



10 Step Guide to Starting a Business in Lake Forest

The City of Lake Forest Economic Development Division is glad to provide you with the following information on business loans, business incentives, free business counseling services, and job training and placement assistance that will make Lake Forest your *Natural Choice for Business.*

1. Meet with a Business Counselor
 - a. The City of Lake Forest provides FREE Business Counseling services to all current and potential Lake Forest entrepreneurs through the Orange County chapter of SCORE. For more information, view our [SCORE Counseling Flyer](#).
2. Create a Business Plan
 - a. Many banks require business plan before they issue loans
 - b. There are various resources available to new small business owners. The following organizations have sample business plans: Small Business Administration (SBA), www.sba.gov, and SCORE, www.score.org.
3. Check out Available Business Resources
 - a. Small Business Development Center - ociesmallbusiness.org/orange-county/
 - b. Small Business Administration – www.sba.gov
4. File a Fictitious Business Name (Doing Business As or dba)
 - a. If you intend to name your business something other than your own name, you must file a fictitious business name with:

Orange County Clerk-Recorder Department
12 Civic Center Dr., Room 101,
Santa Ana, CA 92701
www.ocrecorder.com ~ 714-834-2500
5. Establish a Legal Structure for your Business
 - a. There are a variety of legal structures for business in the State of California. They include Sole Proprietorship, General Partnership, Corporation, S Corporation, Limited Liability Partnerships, and Limited Liability Companies. Different structures have different advantages and disadvantages, including liability and taxes. Visit SCORE (www.score.org) and the Secretary of State's Office (<http://www.sos.ca.gov/business/forms.htm#be>) to research the legal structure that's right for you.

6. Determine your Business Location
 - a. The City of Lake Forest has two major retail centers, a number of community retail centers, and a large area for business, office, and industrial parks concentrating along Bake Parkway and the 241 Foothill Transportation Corridor. To view these and other maps visit www.lakeforestbusiness.com.
 - b. Check with the City of Lake Forest Planning Division to ensure that your business location is in a properly zoned area. Contact Planning at 949-461-3535

7. Complete a Business Registration Form
 - a. The City of Lake Forest does not require or issue business licenses. Instead, we ask businesses to complete a voluntary, no cost Business Registration Form that assists the City in maintaining vital records, emergency contact information and a business mailing list for future announcements of free business seminars and workshops. In lieu of a business license, the City asks its businesses to fill out a Business Registration Form, which is found on the City's website, www.lakeforestbusiness.com.
 - b. Because the City does not have a business license most lenders, clients or other third parties will accept a copy of the City's letter explaining that business licenses are not issued in our community. This letter is also located on the City website. [Click here](#) to view the letter.
 - c. All City of Lake Forest Business Regulations and Permits can be found at: www.lakeforestca.gov

8. Learn Employer Responsibilities & Resources
 - a. State Identification Number – Franchise Tax Board <http://www.ftb.ca.gov/businesses/index.shtml>
 - b. Taxpayer Identification Number – Internal Revenue Service www.irs.gov
 - c. Employment Development Department (EDD) www.edd.ca.gov

9. Recruit and Train Employees – business counseling and ideas can be found at:
 - a. EDD (www.edd.ca.gov)
 - b. SCORE (www.score.org)
 - c. Employee Training Panel (www.etp.ca.gov)

10. Open Your Business – The Grand Opening has finally arrived!! Make sure to visit your Lake Forest Chamber of Commerce (www.lakeforestchamber.com) for networking opportunities. We appreciate your decision to locate your business in Lake Forest.