

Business licensing in Simpsonville

Reasons for, importance of business licenses to the local economy

Let's say a member of the public wants to open a business in the City of Simpsonville. The future business owner has a business plan and has secured property, labor and goods to sell. Before the retailer or restaurateur can open, however, the person must obtain a business license from the City.

Senior Accountant for the City of Simpsonville Faith Scruggs said a business license is an excise tax—or a tax on certain goods, services and activities, that is imposed on the privilege of doing business in a municipality or county.

“A license is a tool for requiring a business or occupation to contribute its share in support of services provided by the City to residents and visitors regarding profits or advantages of occupations,” said Scruggs, who was hired by the City in 2013 and worked as the business licensing and permitting clerk until her promotion in August. “Business licenses are important to enforcing zoning and occupancy regulations and ensuring the City is treating every business fairly and with consistency.”

Any company or organization that would like to do

business in Simpsonville city limits must have an active business license. The process of obtaining, granting and renewal of a business license aids the City and business owners in adhering to standards that protect businesses and the public and create revenue streams that help fund the operations of and public services by the City.

During the process of obtaining a new business license, the business must inform City officials where the business will be located, which allows the Planning Department to determine whether the zoning district permits the type of business. Zoning ensures the efficient and safe placement of different categories of property throughout the City, preventing conflicts like the construction of a factory directly next to a residential neighborhood.

Multiple types of licenses are available, depending on the nature and location of the business. Annual business licenses, which suit businesses that plan to operate for at least a year, include applications for commercial businesses located in city limits; home occupations located in city limits and non-resident businesses that are not located but do operate inside

Faith Scruggs
Senior
Accountant
for
Finance
Department



Senior Accountant Faith Scruggs can be reached at fscruggs@simpsonville.com or 864-967-9526 ext. 115.

city limits. Applications for non-annual licenses include per-job contractors, special event vendors, temporary businesses and exempt businesses, e.g. nonprofits.

“The tax rates for the different applications vary depending on under which industry the business falls,” Scruggs said.

Applying for a business license with the City of Simpsonville is easier than ever. A couple of years ago, the City transitioned to a new portal for business licensing and permitting.

“We’ve streamlined the process for business license applications, which can be submitted via the online portal,” Scruggs said. “Visit simpsonville.com and select ‘[Business Licenses](#)’ from the homepage.”

Scruggs also provided a few misconceptions about business licenses that she has seen over the years:

Common Misconceptions About Business Licensing

1. A business license is a one-time tax.

Business licenses with the City of Simpsonville are not a one-time tax for annual business licenses, which must be renewed every year. Business licenses for event vendors are a one-time tax.

2. I only need a S.C. Department of Revenue retail license because it is the same as a City of Simpsonville business license.

A business with operations in the City of Simpsonville must obtain a business license. The SCDOR retail license is not the same as a business license.

3. It doesn't matter what kind of business licensing I'm applying for; submitting any application will work.

The correct application corresponding to the specific types of businesses and locations must be selected.