

Cleaning Business Guide



Set Up Your Business

Create a plan that determines what type or range of cleaning services you will provide.

businessportal.sfgov.org/start/create-a-plan

Choose a business structure. LLCs, Corporations, and Limited Partnerships must register their structure with CA Secretary of State before registering locally.

businessportal.sfgov.org/start/choose-a-structure

Apply for an Employer Identification Number (EIN), also known as a Federal Tax ID Number from the IRS. This is used to identify your business and allows you to hire employees. If you are a sole proprietor without employees, you may choose to use your Social Security Number instead.

Register your business with the City through the Office of the Treasurer and Tax Collector (TTX).

businessportal.sfgov.org/start/register-your-business

NOTE You may choose to obtain a separate business address, or you may use your personal address for your registration.

Choose and file a business name. File a Fictitious Business Name (FBN) Statement at the SF Office of the County Clerk if you will be using a name other than your given name, the names of your partners, or the officially registered name of your LLC or corporation. Research the name's availability in your county before filing.

businessportal.sfgov.org/start/choose-a-name

If you plan to hire employees, be sure to follow all wage and employment guidelines.

businessportal.sfgov.org/start/hire-employees



Cleaning Services

Adopt workplace safety measures that comply with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements for the cleaning industry. These include providing a workplace free of hazards, training employees to do their jobs safely, notifying government administrators about serious workplace accidents, and keeping detailed safety records.

[osha.gov](https://www.osha.gov)

Dispose of hazardous materials properly. You can dispose of up to 220 pounds or 27 gallons of hazardous waste using the City's drop-off program at SF Recycling and Disposal Inc. Call (415) 330-1425 for an appointment.

Consider obtaining insurance to cover accidents. In a cleaning business, you will be performing various types of physical activity and operating in other people's offices or homes. As a result, it is more likely for injuries and property damage to occur. [insurance.ca.gov](https://www.insurance.ca.gov)

NOTE The SF Department of the Environment offers a green cleaning pilot program that certifies local cleaning business as Green Businesses. To learn more, call (415) 355 3700.



After Opening

Solicit work. There are a number of ways to seek out work, including using the web, word-of-mouth, advertising, partnerships, etc.

NOTE Ask for references from existing customers. Word-of-mouth can be the most effective way to gain new customers.

Negotiate compensation & payment plan prior to signing a contract. Consider taking a class or seeking other advice on contracts.

Prepare and pay your local, state, and federal taxes. Learn more from these departments:

[sftreasurer.org](https://www.sftreasurer.org)

[sfassessor.org](https://www.sfassessor.org)

[ftb.ca.gov](https://www.ftb.ca.gov)

[irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov)



To speak with a business counselor
visit the Office of Small Business

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(415) 554-6134