio.org/utilities/UtilitiesHome.aspx)

Customer Service (440) 350-2645



## INFORMATION / CONTACTS

### Dept. of Economic & Community Development

Phone (440) 974-5740 for additional information or visit our website: [www.cityofmentor.com/work/economic-development/](http://www.cityofmentor.com/work/economic-development/)

### Business Incentives

[www.cityofmentor.com/work/economic-development/business-incentives/](http://www.cityofmentor.com/work/economic-development/business-incentives/)

### Available Properties

[www.cityofmentor.com/work/economic-development/available-properties/](http://www.cityofmentor.com/work/economic-development/available-properties/)

### Demographics

[www.cityofmentor.com/work/economic-development/demographics/](http://www.cityofmentor.com/work/economic-development/demographics/)

### Maps

[www.cityofmentor.com/work/economic-development/maps/](http://www.cityofmentor.com/work/economic-development/maps/)

### Internal Revenue Service

[www.irs.gov/smallbiz](http://www.irs.gov/smallbiz)

Contact IRS for a Federal Employer Identification Number, forms and additional information.

### Ohio Division of Liquor Control

[www.com.ohio.gov/liqr/](http://www.com.ohio.gov/liqr/)

Contact ODLC at (614) 644-2360 if you plan to sell or serve alcoholic beverages. You should also contact the Mentor Planning Department to obtain zoning approval for the sale of liquor.

### Mentor Economic Assistance Corporation

[www.meacoweb.com](http://www.meacoweb.com)

### Mentor Area Chamber of Commerce

[www.mentorchamber.org/](http://www.mentorchamber.org/)

### Small Business Development Center

[www.lcport.org/small-business-development-center](http://www.lcport.org/small-business-development-center)

### Lake County Ohio Port Authority

[www.lcport.org](http://www.lcport.org)

### Lake County, Ohio

[www.lakecountyohio.org/](http://www.lakecountyohio.org/)

## DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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## DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING & ENGINEERING

### Dave Swiger, City Engineer

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### Scott Amos, Chief Building Official

440-974-5785

[amos@cityofmentor.com](mailto:amos@cityofmentor.com)

## FIRE PREVENTION

440-974-5768

Prepared by:

Department of Economic & Community Development



8500 Civic Center Boulevard  
Mentor, Ohio 44060

(440) 974-5740

[www.cityofmentor.com](http://www.cityofmentor.com)



/cityofmentor



# New Business Assistance Guide



## Welcome to Mentor!

This brochure provides a brief overview of the business start-up process in the City of Mentor.

Please use this brochure, as well as the many resources listed in it, as a guide.

If you have any questions along the way and you are not sure where to turn, please call the Department of Economic & Community Development at (440) 974-5740.

We are here to help.