



CYNTHIANA BUSINESS GUIDE

A Guide to Help Launch and
Expand Businesses in
Cynthiana, Kentucky



Cynthiana-Harrison County
Economic Development Authority



Planning and
Community Development
Cynthiana - Harrison County - Berry
Planning Commission



We are CYNTHIANA,

the Maiden City of Kentucky.

We are a community focused on our possibilities, not our limitations; on our strengths, not our weaknesses!

Community is our goal! We all want the same thing - a thriving town with a future for generations.

We invite you to join us as together we prosper.



Whether you are opening or expanding your business, we want to thank you for considering Cynthiana and for making a commitment to our local economy.

We want to make it as easy for you as possible. So we have created this 8-Step Guide to help you do business in Harrison County/Cynthiana.

Whether you are a one-person start-up or you plan to have hundreds of employees, we hope that you will find that whatever agency you are dealing with in your journey that we are business-friendly and focused on you



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the Maiden City of Kentucky.

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WELCOME

Message from Mayor & Judge

Dear Entrepreneurs, Business Owners,
and Community Partners,

Welcome to Cynthiana and Harrison County, a place
where small-town charm meets big potential.



We are honored to present this guide as a collaborative resource to support and inspire you as you start, grow, or expand your business in our vibrant community. Whether you're launching a first-time venture or relocating an established enterprise, you'll find that our community is a place that values innovation, hard work, and partnership.

Our city and county governments are proud to collaborate closely to foster a supportive environment for business development. From walkable downtown spaces and accessible local leadership to infrastructure improvements and strategic planning efforts, we are committed to building a strong foundation for economic success.

Harrison County is more than just a beautiful place to do business; it's a place to belong. We believe in investing in people, nurturing dreams, and celebrating the entrepreneurs who are shaping the future of our hometown. When you succeed, our entire community benefits.

We invite you to explore the opportunities, tools, and contacts shared in this guide, and we encourage you to reach out to us directly if you need any assistance along the way. Your success is our shared priority, and we look forward to partnering with you.

With appreciation and excitement,



Isaac Dailey
Mayor of Cynthiana



Jason Marshall
Harrison Co Judge Executive

Your Business Development Team

Let us help launch your business in the right direction! Our mission is to advance Greater Harrison County by being a catalyst of growth and development for our business community.

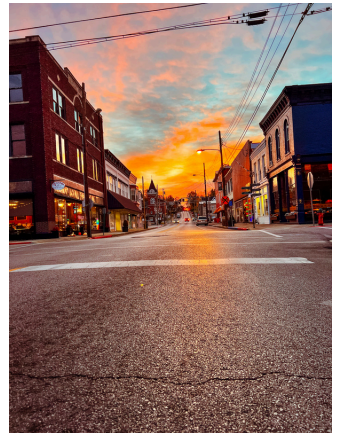
If you're a new business, we welcome you to Cynthiana. If you have been here awhile, then we thank you for your commitment to our Maiden City.

Either way, we want to make it easy for you to succeed.

Cynthiana Business Launch Program

With the **Cynthiana Business Launch Program**, the Chamber of Commerce brings all regulating agencies from Cynthiana and Harrison County to one meeting to give your business all you need for a quick and successful launch. Or if a meeting doesn't fit your needs, we'll connect you to all the needed agencies.

- Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC)
- Building Inspector
- Code Enforcement
- Chamber of Commerce
- City Clerk
- County Clerk/Tax Administrator
- Downtown Development/Tourism
- Economic Development Authority
- Fire Marshall
- Planning & Zoning
- Health Department



Your Business Development Team



James Smith,
Chamber of Commerce
cynchamber@gmail.com



Garnet Furnish,
EDA
cheda2020@gmail.com



Sam Lunger,
Downtown Development/
Tourism Director
cynthianatourism@gmail.com



Bonnie Skinner,
Planning & Zoning
office@harrisonplanning.com



Chris Philpot,
Building Inspector
office@harrisonplanning.com



Autumn Terhune
City Clerk's Office/
autumn.terhune@cynthianaky.com



Julie Northcutt
County Tax Administrator
hctax@hcfcky.org

Opening or Expanding Your Business in Cynthiana: An 8-Step Guide

Starting or expanding your business in Cynthiana is a rewarding process, and we're here to guide you through every step. Follow these 8 essential steps to ensure your business is compliant, well-supported, and positioned for success.

Step 1: Find a Property

Start your search for commercial property in Cynthiana by browsing available listings. You can check out local listings or contact the Cynthiana-Harrison County Chamber of Commerce for guidance.

- Visit the Cynthiana EDA Available Industrial/Commercial Property Listings:
<https://www.harrisoncokyeda.com/available-sites>
- Not all available storefronts or properties are on the above search engine. Please contact the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Development Director, or Economic Development for help in locating your ideal business location.
- Have a potential location identified? Confirm zoning requirements with the Cynthiana Planning and Zoning Department:
Phone: 859-234-7165, Email: office@harrisonplanning.com.



Step 2: Zoning & Permits

All businesses in Cynthiana must meet local zoning requirements. Before you begin operations, make sure your business complies with zoning laws.

Contact the Planning and Zoning Department to apply for zoning approval and a building permit to confirm that your proposed location is permitted for your intended use and aligns with regulatory requirements and your business plan.

Apply for a Building Permit

If your business involves any construction or renovations, you will need a building permit from the Cynthiana– Harrison County– Berry Joint Planning Commission. This ensures adherence to local and state construction codes as well as applicable safety standards. Please note that zoning approval and a building permit are separate requirements. Depending on the scope of your project—such as new construction, interior fit-ups, or a change in use—your business may need to obtain both. These approvals can both be processed through the Planning Department.

- For more information, visit the Community and Development Planning website: <https://www.harrisonplanning.com/>, email office@harrisonplanning.com, or call: 859-234-7165.
- Downloadable forms and checklists can be found at: <https://www.harrisonplanning.com/building-inspection>

Please consult with the Planning Office to review applicable sign ordinances and obtain the necessary permits before purchasing or installing signage. This will help ensure compliance with local regulations and prevent unnecessary expenses on signage that may not be permitted.



Step 3: Incentives for Industrial Development

If you are looking to locate or build in Cynthiana's Business Park, you may qualify for various incentives to support development. These incentives can help reduce costs for land, infrastructure, and construction.

Contact the Economic Development Authority (EDA) for more information about the incentives available for businesses locating in a Business Park from both state and local government:



Cynthiana-Harrison County
Economic Development Office
Phone: 859-621-6570
Email: cheda2020@gmail.com



Cynthiana-Harrison County
Economic Development Authority

Step 4: Food & Beverage License

If your business involves selling food or beverages, you will need to obtain a food service permit and an alcohol license (if applicable).

- For food service permits, contact the WEDCO Health Department:
Phone: (859) 234-0241, Website: www.wedcohealth.org.



To legally sell alcoholic beverages, a person or business must apply for and be issued an Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) license through two governing agencies: the Kentucky Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (state ABC) and the City of Cynthiana or Harrison County (local ABC depending on where your business is located). For those located in the city, license holders should familiarize themselves with the City's ABC ordinance. The ABC license type and fee varies with the need of each applicant.



- For alcohol licenses inside city limits, contact the Cynthiana ABC Administrator. A city license is required. Phone: 859-234-7150, Email: autumn.terhune@cynthianaky.com.
- For alcohol licenses outside city limits, the Harrison County ABC Administrator will approve your license and no further steps are necessary.

Step 5: Taxes and Occupational Licenses

Cynthiana businesses are required to withhold a local payroll tax, and businesses must file taxes with both the City, the County, and the State of Kentucky. Make sure you're in compliance with all tax obligations.

City of Cynthiana Harrison County Net Profits Tax:

An Occupational license is required by any entity or individual doing business in the City. This includes, but is not limited to, landlords, real estate agents, construction workers, and other independent contractors. The City of Cynthiana requires employers to withhold 1.5% on all compensation paid to employees. For more information, contact the Cynthiana Finance Department: Phone: 859-234-2180, Email: autumn.terhune@cynthianaky.com

Harrison County Fiscal Court also requires a 1.5% Occupational Tax. For more information, contact the Harrison County Tax Administrator: Phone: 859-234-7136, hctax@hcfcky.org.

Commonwealth of Kentucky

All businesses in Kentucky must also file with the Secretary of State. Visit www.onestop.ky.gov.

Net Profits Tax: Assessed at 1.5% of net profits for both the City of Cynthiana and Harrison County for a total of 3.0%.

City and county clerk offices will assist you in completing all required licenses.



- County tax forms can be found at: <http://harrisoncountyfiscalcourt.com/occupational.asp>
- City tax forms can be found at: <https://www.cynthianaky.com/o/cynthiana/page/business-information>

Step 6: Rental License (if applicable)

If you plan to rent out residential or commercial property, or if you're operating an Airbnb or VRBO, you will need a rental license with both the city and county.

Apply for a rental license through the Cynthiana City Clerk's Office: Phone: 859-234-7150, Email:

autumn.terhune@cynthianaky.com and the HC Tax

Administrator: Phone: 859-234-7136, hctax@hcfcky.org.

Short term Rentals (AirBnb/VRBO)

Apply for a Transient Room License at the HC Tax Administrator:
Phone: 859-234-7136, hctax@hcfcky.org. A 3% Transient Room Tax can be added to all short term rentals to be paid to the HC Tax Administrator for HC Tourism.



AirBnB/VRBO: Reach out to Cynthiana-Harrison County Tourism Commission at cynthianatourism@gmail.com to get your listing on the county's "Places to Stay" listing for additional promotion and publicity.



Step 7: Waste Management and Recycling Plan

Businesses are required to have an effective waste management and recycling plan in place. If your business is a new construction or undergoing substantial renovations, your waste disposal plan must be in place before opening.

- Contact the Cynthiana City Clerk to set up in city trash service: Phone: 859-234-7150, Email: leslie.mullett@cynthianaky.com.
- Contact the Harrison County Solid Waste Coordinator if your business is located outside of city limits: Phone: (859) 298-2149

Step 8: Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening

Once you're ready to open, the Cynthiana-Harrison County Chamber of Commerce would love to help you celebrate with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Contact the Chamber of Commerce to schedule your ribbon cutting and make your grand opening memorable: Phone: 859-234-5236, Email: cynchamber@gmail.com.



These 8 steps represent the essential actions required to start or expand your business in Cynthiana. By following this guide, you will be well on your way to setting up a successful operation in our vibrant community. Cynthiana is ready for your business to thrive!

For any additional questions or support, reach out to the Cynthiana-Harrison County Chamber of Commerce or Cynthiana Economic Development Office

Do I have everything I need?

Below is a checklist of possible scenarios. Reach out to city staff with questions or clarifications.

	City of Cynthiana				Harrison County		Commonwealth of Kentucky		WEDCO Health Dept
Possible Scenarios (More than one may apply)	Zoning Permit	Occupational License	Alcohol License	Rental License	Occupational License	Building Permit - Planning & Zoning	Register Business	Alcohol License	Food Permit
Opening a business	x	x			x		x		
Preparing/ serving food	x	x			x		x		x
Selling Alcohol	x	x	x		x		x	x	
Becoming a Landlord/Airbnb	x	x		x	x				
New Signage	x								
Exterior Alterations to property	x					x			
Construction or demolition	x					x			



Business Retention & Expansion

When you open or move a business to Cynthiana, we want you to stay and prosper. Reach out to us for help along the way.



Here are some recommended first steps to start your business journey:

- File articles of incorporation with the state of Ky.
- Obtain your EIN# and open bank accounts.
- Follow this 8-step guide to obtain all permits and business licenses.
- Discuss your business plan and location with the P&Z staff.
- Secure purchase/lease at desired location.
- Secure and complete any additional permits, including the health department and ABC licenses.
- Secure sign permits with the planning office BEFORE you order any signage.
- Join the Chamber of Commerce.

The fine print: The information provided in this business guide is provided for informational purposes only. The information is general and is not offered as business, financial, legal or other professional advice. We can provide recommended local lawyers and CPA's to help you with those types of questions.



THANK YOU

for considering being part
of our special community!



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