

CITY OF SAN RAFAEL BUSINESS LICENSE APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS (IN TOWN)

General Information

- There is a one-time, non-refundable processing fee of \$83.00 (home occupation) or \$115 (commercial).
- The license is issued on a calendar year basis, January 1 through December 31. If your business started on or after April 1, your tax will be prorated. Please refer to Box 16 under Page II instructions below.
- Your business license tax rate is determined by your type of business. Refer to Tax Schedule to identify your tax rate.
- If you are filing for your business license 45 days after the start of business in San Rafael, a penalty is due at the rate of 10% per 30-day period, not to exceed 60% per year.
- Some businesses (tax-exempt, tobacco, massage, peddler, secondhand sales/pawnbroker, check cashing, etc.) require additional permits or support documents. If this pertains to your type of business, please call for more information. All retail food-related businesses must provide a copy of their County health permit; please contact the County at 415-499-6907.
- Retail businesses located in the **downtown business district** may be subject to an annual **Business Improvement District (BID)** assessment amounting to 50% of the annual business license tax. If you are not sure whether your retail business is located within the BID, please call to verify.
- A business license will not be issued until the application has been approved and all fees and taxes have been paid.
- Allow up to four weeks for processing of application. Please note that the application will not be processed unless all spaces are completed. Use N/A when a question does not apply to your type of business.

Page I

- Box 1. Businesses operating under a Fictitious Business Name, also referred to as a DBA (doing business as), must include a copy of their Fictitious Business Name filed with the Marin County Clerk's office. This also applies to corporate entities operating under a DBA.
- Box 2. Fill in all that apply. Businesses involving retail and/or wholesale sales must include a copy of their Seller's Permit reflecting the San Rafael business location. If the business has employees or is a corporation or LLC, you must provide the federal & state tax ID numbers (also known as employer ID numbers).
- Box 3. Check the appropriate type of ownership. Include first and last pages of Articles of Incorporation, if applicable.
- Box 4. Please indicate whether your business is for profit or not-profit. Proof of non-profit status, typically a current IRS letter of determination, is required.
- Box 5. Provide the full date (month, day, and year) this business began operating in San Rafael, was represented as operating in San Rafael, or will begin operating in San Rafael.
- Box 6. Be specific in describing the business, indicating the type of services provided or goods sold or manufactured. Please indicate if there are any secondary businesses or uses of the location. If a location is strictly administrative and does not generate gross receipts, please indicate. If possible, please include the NAICS code (see www.naics.com).
- Box 7. Provide personal information of sole proprietor, partners, or at least one officer if a corporation or LLC.
- Box 8. Provide the contact information for your property owner.
- Box 9. Provide the names of emergency contacts and/or alarm companies in case of an after hours emergency. Does not apply to home occupations.

Page II

- Box 10. To assist the Fire Inspectors, please respond to sections 10A and 10B.
- Box 11. Please respond to section 11A if your business is in a commercial location. Please note that the sale of tobacco or food items requires a separate permit.
Please respond to section 11B if your business is a home occupation. Please initial where indicated.
- Box 12. Enter your estimated gross receipts, assuming you will be in business from January 1 through December 31.
- Box 13. Enter your actual gross receipts from each of the prior 3 years, if applicable.
- Box 14. Number of Units (for example, employees or vending machines). This box is only applicable for flat rate taxes. Refer to Tax Schedule.
- Box 15. Enter the application processing fee of \$83.00 (home occupation) or \$115 (commercial).
- Box 16. Calculate the business license tax for the current year by referring to the enclosed tax schedule for your type of business. If your business started after April 1, your tax is calculated using the following pro-rata formula: First determine the tax for a full year (estimated gross receipts and other tax rates use this same formula). Prorate that tax as follows: April 1 – June 30 equals 75% of tax. July 1 – September 30 equals 50% of tax. October 1 – December 31 equals 25% of tax.
- Box 17. If the application is being presented beyond the 45-day grace period, calculate the penalty from the 46th day at the rate of 10% of the current tax per 30-day period, not to exceed 60% per year.
- Box 18. Repeat instructions for Box 16 to calculate taxes for each of the prior 3 years, if applicable.
- Box 19. Repeat instructions for Box 17 to calculate penalties for each of the prior 3 years, if applicable.
- Box 20. BID applies to downtown retail businesses only. The BID assessment is 50% of the tax amount due. BID does not apply to home occupations.
- Box 21. Enter fee for Tobacco Permit (separate application required).
- Box 22. Blank space for any additional moneys due.
- Box 23. Enter total of Boxes 15 through 22.
- Box 24. Sign, identify your title (owner, partner, officer, employee, or agent), and date the application.

Return your completed forms, copies of any associated documents, and a check payable to the "City of San Rafael" for the combined total of the processing fee, the business license tax, and, if applicable, penalties and other fees. For your convenience, the City of San Rafael accepts **Visa** and **MasterCard**.

Any questions?

For questions concerning the business license procedure, please call (415) 485-3051.
For questions concerning zoning or land use, please call the Planning Division at (415) 485-3085.