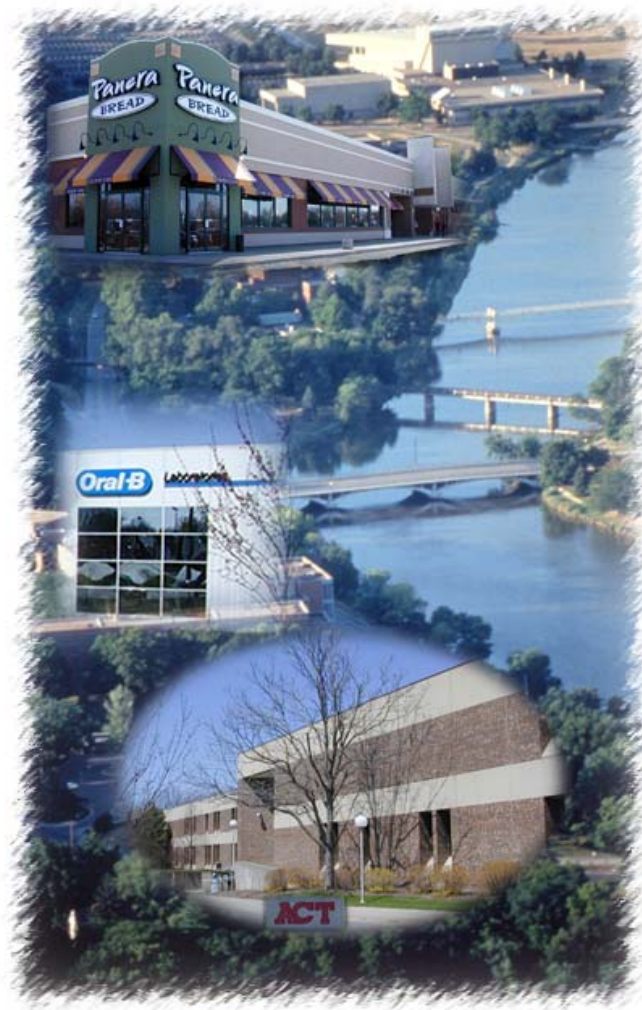


Guide to Operating a Business in Iowa City



**April 2004
Fifth Edition**



A dynamic regional destination point with a growing and thriving business community and a highly educated work force.

Contact:

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Community & Economic Development
410 E. Washington St., Iowa City, Iowa 52240
Phone: (319) 356-5248 ■ Fax: (319) 356-5217
www.icgov.org/business.asp

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Introduction

Welcome to the Iowa City business community!

The City of Iowa City welcomes your interest in opening a business in Iowa City. You are joining nearly 2,500 other businesses in Iowa City and Johnson County that keep the local economy vibrant. Whether it is the University of Iowa employing over 22,000, or a home-based business employing one, all businesses provide citizens an opportunity to enhance their economic well-being.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide you with the basic information needed to establish a business in Iowa City. Also explained within the booklet are different requirements for operating a business in Iowa City and resources available to individuals and existing businesses. **This booklet is a guide** and is provided as a public service. Though it does not include a complete listing of all information relevant to operating a business, it serves as a good starting point.



**Iowa City was rated
#2 Best Small Metro Area
in the Forbes/Milken Institute list of
Best Places for Businesses and Careers
(May 2002)**

Places to Go for Assistance

Economic Development Division

City of Iowa City
Department of Planning and Community Development
410 E. Washington Street
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 356-5248
Steven Nasby, Community & Economic Development
www.icgov.org/business.asp

The Economic Development Division is the municipal office to contact when an individual or business requires assistance from the City of Iowa City regarding business activities. As a division of the Iowa City Department of Planning and Community Development, the Division has access to information and individuals throughout the various city departments and will assist those involved in pursuing business endeavors.

In addition to providing access to information, the Economic Development Division compiles a database of economic and demographic information for the area. The Division can also direct individuals to other sources of information.

Working in cooperation with other city departments and the Iowa City Area Development Group, the Economic Development Division assists developers and prospective companies with specific commercial, office, and industrial development projects. This assistance ranges from helping businesses understand local regulations to determining available local public financial assistance for a specific firm. The Economic Development Division acts as a municipal resource for the business community.

Iowa City Area Development Group

325 E. Washington St., Suite 100
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 354-3939
icad@msn.com
www.iowacityareadevelopment.com

The Iowa City Area Development Group, Inc. (ICAD) is a private non-profit organization whose mission is to position the region as a quality place to work and live and as one receptive to technologies of the future. ICAD works as a confidential advocate for expanding businesses and new industries.

ICAD provides site location assistance in many forms including an inventory of available industrial, commercial, and retail property, and assisting businesses with site visits to the area. Also provided are demographics and area information to assist businesses with their site location decisions.

Serving as a liaison between the City of Iowa City Economic Development Division, the Iowa Department of Economic Development, the University of Iowa, and other entities, ICAD provides information regarding the programs and services available in the area. ICAD often helps businesses pursue state and local financial assistance. In addition, ICAD is a resource for the business community through its advocacy for expanding businesses and new industries, work force development, and site location assistance.

Iowa City Area Chamber of Commerce

325 E. Washington St.
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 337-9637
chamber@iowacityarea.com
www.iowacityarea.com

Since it was founded in 1921, the Iowa City Area Chamber of Commerce has been an effective, non-profit organization with many committees and staff members providing support to the business community. The Chamber's ultimate goal is to enhance the business climate and the quality of life in Johnson County.

For members, the Area Chamber provides networking, professional development, education, and advocacy. Programs designed to provide exposure and promotion for member businesses include the annual *Business Fair* (trade show) and monthly *Business AMs & PMs* (networking event), which are held at member businesses. Educational programs include customer service seminars, human resource seminars, a human resource handbook, small business development packets, an annual membership directory, a small business employer's kit, and a monthly newsletter, *Reflections*.

In addition, the Area Chamber serves as a resource for newcomers to the community. It is often called upon to provide business referrals and the names of member businesses to over 5,000 individuals annually. The annual Community Leadership Program is designed to develop the leadership potential existing in the communities of Johnson County.

The Area Chamber also studies and participates in local, regional, state, and national economic development and legislative issues; advocates position statements; and lobbies elected or appointed officials to encourage the enactment of beneficial policies. The Iowa City Area Chamber of Commerce is a resource for the business community through its networking, professional development, and educational opportunities.

Small Business Development Center

The University of Iowa
S160 Pappajohn Business Administration Building
Iowa City, IA 52242
(319) 335-3742
1-800-373-7232
www.iabusnet.org

The University of Iowa Small Business Development Center (SBDC) is a non-profit organization founded in 1981. The SBDC provides *free* and *confidential* business management assistance to owners and managers of for-profit businesses and individuals interested in starting their own businesses. Existing small business owners typically depend on the SBDC to answer specific business-related questions, while individuals starting a new business have more general questions.

The Small Business Development Center can assist with developing a business plan, locating financial assistance, determining the target market, where to obtain necessary information about state and federal taxes, registering the business name, licensing requirements, and much more.

Assistance is also provided to individuals who have found a business they want to purchase and individuals looking at franchise opportunities. The SBDC has the necessary tools to help individuals decide what the right business is for them. In addition to one-on-one counseling, the SBDC offers seminars and short courses. The two-hour *Smart Start* seminar guides the participants through the progression of starting a business. The nine week *Fast Trac New Venture* assists start-up business owners in expanding a business concept, developing a business plan, and determining potential profitability. *Fast Trac Planning* assists entrepreneurs and managers in developing a strategy to maximize the performance of a business.

Whether a client is considering starting a business or is growing an existing business, the SBDC can provide many of the resources needed to succeed.

Institute for Social & Economic Development

910 23rd Avenue
Coralville, IA 52241
(319) 338-2331
Paula McKenna, Vice-President
www.ised.org

The Institute for Social and Economic Development (ISED) is a private, non-profit organization that helps low-income, unemployed or underemployed individuals start small businesses. ISED focuses on micro-level businesses (5 or fewer employees including the owner) with capital needs of \$25,000 or less. Since 1988, ISED has helped over 1,200 people start or expand small businesses and obtain over \$6 million in capital.

In Iowa City, ISED offers a free 11-week training program to low-to-moderate income residents. The program is a roll-up-your sleeves, straightforward approach to operating a successful business. The program will:

- guide you through the process of writing a business plan – a clearly written description of how your company will run and make a profit;
- help determine if your business can support you and your family;
- teach you how to organize the business, keep good records, determine selling prices, control costs, and market your product or service.

ISED business trainers are former or current business owners– no theories here, just real business experience.

Participants that complete the training program will receive assistance in securing financing. Also, ISED provides additional business counseling after business start-up. All services are free of charge.

ISED was awarded the 1998 Presidential Award for Excellence in Microenterprise Development and was a recipient of the 1999 City of Iowa City Community Development Award.

Iowa Women's Enterprise Center

910 23rd Avenue
Coralville, IA 52241
(319) 338-2331
Christine Mollekopf-Pigsley, Center Director
www.ised.org

Women in Iowa have their own resource to start or expand a business – the Iowa Women's Enterprise Center (IWEC). IWEC is a member of a nationwide network of Women's Business Centers, funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration Office of Women's Business Ownership.

Based in Iowa City, IWEC provides women with technical assistance and training in business-related issues:

- Business Plan Development
- Financing
- Marketing
- Business Management
- Government Procurement
- Business Applications for the Internet and Computer Technology

IWEC also provides services to women currently in business:

- Technology Training
- Targeted Small Business Certification
- Acquiring Capital
- Growth Management
- Capturing New Markets
- Financial Management
- Human Resource Development
- Much More

Services are free of charge. Call 1-888-849-9589 for an initial consultation.

SCORE

210 Federal Building
P.O. Box 1853
400 S. Clinton St.
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 338-1662

The Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), sponsored by the Small Business Administration (SBA), is a non-profit association providing free confidential business counseling to those wanting to start a new business or those presently operating a business.

SCORE is a nationwide organization with 12,000 retired and active executives in 400 chapters. The Iowa City Chapter has 11 members who are ready to offer free confidential counseling at any time. In addition, SCORE periodically conducts seminars and workshops that cover major considerations for running a business. Contact the SCORE office to find out when and where these workshops are held. SCORE is a resource for the business community through its counseling, seminars, and workshops.

Iowa Dept. of Economic Development

Small Business Resource Office
200 East Grand
Des Moines, IA 50309
(515) 242-4700
1-800-532-1216 (outside of Des Moines)
www.iowasmart.com

The Iowa Department of Economic Development offers comprehensive assistance and informational materials for small business start-ups. This includes financial assistance for small business start-ups and expansions and business license information. Minority- and female-owned small business assistance is also available.

The Business License Information Center contains a computerized list of hundreds of different kinds of business licenses, permits and regulations. When you call the center for assistance, an information kit is designed to meet your specific needs, such as required licenses, a summary of each license, special requirements for obtaining the license, fees and processing times, as well as agency names and phone numbers. The Business License Information Center can be accessed on the internet at www.iowasmart.com/blic

Whether starting a new business or expanding a business of any size, the Business License Information Center can make it easier with quick and accurate answers, as well as contacts in the following areas:

- License and Permits
- Taxes
- Regulations
- Unemployment Insurance
- Worker's Compensation
- Local Requirements
- Marketing and Management Assistance
- Financial Alternatives
- Trade Name Registration

Licenses and Permits

Business Licenses

Iowa City does not require a general business license. However, some businesses are required to obtain a license or permit to operate. Following is a brief description of permits and licenses that are required.

Home Occupation

Iowa City does not require a license or permit for operating a business in the home, however, home occupations are regulated. Certain types of home occupations are prohibited; these are: motor vehicle repair, machine shops, medical and dental offices, kennels, welding shops, and mini-storage facilities. The home occupation must be clearly subordinate to the primary use of the dwelling as a residence and occupy no more than 25% of the gross floor area. The dwelling must also be the primary residence of the owner/operator of the home occupation. One employee, who does not live at the residence, may be allowed with a minor modification granted by the Director of Housing and Inspection Services. To ensure that the business is a legal use, it is recommended that a written proposal be submitted to the Housing and Inspection Services Department for review and approval.

Contact: Housing and Inspection Services, (319) 356-5120

Alcoholic Beverages

For businesses that involve the sale of alcoholic beverages, a *Liquor License* or *Beer Permit* is necessary. A *Dancing Permit* is required for dancing in connection with the sale of alcohol. Selling alcohol outdoors on private property requires an *Outdoor Service Area* permit; selling alcohol, food, or beverages on City owned property requires approval as a *Sidewalk Café*. Applications for these permits may be obtained from the City Clerk's office. Along with the application and application fee, a number of requirements must be met before new or renewal licenses and permits are issued.

Contact: City Clerk's Office, (319) 356-5040

Cigarettes

A Cigarette Permit is required to sell cigarettes. Along with the application and application fee, the business owner has certain obligations to fulfill under Iowa City's Cigarette Education Ordinance.

Contact: City Clerk's Office, (319) 356-5040

Taxicab, Pedicab, or Horse-Drawn Vehicle

A permit is required to own and/or operate a taxicab, pedicab, or horse-drawn vehicle. A number of requirements must be met before the application and application fee can be processed by the City Clerk.

Contact: *City Clerk's Office, (319) 356-5040*

Restaurant, Food, or Vending Machine

A permit is required for any kind of food related business, including grocery stores, restaurants, food carts, catering, certain home-based products, and vending machines. Building and equipment plans must be received and approved by the Johnson County Department of Public Health before construction or remodelling occurs. Food operation licenses are nontransferable, therefore, a new permit must be obtained if a change in ownership and/or change of location occurs. After a permit has been issued, the County Health Department conducts annual inspections. An annual license renewal fee is required.

Contact: *Johnson Co. Dept. of Public Health, (319) 356-6040*

Other Health Department Permits

The Johnson County Department of Public Health regularly inspects businesses that affect public health. Construction and remodelling plans for *hotels and motels* and *licensed daycare centers* must be approved by the County Health Department. Hotels and motels are inspected regularly and licensed daycare centers are inspected annually. *Swimming pools* inspected by the County Health Department include: public swimming pools and spas; hotel/motel pools and spas; public schools; and community facilities. An annual inspection fee is required. Approval for swimming pool construction and remodelling is obtained from the State Department of Public Health. *Tanning facilities, tattoo establishments, and funeral homes* are annually inspected to determine compliance with state regulations. An annual inspection fee is required.

Contact: *Johnson Co. Dept. of Public Health, (319) 356-6040*

Utilities

Water/Sewer

- **New Service:** The City of Iowa City supplies water and sewer service to businesses within the city limits. To order new service for an existing line, contact the City Treasury Division. A registration card and commercial deposit are required before service can begin. *Contact: City Treasury Division, 319-356-5066*

- **New Connections:** When new water lines and sewer lines are involved, the contractor generally orders water and sewer service. Applications are required for water and sewer connections.
Water Connections: Water Division, 319-356-5160
Sewer Connections: Building Inspection Division, 319-356-5126

- **Water Leaks:** Water leaks should be reported to the Water Division Service Department, who determine the location of the water leak. The property owner is responsible for the repair costs of leaks from the water main to and within the property structure. *For questions concerning excessive water usage, contact the Water Division Service Department at (319) 356-5166. For billing questions, contact the Treasury Division at (319) 356-5066.*

- **Temporary Water Service:** When temporary water is needed for construction, new structures will be given a utility account and will be billed “on construction” fees as soon as the tap is made on the water main. *Contact: Water Division (319) 356-5160*

- **Complaints:** Report sewer leaks, odors, backed-up or plugged sewer lines, or any other type of complaint to the Wastewater Division. The property owner is responsible for repairs and maintenance costs from the City main to and including the building. *Contact: Wastewater Division, (319) 356-5177. Refer billing questions to the Treasury Division at (319) 356-5066.*

Sanitation/Recycling

Private waste haulers provide sanitation and recycling services to businesses in Iowa City. Businesses should contract with a private hauler for sanitation services. Waste haulers serving Iowa City include:

- Hawkeye Waste Systems (319) 351-5932
- N & N Sanitation (319) 354-2535
- Waste Management (319) 337-5669

For recycling services, refer to the sanitation services above or contact:

- City Carton Co. Inc. (319) 351-2848

Contact the Iowa City Landfill Division at 319- 356-5185 for information regarding hazardous material regulations, landfill material bans, and special waste authorization.

Gas and Electricity

MidAmerican Energy Company serves most of the Iowa City area for gas and electricity. *Contact MidAmerican at (800) 329-6261 for information on hook-up for either a new building or existing address.* Eastern Iowa Light and Power Cooperative serves a small portion of southern Iowa City. *Contact Eastern Iowa Light and Power at (319) 629-4221.*

Telephone

Qwest and McLeodUSA provide local phone service to Iowa City. To order phone service for your business or to install service at a new address, *call Qwest at (800) 244-1111 or McLeodUSA at (319) 338-1888.*

Development Process & Permits

Zoning

The City of Iowa City has designated various areas throughout the city as appropriate for industrial and commercial uses. When looking for a business location, it is suggested that these areas be considered first. The Department of Housing and Inspection Services supplies general information on zoning and allowable land uses in various zoning categories. Most information is available over the phone or in person free of charge.

Contact: Housing and Inspection Services (319) 356-5120

Rezoning

In the event a business location is desired on property that is not suitably zoned, the City may, in some cases, grant a rezoning. The City's decision to grant a rezoning will be based on the comprehensive plan, compatibility of the proposed zone with nearby zones; the adequacy of city infrastructure and services in the area; and public input. **To discuss a potential rezoning, contact the Urban Planning Division of the Planning and Community Development Department at (319) 356-5240.**

After consulting with staff, an application and fee must be filed with the City Clerk. After the application is filed, the staff prepares a report evaluating the proposed rezoning and makes a recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission to approve or deny the application. The Planning and Zoning Commission has two public discussions at which citizens and property owners have the opportunity to comment on the proposed rezoning. The Planning and Zoning Commission then makes a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council holds a public hearing on the issue. If the Council decides to approve a rezoning, three readings of the ordinance are required before final approval. The rezoning process takes approximately 12 weeks from the time the application is filed to the final decision of the City Council.

Contact: Urban Planning Division, (319) 356-5240

Special Exceptions

Each zoning district contains a list of permitted and provisional land uses that may be established on a property if the zoning requirements, such as building height and parking spaces, are adhered to. Each zoning district also contains a list of special exceptions. Special exceptions are not permitted by right in a zone, but after review by the Board of Adjustment, they may be allowed if there are no negative impacts on nearby properties or if any negative impacts may be ameliorated. If a special exception is needed, the Urban Planning Division should be contacted for a consultation. An application and application fee must be filed with the City Clerk. After the application is submitted, the staff reviews and makes a recommendation to the Board of Adjustment. The Board of Adjustment holds a public meeting on the item then approves, approves with conditions, or denies the special exception. The process takes approximately one month from the time the application is filed to the final decision of the Board of Adjustment.

Contact: Urban Planning Division, (319) 356-5240

Site Plan Approval

The Department of Housing and Inspection Services should be contacted to obtain current information concerning submission and review of required site plans. Site plans are required for construction of new buildings, remodeling, or for any change in use of an existing building. A fee is required for review of major site plans, which are required for nonresidential developments over 10,000 square feet of floor area and residential developments of more than 12 dwelling units. The fee is collected when the site plan is submitted to Housing and Inspection Services. A fee is not required for minor site plan reviews, which are required for all developments that do not require a major site plan. The City has an obligation to approve or deny a major site plan within 21 working days, although the average review process takes less time.

Contact: Housing and Inspection Services, (319) 356-5132

Building Permits

Most physical changes to commercial and industrial development require a building permit. A building permit is required for any new construction, any change in use, and most remodeling. A demolition permit is required for the demolition of part or all of a structure. At the issuance of the permit, a permit fee will be collected.

Contact: Housing and Inspection Services, (319) 356-5120

Construction in the Right-of-Way

Any construction activity that requires construction equipment to occupy the public right-of-way should be coordinated with the Public Works Department by obtaining a temporary use of a public right-of-way permit. Excavation within the public right-of-way requires an excavation permit from the Public Works Department. A refundable deposit and certificate of insurance is required to ensure restoration is completed.

Contact: Department of Public Works, (319) 356-5140

Parking Facility Impact Fees

A parking facility impact fee, which deals with off-street parking requirements, is required for residential development in most of the Near Southside Neighborhood. The Near Southside is bound by Burlington Street to the north, Madison Street to the west, Gilbert Street to the east, and the Iowa Interstate Railway main-line to the south. The revenues from the impact fee are used by the City to provide parking facilities in the Near Southside. A formula is used to determine the amount of required off-street parking and the amount of required parking impact fee. The Department of Housing and Inspection Services collects the fee, which may be paid in three installments, with the first installment due before the certificate of occupancy is issued.

Contact: Housing and Inspection Services, (319) 356-5132

Sign Permits

Most commercial and industrial signs visible to the public from a street or public right-of-way require a sign permit. A sign permit is required for any new signs or any change in the face or structure of an existing sign. Signs and banners for special events also require a sign permit. The use of a special events sign or banner is restricted to no more than four times a year and for a single duration of no more than 30 days. Certain types of signs, such as roof signs and swinging signs, are prohibited. A few types of signs do not require a permit, although the size and placement of the sign may be regulated. Any type of banner not related to a special event is prohibited in an outside location.

Contact: Housing and Inspection Services, (319) 356-5120

Certificate of Occupancy

A Certificate of Occupancy is required for any new structure or for any change in use. The Certificate of Occupancy certifies that at the time of issuance the structure was in compliance with various ordinances regulating building construction or use and the City Zoning Ordinance. The Certificate of Occupancy is the conclusion of the building permit process, but it is also still necessary even if no building permit has been required or if a change of use occurred. The Building Official can issue a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy for an additional fee if a project is not completely finished but has no life/safety issues.

Contact: Housing and Inspection Services, (319) 356-5120

Plumbing, Electrical, or Heating Permits

Most plumbing, electrical, or mechanical changes to a building require a permit. A permit fee is collected when the permit is issued.

Contact: Housing and Inspection Services, (319) 356-5120

Easement for Use of Sidewalk/Public Right-of-Way

In order to better comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the City Council may grant an easement for the use of a sidewalk or public right-of-way to make local businesses accessible to persons with disabilities if physical limitations prevent the necessary accommodations on private property.

Contact the Department of Housing and Inspection Services at (319-356-5132) about specifications for accessibility. If an easement for the use of the sidewalk or public right-of-way is the preferred option, a written request with construction drawings must be submitted to the Department of Public Works for City Staff review and City Council approval.

Contact: Department of Public Works, (319) 356-5140

Construction Trade Licenses

In the City of Iowa City plumbing, electrical, gas pipe installers, sewer and water installations, and sign installations must be performed under the direct supervision of contractors licensed by the City of Iowa City for that particular trade. Licenses are issued through the Housing and Inspection Services Department. An application, application fee, and yearly renewal fee are required for all of the above licenses. In addition, a test and test fee are required for plumbing contractors, electrical contractors, gas pipe installers, and sewer and water installers.

Contact: Housing and Inspection Services, (319) 356-5120

Taxes

Sales and Use Taxes

Anyone making a retail sale in Iowa must obtain a retail sales tax permit from the Iowa Department of Revenue and Finance. The permit is available at no charge. Application forms may be obtained from Taxpayer Services. All sales of *tangible personal property* in Iowa – other than those for processing or resale – are subject to the sales tax unless specifically exempted by state law. Sales of *services* are exempt from Iowa sales tax unless specifically taxed by state law. Further detail is available in an information booklet titled *Iowa Sales and Use Tax* available from Taxpayer Services at the address or number below. Iowa City does not have a local option sales tax.

A use tax is imposed in the event that property purchased out-of-state for use in Iowa is brought into Iowa. Every out-of-state retailer who maintains a place of business in Iowa and/or makes tangible personal property or taxable services must obtain a retailer's use tax certificate free of charge.

Contact: Iowa Dept. of Revenue & Finance
Taxpayer Services
P.O. Box 10457
Des Moines, IA 50306-0457

From Iowa/Omaha/Moline-Rock Island area: 1-800-367-3388
From Des Moines metro area/out of state: (515) 281-3114
Tax-Fax number: 1-800-572-3943

Obtain Iowa forms at <http://www.state.ia.us/tax>

Hotel/Motel Tax

Iowa City has adopted a local option hotel/motel tax. The tax is assessed on the renting of sleeping rooms in any hotel, motel, inn, bed and breakfast, public lodging house, rooming house, tourist court, mobile home, or in any place where sleeping accommodations are furnished to transient guests for rent. These rentals are also subject to the state sales tax. No additional tax permit, other than the state sales tax permit, is required for hotels and motels.

Property Tax

In Iowa City, a property tax is levied on all real property. Property taxes are payable in two equal installments, the first due in September, the second in March of the next year for taxes assessed the previous fiscal year. Several entities receive the tax, including the School District, the City, and the County.

Contact: Iowa City Assessor, (319) 356-6066.

Internal Revenue Service

The IRS presents small business workshops across Iowa each year, with regular sessions addressing Sale Distributorships, Payroll Taxes, and Corporate Taxes. The Small Business Tax Kit, a packet of Federal forms and information, is available by calling (515) 284-4870.

- Federal Tax Information: 1-800-829-1040
- Federal Tax Publications: 1-800-829-3676
- Local Presentations & Small Business Workshops: 515-284-4870

State & County Departments

Iowa Department of Commerce

1918 S.E. Hulsizer Avenue
Ankeny, IA 50021
www.state.ia.us/government/com/

- Licensing for retail and wholesale sales of alcoholic liquor, wine, and beer (515) 281-7430
- Information concerning rates and services of certain electric, gas, phone, and water utilities (515) 281-5979 or 1-877-565-4450
- Problem resolution and information concerning insurance for small businesses (515) 281-5705 or 1-877-955-1212
- Assistance to small businesses concerning the sale of stock (515) 281-4441
- Licensing for the following professions: Certified Public Accountants, Accounting Practitioners, Architects, Real Estate Brokers, Real Estate Salespersons, Real Estate Appraisers (515) 281-3183
- Regulation of state chartered banks, finance companies, mortgage brokers, and others in the business of delivering financial products and services (515) 281-4014

Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals

Lucas State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319
(515) 281-7102
www.state.ia.us/government/dia/index.html

- Restaurant and food sales licensing
- Gambling license information
- Targeted small business certification
- Licensing of residential care and intermediate care facilities
- Certification of home health agencies

Iowa Department of Agriculture

Wallace State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319
(515) 281-8619
www.agriculture.state.ia.us

- Regulatory information for food-related and animal related businesses
- Information concerning weights and measures
- Information for commercial grain storage and grain sales businesses

Iowa Secretary of State

Hoover State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319
(515) 281 -5204
www.sos.state.ia.us/

- Information for corporations, nonprofit corporations, limited partnerships, limited liability companies, and state trademarks

County Recorder

913 S. Dubuque St.
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 356-6093

- Information for sole proprietorships and simple partnerships
- Certificates of Assumed Name (if doing business under a name other than your own)

Iowa Department of Transportation

Motor Vehicle Decision
Park Fair Mall
100 Euclid Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50306
(515) 239-1101
www.dot.state.ia.us/

- Motor vehicle dealership information and licensing
(515) 237-3162
- Information for trucking businesses (515) 237-3264
- Information concerning vehicles subject to registration
(515) 237-3110

Iowa Workforce Development

1000 East Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50319
1-800-562-4692
www.iowaworkforce.org

- OSHA consultations and information on labor laws
- Unemployment insurance information
- Worker's compensation information
- Information concerning child labor laws, minimum wage, wage enforcement and hazardous chemicals
- Boiler, elevator and amusement ride inspection; licensing of private employment agencies and professional boxing and wrestling; and registration of construction contractors
(515) 281-3606

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Building Inspection Division

City of Iowa City
410 E. Washington St.
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 356-5126

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City Clerk's Office

City of Iowa City
410 E. Washington St.
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 356-5040

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Department of Housing & Inspection Services

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410 E. Washington St.
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 356-5120

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Plumbing, electrical, or heating permits 18
Sign permits 17
Site plan approval 15
Zoning 14

Iowa City Assessor's Office

913 S. Dubuque
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 356-6066

Property taxes 20

Iowa Department of Revenue and Finance

Taxpayer Services
Hoover Building
P.O. Box 10457
Des Moines, IA 50306-1457
1-800-367-3388 (from outside the Des Moines metropolitan area,
or from the Omaha or Moline-Rock Island calling areas)
(515) 281-3114 (from the Des Moines metropolitan area or from
out of state)

Sales and use taxes 19

Hotel/Motel tax 20

Johnson County Department of Public Health

1105 Gilbert Ct.
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 356-6040

Hotel and motel inspections 11

Licensed daycare center inspections 11

Restaurant, food, and vending machine inspections 11

Swimming pool inspections 11

Public Works Department

City of Iowa City
410 E. Washington St.
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 356-5140

Construction in the right-of-way 16
Easement for use of sidewalk/public right-of-way 18

Sanitation Department (mailing address)

City of Iowa City
410 E. Washington
Iowa City, IA
(319) 356-5180

Hazardous material regulations 13
Landfill material bans 13
Special waste authorization 13

Treasury Division

City of Iowa City
410 E. Washington St.
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 356-5066

Water and sewer service 12
Water and sewer billing questions 12

Urban Planning Division

City of Iowa City
410 E. Washington St.
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 356-5240

Rezoning 14
Special exceptions 15

Water Division (mailing address)

City of Iowa City
410 E. Washington St
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 356-5160

Water service for new buildings 12
Temporary water for construction 12

Wastewater Division

City of Iowa City
1000 S. Clinton St.
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 356-5170
(319) 356-5177 (sewer emergency calls)

Sewer leaks 12

While every effort has been made to present accurate information, this booklet should not be misconstrued as a legal interpretation of laws. The City of Iowa City expressly disclaims any liability for errors or omissions contained herein.

Internet Resources:

Iowa Profiles:

Includes information on local area economics, demographics, and governments.

<http://profiles.iastate.edu/>

Iowa Economic Trends Page:

Provides the most current economic news useful to business, government, and financial policy makers. There are links to useful economic information including international economic information, current economic news, financial information, demographics, and markets.

<http://www.iowaWorkforce.org/trends>

SBA On-Line:

The U.S. Small Business Administration has a wealth of information about SBA programs and assistance. This site includes many helpful publications aimed at small business.

<http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/>

U.S. Business Advisor:

Provides a one-stop electronic link to federal government information, services, and transactions.

<http://www.business.gov/busadv/index.cfm>

Iowa Department of Economic Development Small Business Resource Office:

Provides informational material for small business start-ups. This includes financial assistance for start-ups and expansion. The business license center contains a computerized list of business licenses, permits and regulations.

<http://www.iowasmart.com>

Institute for Social and Economic Development:

The Institute for Social and Economic Development is a private, non-profit organization that helps low-income, unemployed or underemployed individuals start small businesses. The Iowa Women's Enterprise Center (IWEC), can also be accessed by link from this Internet address.

<http://www.ised.org>

Iowa City Economic Development Division:

Provides a link to the Iowa City Economic Development Division. This division is the municipal office to contact when an individual or business requires assistance from the City of Iowa City regarding business activities.

<http://www.icgov.org/business.asp>

Small Business Development Center:

The University of Iowa Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides free and confidential business management assistance to owners and managers of for-profit businesses. This office and its activities can be accessed at the following Internet address.

<http://www.iabusnet.org>

Iowa Department of Revenue and Finance:

This site offers 24-hour access to Iowa tax forms.

<http://www.state.ia.us/tax>

Johnson County Government:

Provides access to the Johnson County Administration pages, which contains all applicable information and relevant links.

<http://www.jccn.iowa-city.ia.us/~jcgovis/> (Johnson Co. Community Network) <http://www.johnson-county.com> (Johnson Co. Government web site)