

PITTSFIELD BUSINESS GUIDE



Peter Marchetti, Mayor
City of Pittsfield, Massachusetts

Justine Dodds
Director of Community Development



A Resource Guide to Starting and Growing Your Business

2024

Dear Entrepreneur,

As Mayor of the City of Pittsfield, I thank you for choosing Pittsfield as the place to host or grow your business. If you are just starting a new chapter in your business journey, looking to expand your current operations or relocate, our team has a variety of resources to offer right here at the local level. In addition, our team has a great network of resources at the state level offering additional programs which you may be eligible for.

With the cleanup of the Housatonic River, the reconstruction of prime industrial property at the heart of the City, and an energized arts and entertainment scene in the downtown, Pittsfield establishes itself as a cultural center for the region with the prospect of renewed economic vitality. Pittsfield is centrally located with easy access to East Coast markets including two major metropolitan cities, Boston and New York City. There is truly something for everyone in Pittsfield— world class theaters, live music, art shows, museums, unique shopping and a vibrant restaurant scene – all just minutes from spectacular four-season recreation and scenic beauty.

Pittsfield is built upon strong connections, a stable foundation and people who are committed to our city's success. In partnership with the Pittsfield Economic Development Authority (PEDA), Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation (PERC), 1 Berkshire, Downtown Pittsfield, Inc., Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network, Entrepreneurship for All, Massachusetts Office of Business Development, and the Berkshire Innovation Center among others, Pittsfield is committed to working with you to find the best opportunities for financial incentives and counseling that meet your needs.

I am happy to have you as a part of this community and I know my team is eager to assist you. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the Department of Community Development at (413) 499-9368 or visit www.businesspittsfield.com for the most up-to-date information on business resources in the City of Pittsfield.

Sincerely,



Peter M. Marchetti, Mayor

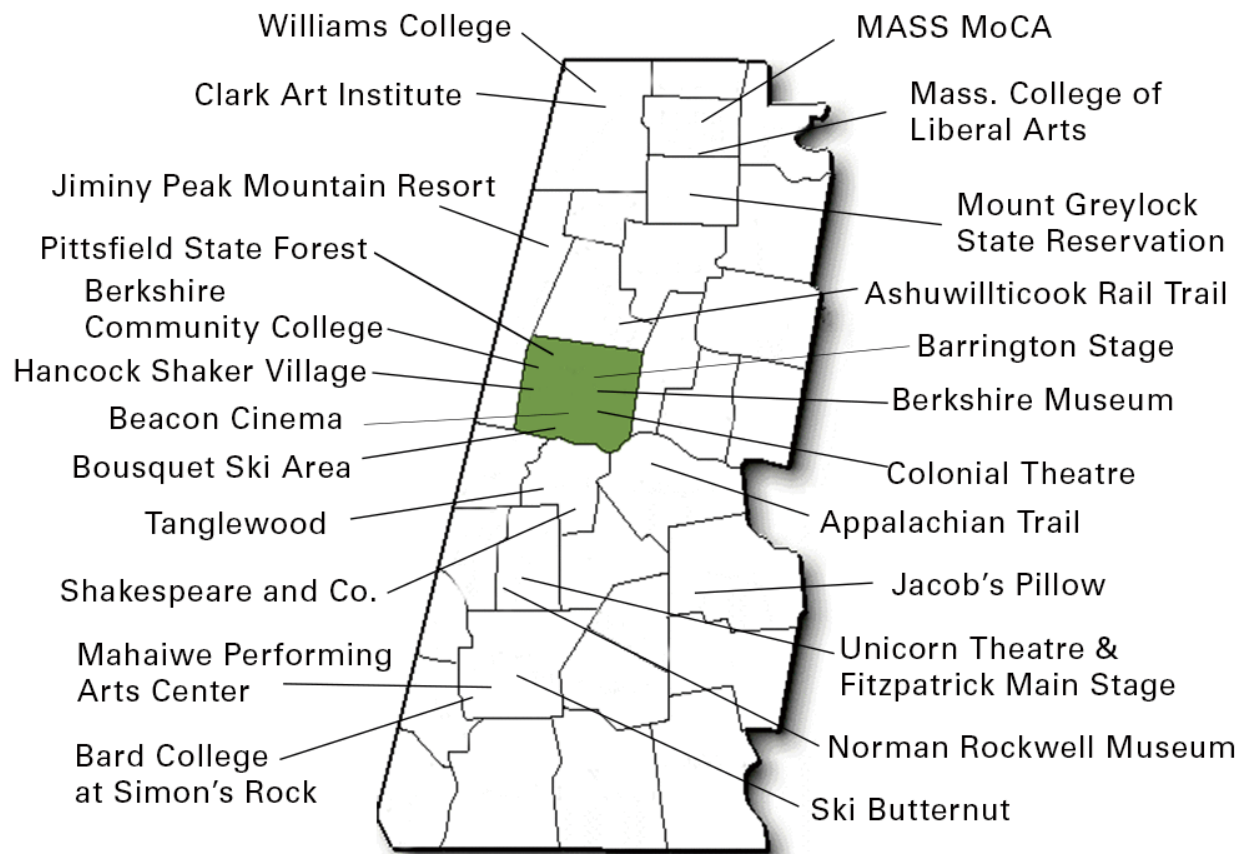


For Your Business.... Your Life.... Your Future... It's All Here... Pittsfield Wants Your Business

Pittsfield is at the center of the Berkshires, right where you want your business to be. You and your employees can take advantage of the amazing Berkshire lifestyle with world-class cultural attractions, year-round outdoor activities and fast access to major East Coast markets.

As the economic hub of the region, customers and employees come from across the Berkshires to Pittsfield. The largest manufacturing, health care and retail businesses are here.

For your business, your life and your future, it's all here in Pittsfield.



43,927 - Pittsfield's Population

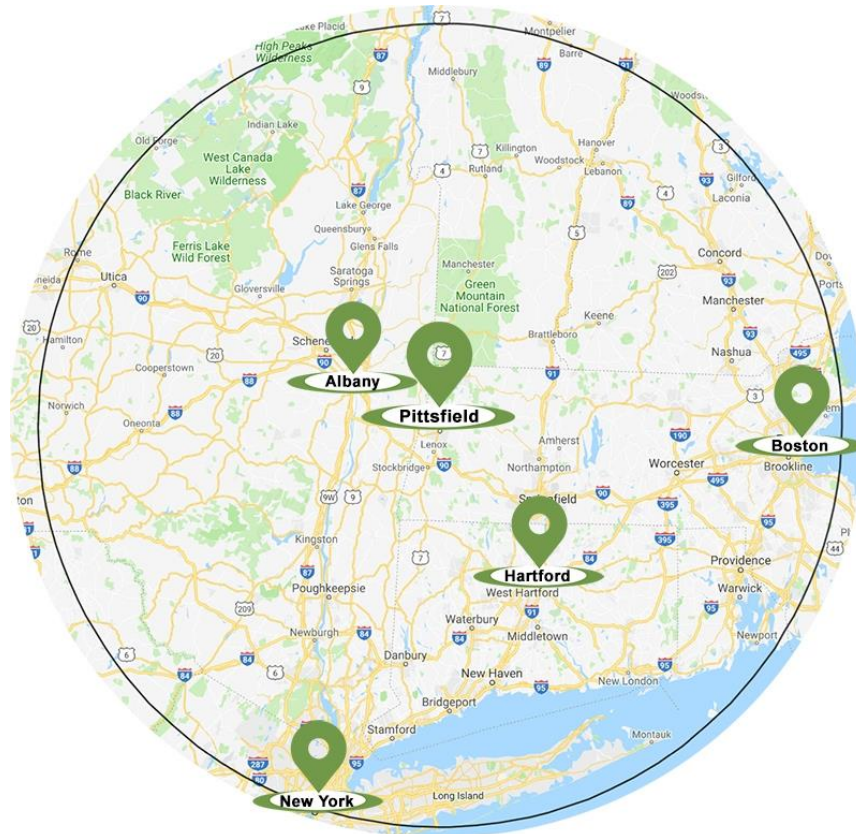
60,000 - Pittsfield's Daytime Population

126,313 - Berkshire County's Population

21,803 - Pittsfield's Labor Force

66,109 - Berkshire County's Labor Force

26.5 million - People Live Within 125 Miles of Pittsfield



- Pittsfield's unique Economic Development Fund can provide incentives.
- You can wake up in the beautiful Berkshires, have lunch in New York or Boston, and be home in time for dinner.

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GETTING STARTED

Opening a new business or expanding an already established business can be difficult. The City of Pittsfield is dedicated to your success, and we are here to help you get started and assist you as you work through your licensing and permitting. We encourage you to ask as many questions as needed as you move forward and to contact the Department of Community Development (DCD) at (413) 499-9638.

To get started, here are a few specific things every business owner should consider:

Business Certificate – Any person conducting business in the City of Pittsfield must file a business certificate with the Pittsfield City Clerk. Local banks have been requiring a Doing Business As (DBA) Certificate for all business bank accounts, even if using an individual's name.

Building Permit – If you plan to undertake any construction or change the use or occupancy of a building or space, as defined by the building code, you will require a building permit. Construction requiring a permit is very broad and complex and you are encouraged to contact the Office of the Building Commissioner to discuss your project plans. It is advisable that you contact a Massachusetts architect or engineer to guide you through the process of obtaining a permit. All permits through this office are obtained through our online permitting portal found here; [Permit Application Login Page \(permiteyes.com/Berkshire/user_logins.asp\)](https://permiteyes.com/Berkshire/user_logins.asp)

Building Safety Inspection – A building safety inspection is required when a new tenant plans to occupy an existing building or space, no construction work is proposed, and the use or occupancy of the building or space does not change. You can obtain the application for a building safety inspection by contacting the Office of the Building Commissioner at 413-499-9440 M-F 7:30-3:00. Building Safety Inspection applications are not currently available through the online portal.

Signs – To install signs for your new business, you are required to obtain a sign permit through the Office of the Building Commissioner. Permits for signs are obtained through the online permitting portal found here; [Permit Application Login Page \(permiteyes.com/Berkshire/user_logins.asp\)](https://permiteyes.com/Berkshire/user_logins.asp). You can also review the City of Pittsfield sign ordinance to understand the limits of permissible signs. You can find the sign ordinance here; [City of Pittsfield, MA Signs \(ecode360.com/27253514\)](https://ecode360.com/27253514).

Certificate of Inspection – Some types of businesses, including restaurants, bars, night clubs, churches, day cares, theaters, educational, hotels/motels, boarding houses, etc., are required to apply for periodic inspections and obtain a Certificate of Inspection to permit continued use and occupancy. Please contact the Office of the Building Commissioner to find out if your business will require a periodic Certificate of Inspection. To apply for a Certificate of Inspection, submit your application through our online permitting portal found here; [Permit Application Login Page \(permiteyes.com/Berkshire/user_logins.asp\)](https://permiteyes.com/Berkshire/user_logins.asp)

City of Pittsfield Contacts

Detailed contact information for each City Department needed to successfully start your business in Pittsfield follows. Included in this information are specifics on licensing available by department, board, and/or commission.

All information is up to date as of January 2024.

Office of the City Clerk

70 Allen St., Room 103
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 499-9361



Heather Brazeau, Assistant City Clerk,
hbrazeau@cityofpittsfield.org

https://www.cityofpittsfield.org/departments/city_clerk/index.php

The City Clerk is responsible for various licenses, including the Business Certificate.

How do I register my business with the City?

If the title of your business differs from your name or the corporate name, you need a Business Certificate or a d/b/a (Doing Business As) from the City Clerk.

How do I apply for any licenses from the City Clerk's Office?

Unless otherwise noted, all applications are returned to the City Clerk's Office, 70 Allen Street, room 103.

Some applications require a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) acknowledgement form.



Licensing Board

70 Allen St., Room 103
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 499-9361

Licensing Board Clerk, LicensingBoard@cityofpittsfield.org

https://www.cityofpittsfield.org/departments/licensing_board/index.php

The Licensing Board is responsible for the licensing and regulation of businesses and events. The Licensing Board Clerk can best answer questions about licenses offered.



What do I need a license for?

The Licensing Board provides licenses for the following commercial uses:

Auto dealer	Lodging House, Hotel, Inn, or Bed and Breakfast Establishments
Automatic Amusement	Fortunetelling (both individual and storefront)
Common Victuallers (i.e., those involved with cooking, serving, or preparing food)	Outdoor cafes
Entertainment	Transient Vendors
Sale of Alcoholic Beverages (both seasonal, year-round, and one-day licenses)	



Helpful Hint

Did you know that an Entertainment License is needed if you plan to play a radio in your restaurant and certain other businesses?

What is the process for obtaining a license through the Licensing Board?

1. Consult with the Licensing Board Clerk. The Clerk can talk to you about the requirements of the Board and any of the permits you may need prior to opening.
2. Application. You will need to submit your complete application packet, with all the necessary sign offs from city departments and the required fee. As the applicant, you are responsible for the costs of advertising in the local paper and any required notices.
3. Public Hearing. A public hearing will be scheduled after submittal of a complete application packet. You, or your representative, will be required to attend the public hearing. At the hearing, the Licensing Board will either issue or deny your license.
4. Final Approvals (liquor licenses). In the case of licenses involving alcoholic beverages, the Board must act within 30 days of submission of completed application. Within 3 days of local approval, the Board must submit your application to the Massachusetts Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC) for review and approval. Within 7 days of receipt of ABCC approval, the Licensing Board will issue your license.

Liquor Licenses

All individuals applying for a liquor license should be aware of the following information:

- When submitting an application, the applicant must publish a notice of the application in a Pittsfield newspaper at the applicant's expense. A hearing will be held at the following Licensing Board meeting.
- If the proposed premises are within 500 ft. of a church, hospital or school, a copy of the published notice must be sent, by registered mail at the applicant's expense, to any of these institutions. Applicants who are inn-holders and applicants who are located 10 or more floors above street level are not required to send these notices.
- All certified mail receipts and proof of mailing must be submitted to the Licensing Clerk within three days of newspaper publication.
- In the case of a liquor license transfer, the former owner of the premises is still liable for the operation of the premises until a new liquor license is issued.

Can I obtain a seasonal liquor license?

Yes, you can obtain a seasonal liquor license. The season runs from April 1 to January 15. The process to obtain the license is the same as obtaining a regular liquor license.

Can I get a special liquor license for an event in my store?

Yes, you can obtain a one-day liquor license for an event, such as a wine-tasting, in your store. In fact, a Special Alcoholic Beverage License is required for any activity at which alcoholic beverages are served. A License may be issued to the responsible manager of any activity or enterprise for wine and malt beverages only. The manager is required to obtain TIPs (Training for Intervention Procedures) Certification.

Applications can be obtained by the Licensing Board Clerk or on the City's website. Special one-day all alcohol licensing is available for non-profit organizations only.



Helpful Hint

There is a possibility that a license may not be issued. The most common reasons why a liquor license applicant is denied at the state level are:

- If taxes are owed to the Commonwealth.
- The manager is not a citizen.
- The directors are not citizens.
- The City's quota of liquor licenses is full.
- Incomplete forms are submitted and/or fees were not paid.
- Supplemental information was not provided.

Office of the Building Commissioner/Inspector of Buildings

100 North Street, 2nd Floor
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 499-9440

Jeffrey Clemons, Building Commissioner, jclemons@cityofpittsfield.org

https://www.cityofpittsfield.org/departments/building_inspections/index.php

The Office of the Building Commissioner/Inspector of Buildings is responsible for the interpretation and enforcement of building and zoning codes, conducting inspections, and enforcement actions on construction projects. In addition to taking appointments, the Department holds the following office hours:

Administrative Office Hours:

Monday – Friday: 7:30 am – 3:00 pm

Inspectors' Office Hours:

Building

Monday – Friday: 7:30 am – 3:00 pm

Electrical/Plumbing and Gas

Monday – Friday: 7:30 am – 10:00 am



Helpful Hint

At the beginning of your project, whether it includes major renovation or minor changes, speak with a Building Inspector to ask if you need to complete an Existing Building Evaluation. This evaluation must be completed by a registered design professional who will use plans and drawings to determine if your project meets all relevant codes and regulations. Not all projects will trigger this requirement, but it's best to ask up front so you can plan accordingly.

Zoning Enforcement – The Building Official/Zoning Enforcement Official ensures compliance throughout the City with the numerous Zoning Regulations and Ordinances, as well as the interpretation and explanation of the same to the members of the community. The Building Official/Zoning Enforcement Official is also tasked with determining the allowable uses for the City's properties based on the Zoning Ordinance and Building Code.

Building Inspections Office – Comprised of the Building Commissioner, five Local Inspectors, a Plumbing and Gas Inspector, an Electrical Inspector, a Sealer of Weights and Measures, as well as two Administrative Clerks. The Building Inspections Office takes in all Building, Plumbing, and Gas permit applications, reviews all plans and application packages, and issues or denies permits of these applications based on demonstration of compliance. The Building

Inspections Office also conducts all required inspections under their jurisdiction and where applicable, grants Certificates of Occupancy and Certificates of Inspection.

Building Code – A legal document that protects public health and welfare by reducing potential construction hazards and costs, providing construction standards, and contributing to community well-being. The Massachusetts Building Code can be found here: [Building Code \(https://www.mass.gov/massachusetts-state-building-code-780-cmr\)](https://www.mass.gov/massachusetts-state-building-code-780-cmr).

Building Permit – an official document or certificate issued by the Building Official that authorizes the performance of a specified activity.



Helpful Hint

If the licensed construction supervisor designated on the permit application leaves the project before completion, construction must cease, and the Building Inspections Department must be notified immediately. A new licensed construction supervisor needs to be designated before construction work can continue.

What do I do if I need an Electrical Permit?

The City's Wiring Inspector is responsible for the issuance and oversight of all Electrical Permits.

In accordance with MGL c. 143, Section 3L, no person shall install for hire any electrical wiring or fixtures subject to this section without first, or within five days after commencing the work, giving notice to the inspector of wires appointed pursuant to the provisions of section thirty-two of chapter one hundred and sixty-six. Said notice shall be given by mailing or delivering a permit application form prepared by the board, to said inspector. Any person failing to give such notice shall be punished by a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars. This section shall be enforced by the inspector of wires within his jurisdiction and the state examiners of electricians.



Helpful Hint

An electrical permit may only be obtained by a Massachusetts licensed electrician.

When is a Building Permit required?

- No building or structure shall be erected, moved, added to, or structurally altered without a permit issued by the Building Inspector. Failure to obtain a building permit shall be a violation of City of Pittsfield Zoning Ordinance, Article 23-12, Section 12.2.
- Also, in accordance with the Massachusetts Building Code, 780 CMR, It shall be unlawful to construct, reconstruct, alter, repair, remove or demolish a building or structure; or to change the use or occupancy of a building or structure; or to install or alter any equipment for which provision is made or the installation of which is regulated by 780 CMR without first filing an application with the building official and obtaining the required permit.

Emergency Repairs

Where replacements and repairs governed by 780 CMR shall be performed in an emergency situation, the permit application shall be submitted within the next working business day to the building official.

**Helpful Hint**

Construction or work for which a permit is required shall be subject to inspection by the building official and such construction or work shall remain accessible and exposed for inspection purposes until approved. It shall be the duty of the permit applicant to cause the work to remain accessible and exposed for inspection purposes and that all work shall be conducted, installed, protected and completed in a workmanlike and acceptable manner so as to secure the results intended by 780 CMR.

Planning Department

Office of Community Development
70 Allen St., Room 205
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 499-9368

https://www.cityofpittsfield.org/departments/community_development/planning_and_development/index.php

The Planning Department is responsible for reviewing and processing applications for Site Plan Approval, Special Permits and Variances. **To find out what permits you might need, start by contacting Amber Spring, Permitting Coordinator at 413-448-9673, or aspring@cityofpittsfield.org.**



Special Permits, Site Plan Approvals and Variances

How do I know if I need a Site Plan Approval or a Special Permit?

Depending on your idea (the use) and your location, you may need to have your project reviewed by the Community Development Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, or the City Council. The best way to determine this is to contact our office or check the **Table of Principal Permitted Uses** in **Section 4.202** of City's Zoning Ordinance for your specific use.

Uses that require site plan approval are listed under **Section 7.7** of the Zoning Ordinance:

Uses that require both site plan approval and a special permit are listed under **Section 7.8** of the Zoning Ordinance:

Development in the **Floodplain Overlay District** will require **a special permit** from the **Community Development Board** under **Section 6**

Golf courses, drive-in theatres, animal shelters, riding stables and hospitals are just a few uses that require site plan approval

Airports, camps, mobile home parks, stadiums, veterinary hospitals, shopping centers and cannabis dispensaries are just a few uses that require a special permit

Any development in a flood zone requires a special permit.

What is a Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA)?

A Special Permit Granting Authority is a committee or governing body that grants special permits. Certain uses require the Community Development Board (the Planning Board) to grant special permits. Other uses require the Zoning Board of Appeals, or the City Council to grant the special permit. Each section and use in the zoning ordinance will tell you who is the SPGA.

How do I know if I need a Variance?

A variance is required if you would like to do something that isn't otherwise allowed under the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. In order to obtain a variance, you will need to prove that meeting the requirements will present a hardship for you. Variances are granted through the Zoning Board of Appeals. Our Permitting Coordinator Amber Spring will be able to assist you if you believe you need a variance. Please contact Amber at 413-448-9673, or aspring@cityofpittsfield.org for a review of your specific project and property.

If you would like to read more about variances, please refer to **Section 11.3** of the Zoning Ordinance.

But wait, I just want to open a small business in my home. Who can I talk to about this?

Please contact Amber Spring, Permitting Coordinator at 413-448-9673, or aspring@cityofpittsfield.org for a review of your specific project and property. There may be requirements and permits unique to your location.

Generally, in residential zoning districts, some at-home businesses may be permitted through a Home Occupation permit issued by the **Building Department**.

Additional permitting is required for businesses involved in food production which may be issued through the **Health Department**.

Anyone operating a business in Pittsfield will need a Business Certificate from the **Office of the City Clerk**.

If you would like to use a separate building on your property for a home business you will need a special permit from the **Zoning Board of Appeals**.

If you would like to read more about Home Occupations, please refer to **section 9.3** of the zoning ordinance.

Health Department

100 North St.
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 499-9411



Andy Cambi, Director of Public Health,
acambi@cityofpittsfield.org

https://www.cityofpittsfield.org/departments/health_and_inspections/index.php

The Pittsfield Health Department delivers public health services to residents, businesses, and visitors to benefit the culturally diverse population of the City of Pittsfield. As part of their role, the Health Department is responsible for enforcing the state & local rules and regulations regarding various business establishments to preserve public health. The Health Department can help you determine what permits are required for your type of business. Examples of permitting required through the Health Department include:

Funeral Director	Plan Reviews (New Business & New Retail Owner)
Body Art Establishment	Retail Food
Body Art Practitioner	Tanning Establishments
Catering	Swimming Pool (public or semi-public)
Day Camps	Temporary Food
Disposal Work Installers	Title V (Septic System) Review
Food Service Establishments	Tobacco Vendors
Frozen Desserts	Well Application
Mobile Food	
Rubbish Hauler	

Health Department – Food Permitting

The process for food permitting is two-fold: Plan Review and Food Establishment Permit Inspection.



Part 1: Plan Review

1. Schedule a meeting with Health Agent to discuss proposal and requirements for licensure.
2. Schedule a site visit. The site visit allows the applicant to describe their plans for the location and the Health Department to provide information on work required to ensure the facility meets compliance for licensure. Because the Public Health codes change, facility upgrades may be necessary even if you are going to conduct a similar type of business as previously existed at the location.
3. Submit Plan Review Application Submittal – Plans must be submitted 30 days prior to the start of construction, and shall include:
 - a. Application Form
 - b. Professionally drawn plans that must show:
 - i. Site plan and floor plan
 - ii. Elevation and wall/floor joint details
 - iii. Lighting, plumbing/drainage details

- iv. Lighting schedule and surface finish schedule
- c. Specification sheets for all equipment and surfaces
- d. Menu
- e. Application Fee
- f. Obtain all applicable building department permits.

Part 2: Food Establishment Permit Inspection

To ensure that your food establishment is inspected and permitted to meet your projected opening date, please contact the Health Department **one week prior** to your proposed opening date to schedule an inspection. *

You must have the following documents in-hand in order to schedule the inspection:

- a. Food Establishment Permit
- b. Certified Food Manager Certificate (for establishments that sell anything other than prepackaged food)
- c. Allergen Awareness Certificate
- d. Workers' Compensation Insurance Affidavit
- e. Pest Control Contract
- f. Trash Disposal Contract
- g. Grease Disposal Contract
- h. Choke Save Training Certificate (if establishment has 25 or more seats)
- i. Lab Results (if you prepare frozen desserts)
- j. Variance Requests with supporting documentation

* The food establishment permit inspection should be scheduled after other departments (except the Building Department) have completed their inspections.

Once the inspection is completed and the facility has met the requirements for their Food Establishment Permit, the inspector will sign the building card for the occupancy permit. They will also advise the Licensing Department that they have completed their inspection so they can issue the Common Victualler permit (if needed). After the Building Department has issued the Certificate of Occupancy, the Food Establishment Permit will be issued, at which time you may begin operating.

Health Department – Sick Employees

If you or one of your employees is sick with a communicable disease that may be passed to another, please contact the Public Health Nurse at (413) 499-9411.



Pittsfield Police Department Operational Support Division

39 Allen Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 448-9700

<https://www.pittsfieldpd.org/forms/>



Police Department review may be necessary for certain types of licensures, such as fortune telling or pawnbroker. Please see the City Clerk for the necessary forms and referral to the Police Department regarding these types of business.

Fire Department

74 Columbus Ave., Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 448-9764



Lieutenant Scott McGinnis, Fire Prevention Bureau Contact, smcginnis@cityofpittsfield.org

https://www.cityofpittsfield.org/departments/fire_department/online_permitting.php

The Fire Department is responsible for several permits, inspections and signature authorities for Certificates of Inspection and Occupancy.

Some permits and inspections are annual and must be renewed every year. Other permits and inspections are issued once per project and do not require renewal.

Business owners are encouraged to consult with the Fire Department early and often during the process of opening or expanding your business.



Helpful Hint

Food trucks operating in the City must have a seasonal propane permit, which includes an inspection of the food truck by the Fire Department.

Conservation Commission

70 Allen St., Room 202
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 499-9359

Robert J. Van Der Kar, PWS, Conservation Agent,
rvanderkar@cityofpittsfield.org



https://www.cityofpittsfield.org/departments/conservation_commission/index.php

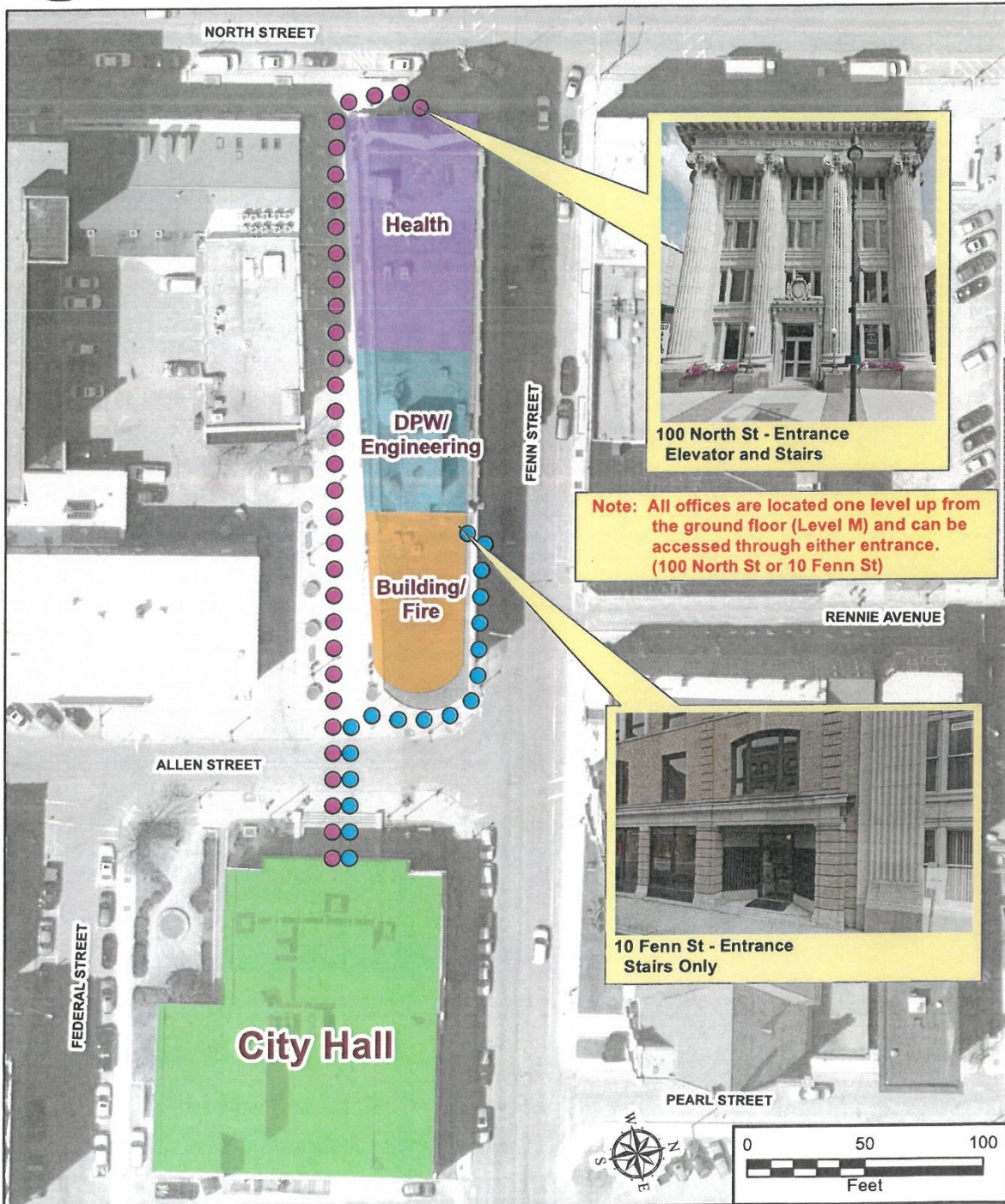
Pittsfield's unique blend of wonderful urban and rural landscapes provides for a diverse array of exceptional natural resources. The Pittsfield Conservation Commission plays an integral role in conserving such resources through the preservation of their functions and values. Conservation Commission review is required when a project will alter a wetland resource area or lands within 100' of a wetland, waterbody, and/or waterway (200' for perennial rivers). Please contact the Conservation Commission if you are unsure whether any of your business plans that involve exterior storefront or building improvements are in an area subject to the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act and someone will gladly assist you.



City Offices Map



100 North St & 10 Fenn St - City Offices Level M (Mezzanine)



Checklists

Starting a business requires many different licenses and permits. Navigating through the permitting process can be overwhelming. On the following pages, you will find a series of questions to ask yourself to determine which city departments, boards, and commissions from whom you will need to seek approval.

City Clerk's Office

	YES	NO
Does the title of your business differ from your name or from a corporate name?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your business include a bowling alley, billiards, or pool?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you classified as a "junk collector" or "junk dealer"?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your business involve auctions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>If you answered "yes" to any of these questions you need to obtain a Business Certificate and/or a License from the City Clerk's Office at (413) 499-9361.</i>		
	YES	NO
Does your business involve fortune telling?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you considered a pawnbroker?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you are required to obtain clearance from the City's Police Department. Please see the City Clerk for the necessary forms and a referral to the Police Department.</i>		
	YES	NO
Does your business involve a vehicle(s) for hire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your business involve limousine and/or taxi service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>If you answered "yes" to this use, you require approval from the Taxi Commission. Applicants should first bring these applications to the City Clerk's Office who will then forward them to the Police Department. Once the application has been cleared, it will be sent back to the City Clerk for Taxi Commission approval.</i>		
<i>If you are not sure the answer to any of the questions you should consult with the City Clerk to determine if you will need to obtain a license for these items.</i>		

Licensing Board

	YES	NO
Does your business involve the sale of alcoholic beverages (including on-premises or off-premises consumption)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your business a restaurant or involve the cooking, serving or preparation of food (common victualer)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your business a hotel, inn, lodging house, or bed and breakfast?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your business provide services as an auto dealer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will your business have entertainment (such as playing music on a radio or having live music performed on-site)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your business providing services as a transient vendor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will your business have outdoor seating?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>If you answered "yes" to any of these questions you need to obtain a License from the Licensing Board (413) 499-9361.</i>		
<i>If you are not sure the answer to any of the questions you should consult with the Licensing Board Clerk to determine if you will need to obtain a license for these items.</i>		

Office of the Building Commissioner/Inspector of Buildings

	YES	NO
Does your project involve the construction, alteration, repair, change of use of a building or space, or demolition of a structure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>If you answered "yes" to this question, you probably need to obtain a Permit from the Office of the Building Commissioner/Inspector of Buildings, which can be reached at (413) 499-9440.</i>		

Conservation Commission

	YES	NO
Will your project take place in, or alter in any way, a waterway or resource area (i.e. floodplain, wetland, stream, pond, lake, etc.) your project involve the construction, alteration, repair, change of use of a building or space, or demolition of a structure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your activity going to take place within 200 feet of a river?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your project going to conduct any construction or alteration of land within 100 feet of wetlands or a waterway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, or if you are not sure about how to answer any of these questions, please contact the Conservation Agent at 413-499-9359.</i>		

Financial and Technical Assistance

This section identifies funding and technical assistance opportunities for both new and existing business owners.

Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation (PERC)

70 Allen St., Room 205

Pittsfield, MA 01201

(413) 499-9378

<https://businesspittsfield.com/perc/>



PERC's primary purpose is to further the economic development and social welfare of the City of Pittsfield and Berkshire County to increase employment opportunities and facilitate growth and development of small businesses.

PERC provides direct loans and access to a variety of public loan programs to help businesses that are unable to obtain conventional financing.

PERC offers several programs as assistance to entrepreneurs locating or expanding businesses in Pittsfield and Berkshire County. Each program has project eligibility requirements and most require a job creation commitment.

Financial Incentives:

Our expertise lies in connecting the right applicants to the correct, available resources. Before filling out any applications, you must first set up a meeting with us to determine the best plan of action and loans/grants to suit your qualifications. Make an appointment with Laura Mick, Community Development Specialist, who can guide you through all the incentives available to small businesses in the City of Pittsfield. Ms. Mick may combine funds from multiple programs to obtain the assistance you need. Each program has its own requirements. Once you have met with us, applications may be downloaded for your convenience.

Contact Laura Mick at (413) 499-9378 or send an email to lmick@cityofpittsfield.org.

Here are some of the Loan and Grant Programs that may be available to you:

CDBG Small Business Loan Program

This program was designed for companies making fixed-asset investments in Pittsfield. Loans are for the construction or acquisition of fixed assets and/or working capital. The maximum loan is \$50,000 but may not exceed 40% of the financing package. The project must result in the addition or retention of jobs for low- and moderate-income citizens. These loans are offered as “Companion Loans” in conjunction with other public programs and/or private financing. The program is funded by the City of Pittsfield through its Community Development Block Grant and administered by PERC.

CDBG Technical Assistance Grant

This program provides grants for specialized technical assistance for individuals developing small and micro businesses in Pittsfield. It offers matching grants of up to \$20,000 to be used for professional services, including accounting, bookkeeping, business consulting and marketing. This program is designed to provide funding to businesses unable to obtain funding in the private market. The program is funded by the City of Pittsfield through its Community Development Block Grant and administered by PERC.

City of Pittsfield CDBG Handicapped Accessibility Loan Program

This program is intended to provide funding assistance to non-profit and for-profit property owners located in the City of Pittsfield for making handicapped accessibility improvements to commercial buildings. By requiring a private match to loan funding, it is the vision of this program to stimulate other investments in the affected building, depending on the scope and cost of the proposed handicapped accessibility project.

City of Pittsfield Economic Development Fund

The City of Pittsfield has an Economic Development Fund through which it can offer financial incentives to businesses that will have a significant positive impact on the City’s economic development. The mayor may propose (for City Council approval) financial incentives for businesses that plan to create high quality jobs and make substantial investments in real estate. Consideration in determining the level of incentives the city might offer is given to the long-term public benefits of the project, including capital investment, potential tax revenue income, the number, quality and longevity of jobs, community programs offered, and secondary economic benefits that will be generated by the business activity.

CDBG Micro-Loan Program

The Community Development Micro-Loan Program provides loans up to \$15,000 to microenterprise businesses owned by low- to moderate-income residents of Pittsfield. These loans can be used for purchase of fixed assets, equipment, inventory and/or working capital needs. Up to 95% of project costs can be funded at reasonable interest rates. The program is funded by the City of Pittsfield through its Community Development Block Grant and administered by PERC.

Pittsfield Economic Development Authority (PEDA)

P.O. Box 617

Pittsfield, MA 01202-0167

(413) 448-9726

<https://businesspittsfield.com/peda/>



Pittsfield Economic Development Authority (PEDA) is a quasi-public agency created by a special act of the Massachusetts State Legislature, for the purpose of being the recipient and redeveloper of approximately 52 acres of General Electric Company's former industrial facility located in the heart of Pittsfield Massachusetts. This development, known today as the William Stanley Business Park, has three of its parcels occupied with ten prime building sites available for new business and industry.

PEDA's work must be transparent, fiscally and socially responsible, economically, socially and environmentally sustainable, consistent, inclusive, and equitable. PEDA will accomplish this by collaboration, market focus, clustering, and accountability.

PEDA must work with businesses to pave the way for their development and expansion. It must work with citizen groups, environmental groups, and labor to ensure they participate in the economic growth of the area. In addition, PEDA must work closely with the City of Pittsfield, the Federal government (EPA), and State government (DEP), to ensure the public sector offers a supportive role for businesses and a regulatory level appropriate for the public safety and health of the Community.

William Stanley Business Park:

The William Stanley Business Park is the home of innovation at the center of the Berkshires, right where you want to be. The 52-acre park is ideally suited for an office building, light manufacturing, R&D and assembly for life sciences, packaging, technology, product distribution, wholesale, warehousing, data processing and software development. The site includes:

- 6 construction-ready lots from 1.1 to 16.5 acres.
- Commercial/mixed-use building lots available. Some have onsite structures with ready-to-build foundations.
- Generous state and local economic incentives
- Includes unique incentives from the Pittsfield Economic Development Fund, the only fund of its kind in Massachusetts.
- Already approved zoning and environmental permits
- Rail access
- Onsite Berkshire Innovation Center
- BIC membership provides access to world-class R&D facilities and equipment, interactive training and conferencing facilities.
- Designated Economic Opportunity Area (EOA)

Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network

33 Dunham Mall, Suite 103

Pittsfield, MA 01201

(413) 499-0933

<http://www.msbdc.org/berkshire>



Successful entrepreneurs continually seek ways to improve the management and operation of their business, often seeking outside advice to help with particular challenges.

The Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network is committed to helping your business succeed in Massachusetts. We provide free, confidential, one-to-one business assistance and free or low-cost educational training programs to prospective and existing small businesses in Berkshire County.

Areas of assistance include, but are not limited to: business plan development, preventive feasibility, cash flow analysis, personnel and organizational issues, conventional and non-conventional financing, and marketing.

Entrepreneurship for All (EforAll)

437 North St.

Pittsfield, MA 01201

(833) 336-7255 ext. 7209

Berkshire-county@eforall.org

<https://eforall.org/ma/berkshire-county/>



Entrepreneurship for All (EforAll) Berkshire County is a non-profit that helps underrepresented individuals successfully start and grow a business through intensive business training, mentorship, and an extended professional support network.

Business Accelerator - In the Fall and Spring EforAll runs a 12-week Business Accelerator program for 12-15 local entrepreneurs. It provides immersive business training, mentorship, and access to an extended professional network. Most classes and activities are offered virtually. Anyone with a dream to start or grow a business is encouraged to apply.

Pitch Contests – Fast-paced, fun community events that enable early-stage entrepreneurs to gain valuable exposure and feedback on a business idea at no cost. Opportunity to network and validate business ideas with the potential to win cash prizes.

Deep Dives – Every month, EforAll offers an in-depth examination of an important business topic with an established expert. These virtual workshops are archived for future reference.

BBEC – Berkshire Black Economic Council

33 Dunham Ball, Suite 101

Pittsfield, MA 01201

contact@berkshirebec.org

<https://berkshirebec.org/>



Our objective at the Berkshire Black Economic Council is to foster Black businesses and introduce policies to spur economic development in the Berkshires and the Commonwealth.

GOALS

- Increase the number of Berkshire Black businesses that are certified as minority owned businesses.
- Locate, recruit, and retain other Black entrepreneurs and businesses.
- Help Black-owned businesses gain access to business coaching, professional development, grants, and capital.
- Promote economic justice by advocating public policy and increasing supplier diversity.

Blackshires

39 South Street

Pittsfield, MA 01201

(413) 588-4415

hey@blackshires.net

<https://blackshires.net/>



We're a community-focused organization led by people of color, here to empower and enrich the Black community in the Berkshires and surrounding areas.

By creating the Blackshires Community Empowerment Foundation, our goal is to help build a strong and healthy economic ecosystem while also providing community empowerment opportunities for current and future leaders and organizations.

We understand the struggles and frustrations that many in our community face, and our cooperative framework is designed to help develop the skills and capacities needed to create a vibrant and resilient network of support.

Latinas413

PO Box 188
West Stockbridge, MA 01266
(413) 679-1301
www.latinas413.org



Latinas413 mission is to assist, empower and inform Latinas in the Berkshire with their social and economic capital and to be a source for area resources.

Members of Latinas413 work in committees (focused on art, community, and mentorship) to meet their mission: to ignite the collective power of Latinas to expand their social and economic capital, serving as a bridge to resources available in our county, thereby increasing the representation of the voices,

talents, and interests of Latinas across Berkshire County.

CommonCapital

1780 Main Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413) 233-1680
<http://www.commoncapitalma.org>



Common Capital is a non-profit, community development financial institution (CDFI) working to strengthen communities by creating economic opportunities for low-and moderate income people, women, people of color and immigrants in western Massachusetts. They responsibly lend money to small businesses that are unable to access all the capital they need from conventional sources, such as banks. Common Capital augments the money it lends with free business assistance that supports the borrower's growth and success.

Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation Technical Assistance Grant Program (MGCC)

529 Main Street, Suite 201
Charlestown, MA 02129
(617) 523-6262
mgcc@massgcc.com
<http://www.empoweringsmallbusiness.org>



Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation (MGCC) is quasi-public agency of the Commonwealth established in 2010 to provide financial services and managerial assistance that saves and creates jobs at small businesses,

including many owned by women, minorities, immigrants and veterans in Massachusetts.

MGCC promotes economic development throughout the Commonwealth, focusing on Gateway Cities and low to moderate income and underserved communities.

MCGG Technical Assistance Grants are available through PERC to small businesses in Pittsfield and other Berkshire County communities. Grants can be awarded to businesses that have need for professional guidance and services of technical nature such as financial, accounting, architectural, legal, engineering, or specialized business planning services. The grants are intended to help small businesses expand and improve their operations and create jobs. A collective of passionate team of small businesses, creators, artists, entrepreneurs, and leaders who champion a culture of equity and belonging. The organization's focus is empowering its member businesses and communities to reach their fullest potential by providing comprehensive business support and consultancy services.

Massachusetts Office of Business Development (MOBD)

136 Blackstone Street, 5th Floor

Boston, MA 02109

(857) 301-0822

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-office-of-business-development>



The Massachusetts Office of Business Development assists businesses relocating to Massachusetts as well as businesses wishing to expand their current operations, with specific attention being paid to jobs created, jobs retained, and capital invested.

Our team provides a highly responsive, central point of contact that facilitates access to resources, expertise, and incentive programs.

MassDevelopment

1350 Main Street

Springfield, MA 01102

(413) 731-8848

<https://www.massdevelopment.com/>



Lenders. Developers. Job creators. At MassDevelopment, we offer financing and real estate solutions to support companies and nonprofits, increase housing, eliminate blight, and drive economic growth across Massachusetts.

1Berkshire

66 Allen St.

Pittsfield, MA 01201

(413) 499-1600

<https://1berkshire.com/>



As the official Regional Economic Development Organization and Regional Tourism Council of Berkshire County, 1Berkshire is here to assist

you in becoming a part of our dynamic region in Western MA, which is well-positioned for investment, growth, and development.

1Berkshire was created in June 2016 by a merger of four countywide economic development organizations: the Berkshire Economic Development Corporation, the Berkshire Chamber of Commerce, the Berkshire Visitors Bureau, and the Berkshire Creative Economy Council. By combining these entities, they have leverage resources, improve efficiency, expand audience reach, and coordinate programs that benefit every area of the region. They are the voice of the Berkshire business community with a strong membership and a powerful network of resources. Check out the original visioning for 1Berkshire in the Berkshire Blueprint.

Downtown Pittsfield, Inc.

431 North St.

Pittsfield, MA 01201

(413) 443-6501

<https://downtownpittsfield.com/>



The mission of Downtown Pittsfield, Inc. is to strengthen and promote Downtown Pittsfield, Inc's membership through advocacy, collaboration, and celebration. Downtown Pittsfield, Inc and its members welcome people, businesses, and events to join the diverse, vibrant and bustling district.

Since 1983, Downtown Pittsfield (DPI) has been recognized as leader, facilitator and principal advocate for downtown Pittsfield. DPI has developed strategies and programs mobilizing resources resulting in a creative, lively, sustainable environment.

DPI is a membership organization consisting of property owners, businesses, residents, cultural & entertainment venues, restaurants and non-profits who have joined forces to increase economic activity by promoting downtown as a great place to live, work and play.

MassHire

Berkshire Career Center

160 North St., 3rd Floor

Pittsfield, MA 01201

(413) 499-2220 ext. 114

<https://www.masshireberkshirecc.com/>



The MassHire Berkshire Career Center is a partnership between Berkshire Training & Employment Program and the Massachusetts Division of Career Services, chartered by the MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board. Together, we are committed to providing quality programs and services to businesses, job seekers, and our community partners. We serve all 32 cities and towns in Berkshire County. Whether you're looking for your first job, a new career, career advancement, or quality employees, MassHire Berkshire Career Center is here to assist you.

MassHire Programs & Services are funded in full by US Department of Labor (USDOL) Employment and Training Administration grants. (Additional details furnished upon request.)

Berkshire Community College (BCC)

1350 West Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 236-2115

workforce@berkshirecc.edu

<https://www.berkshirecc.edu/academics/community-education-and-workforce-development/index.php>



Berkshire Community College (BCC) Workforce Training offers a wide range of education resources designed for individuals, businesses, and organizations.

Let's work together to:

- Advance your career
- Train your workforce
- Build your professional skills

Let us know your goals and interests and we will help you figure out what fits best!

Corporate Training at BCC

Ongoing changes in technology, career, and job requirements create the need for continuous skill development in both occupational and vocational areas. The BCC Workforce Development team responds to these needs by providing customized training to organizations throughout Berkshire County. The trainings range from basic career-readiness skills, supervisory development, and change leadership mapped to Berkshire industry sector in-demand talent needs.

Let us know your organizational goals and challenges, and we customize trainings and help to identify grant funding resources.

Customized Corporate Training Offering Examples include:

- Supervisor Development
- Managing Challenging Conversations
- Microsoft and Google Suite Applications
- Customer Service
- Change Leadership
- Time Management
- Train the Trainer

Berkshire Innovation Center

45 Woodlawn Avenue

Pittsfield, MA 01201

(413) 449-1100

<https://www.berkshireinnovationcenter.com/>



The Berkshire Innovation Center serves as a catalyst to spark innovation and sustainable growth of technology-focused companies. We do this through programs that promote learning and enrich people in technology-led career paths and by providing research and innovation space for people and companies to explore new technologies, all while convening and connecting a community of like-minded people.

The Berkshire Innovation Center, which officially opened in 2020, provides regional manufacturers and STEM businesses with advanced R&D equipment, state-of-the-art lab and training facilities, and collaboration opportunities with BIC's renowned research partners, as well as internship and apprenticeship programs for local students. Operationally, the BIC is a membership model designed to be self-sustainable and private sector driven.

State and Federal Contacts

The following list contains contact information for state and federal agencies that you may need to successfully start your business in Pittsfield. All information is current as of January 2024.

Massachusetts Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC)

95 4th Street, Suite 3, Chelsea, MA 02150
617-727-3040

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/alcoholic-beverages-control-commission>



The [ABCC](#) is an agency under the Massachusetts State Treasury. The objective of ABCC is to provide uniform control over the sale, transportation, possession, purchasing, and manufacturing of alcoholic beverages in the state. They work with companies in the alcoholic beverage industry and municipal licensing authorities to provide licenses, enforce legislation and regulations, and resolve license issues.

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP)

205B Lowell Street, Wilmington, MA 01887
978-694-3200

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-department-of-environmental-protection>



MassDEP works to ensure clean air and water, the safe management of toxic and hazards, the recycling of solid and hazardous wastes, the timely cleanup of hazardous waste sites and spills, and the preservation of wetlands and coastal resources. Depending on the nature of your business or location, the City of Pittsfield may refer your project to DEP for further examination and approval.

Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR)

100 Cambridge Street, 7th floor, Boston, MA 02114
617-626-2600

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-department-of-revenue>



If you will be selling products or services for which sales tax must be collected, you will need to apply for a Massachusetts Sales Tax Vendor Number and a Sales and Use Tax Registration Certificate from [DOR](#). Certain businesses may also be required to pay Trustee and/or Excise Taxes. Also, most businesses are required to pay some amount of Income Tax.

DOR has compiled a page of references for your [Employer Tax Obligations](#), which provides specific information on a variety of state tax issues. DOR also offers [Small Business Workshops](#) designed modules on their website to walk you through the tax issues.

Massachusetts Division of Occupational Licensure



1000 Washington Street, Suite 700, Boston, MA 02118
617-701-8600

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/division-of-occupational-licensure>

The Division of Occupational Licensure (DOL), through its boards and offices, licenses and regulates more than 580,000 individuals, businesses, and schools to engage in over 150 trades and professions in Massachusetts.

Massachusetts Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation

501 Boylston Street, Suite 5100, Boston, MA 02118
617-973-8787

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/office-of-consumer-affairs-and-business-regulation>



The Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation protects consumers through advocacy, education and ensuring fair, honest business practices among companies and licensees within its jurisdiction.

Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth, Corporations Division

1 Ashburton Place, 17th Floor, Boston, MA 02108
617-727-9640

<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/divisions/corporations/corporations.htm>



The Corporations Division is responsible for filings related to all for profit and nonprofit corporations organized in Massachusetts as well as those out-of-state corporations doing business in Massachusetts that have registered with the division.

United States Army Corps of Engineers, New England



696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742
978-318-8580

<http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/>

The Corps has authority over construction or placement of structures, dredging, and dredged material disposal in the waters of the United States for any project in or affecting the waters of the U.S. These projects must comply with the conditions of the Massachusetts Programmatic General Permit (PGP) or, in the case of larger projects, the conditions of an Individual Permit. The Corps' involvement sometimes parallels review from the Conservation Commission.

United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

JFK Federal Building, 15 Sudbury Street, Boston, MA 02203
844-545-5640

<https://www.irs.gov/>

Among other duties, the IRS provides Federal Tax or Employee Identification Numbers (EINs) to identify a business. Business owners may not transfer EINs if he or she sells or otherwise transfers their business, and the new business owner and operator may not use your EIN.



Tax information for starting a business can be found by going to <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/starting-a-business>. The following IRS tax publications may be useful:

- Sole proprietor: <https://www.irs.gov/publications/p334>
- Partnership: <https://www.irs.gov/publications/p541>

Additional Considerations

This section identifies the extraneous things sometimes forgotten when setting up a business. All information is current as of January 2024.

Tax Identification Numbers



For a federal tax identification number, please use the following link to fill out the form and have your EIN emailed to you; <https://www.irs-ein-tax-id.com/>.

Trash Collection

The Department of Public Utilities Administration Division administers the City's trash and recyclables collection and disposal contracts with Casella Waste Management <https://www.casella.com/>.



Department of Public Utilities
10 Fenn St.; (413) 499-9330
Ricardo Morales, Commissioner of Public Utilities, dpw@cityofpittsfield.org
https://www.cityofpittsfield.org/departments/public_services/index.php

Water and Sewer

Department of Public Services
10 Fenn St.; (413) 499-9330
Ricardo Morales, Commissioner of Public Utilities, dpw@cityofpittsfield.org
https://www.cityofpittsfield.org/departments/public_services/index.php



The homeowner must hire a licensed contractor for this work and get permits through the Engineering Dept.

Property Taxes

If you need information regarding the assessment of your property, you should contact the City's Assessor's Office.



Assessor's Office
70 Allen St., Room 108; (413) 395-0102
Laura M. Catalano, Chief Assessor, assessors@cityofpittsfield.org
https://www.cityofpittsfield.org/departments/board_of_assessors/index.php



Tax Collection

If you need information regarding collection of your taxes, you should contact the Collector's Office.

Collector's Office

70 Allen St., Room 112; (413) 499-9431

Lisa M. Lewis, Tax Collector, llewis@cityofpittsfield.org

https://www.cityofpittsfield.org/departments/tax_collections/index.php

Bidding on Municipal Contracts

Purchasing Department

70 Allen St., Room 102

(413) 499-9470

Colleen Hunter-Mullett, Purchasing Agent, purchasing@cityofpittsfield.org

https://www.cityofpittsfield.org/departments/purchasing_department/index.php



Purchasing is a service department responsible for contracting all goods and services to support the City. If you're interested in doing business with the city, please talk to the Purchasing Agent.

Please note that if you are contracted for a project that is funded with federal funds, you will need to obtain a Unique Entity ID (UEI). This can take 3 months or more to obtain. Start at www.sam.gov.

Electrical Service

Eversource

1-800-340-9822

<https://www.eversource-ma.com/small-biz/>

You should contact Eversource to request new service, to reconnect or disconnect service, to obtain your account balance, and payment history, to make changes to your account information, to change your account information, to report a power outage, to discuss credit and collection issues.

Gas Service

Berkshire Gas

1-800-292-5012

<https://www.berkshiregas.com/support/contact-us>

You should contact Berkshire Gas to request new service, to reconnect or disconnect service, to obtain your account balance, and payment history, to make changes to your account information, to change your account information, to report a power outage, to discuss credit and collection issues.