



Business Start Up and Expansion Guide

Start Up Basics:

Fostoria Co.Starters: Co.Starters is a 10 week program offered by the Fostoria Chamber of Commerce at the Fostoria Learning Center. The weekly program is designed to help you find the best approach to starting and growing a business. Mentors will help you refine your concept, develop your ideas and take them to the next level. Co.Starters uses a canvas model business plan. [Learn more.](#)

Wayfinding: The Fostoria Chamber offers free wayfinding sessions for entrepreneurs looking to get started, grow or refine their ideas. Appointments are needed and may be made by calling the Chamber, 419-435-0486 or email sarah@fostoriachamber.com

Advising Hours: Once a month, experts are available for free 30 minute consulting sessions at the Fostoria Learning Center. The panel of experts include Branding and Marketing, Legal and General Business. To schedule an advising session, [click here](#) or visit FostoriaChamber.com

Business Plan: If you are going to seek bank or SBA financing one of the first things you will likely need is a business plan. If you don't already have one, you will discover a well written business plan or a canvas model will keep you on track while building your business. If you need assistance with a formal business plan, the Small Business Development Center at Terra State Community College can assist.

SBDC at Terra State Community College
www.terra.edu/sbdc

Miranda Hoffman, Director, Certified Business Advisor
Phone: 419-559-2210 Email: mhoffman05@terra.com

Another great resource for starting a business in Ohio can be found at www.business.ohio.gov.

There you can find a downloadable Start Up Guide, a checklist specific to the type of business you wish to start as well as other helpful resources. Click here to view the [Start Up Guide](#)

An accountant and/or tax professional can also be helpful when starting a business. For references and additional help, contact the Chamber.

State of Ohio Requirements:

Determine the type of legal entity you will be forming and register with the Ohio Secretary of State. Register online or find the forms needed to file your business at www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov Also, on this site you can find additional resources for starting and maintaining a business in the State of Ohio.

City of Fostoria: If you are planning to build or remodel in the City of Fostoria you will be required to submit a detailed site plan to the City Planning Commission for review. This process takes approximately one month. Once the Planning Commission approves the site plan, a permit number is issued by City of Fostoria's Zoning Department. The permit number is needed by the **Seneca County Building Department** (419)447-8022 ext. 6515 who reviews construction plans for your building. The Seneca County Building Department covers ALL of Fostoria. Before choosing a location, you will want to make sure the site you have chosen meets the local zoning code. Taking care of these matters early can prevent problems and save you time and money. Contact the **City of Fostoria Zoning Department** Office (419)435-8243 for applications and information.

In addition, the **Fostoria Fire Department** (419)435-3206 should inspect all commercial and Industrial buildings to check the fire suppression systems. This inspection must be done in addition to the Wood County Building Inspection.

For all Health Department inspections, for food related businesses, the **Seneca County Health Department** (419)447-3691 conducts all inspections for Fostoria.

Businesses hiring in Fostoria need to register with the **City of Fostoria Income Tax Office** (419)435-6449.

Helpful Contact Information:

Local Utilities:

American Electric Power
877-237-2886

AEP Underground line locator
800-362-2764

North Central Electric Cooperative
800-426-3072

Columbia Gas New Construction/Conversions
800-440-6111

Ohio Utilities Protection Services (O.U.P.S.) /Call before you dig
8-1-1 or 800-925-0988

Inspections/Permits/Zoning:

City of Fostoria Zoning Department
419-435-8243
compliance@fostoriaohio.gov

Seneca County Building Department
419-447-8022 ext. 6515
senecacountybuildingdept@safebuilt.com

Seneca County Health Department
419-447-3691

Fostoria Fire Department
419-435-3206

City of Fostoria Income Tax Office
419-435-6449

Other Licenses & Permits Required by the State of Ohio
www.business.ohio.gov/licensing/

Other Helpful Resources:

Fostoria Area Chamber of Commerce
419-435-0486

Fostoria Economic Development
419-435-7789

SBDC at Terra State Community College
419-559-2210

Ohio Business Gateway-1st Stop Business Connection
www.business.ohio.gov/

[Ohio Secretary of State](#)

Ohio Department of Taxation
www.tax.ohio.gov

Ohio New Reporting Center
www.OH-NewHire.com
888-872-1490

Ohio Bureau of Worker's Compensation
www.bwc.ohio.gov search "employer"

Ohio Department of Job & Family Services
www.jfs.ohio.gov search "employer"

Fostoria is a great place to do business! Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions. We are here to help.

Sincerely,
Sarah Stephens Krupp
Project Administrator
Fostoria Economic Development Corporation
419-435-7789
Projects@FostoriaEDC.org

Jocelyn Reinhart Scaife
Director
Fostoria Area Chamber of Commerce
419-435-0486
Director@FostoriaChamber.com