

*This information was prepared by the*



**Hermosa Beach Chamber of Commerce  
& Visitors Bureau**

1007 Hermosa Avenue, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254  
(310) 376-0951 / [www.hbchamber.net](http://www.hbchamber.net)

**Business Start-Up Kit  
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# Hermosa Beach Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau

## What the Chamber Does

The Hermosa Beach Chamber of Commerce advocates and represents businesses' interest and issues affecting the community. We provide the environment to help our members prosper and succeed through a productive working partnership with all levels of government and community organizations to achieve a healthy local economy and quality of life.

The Chamber provides its members networking opportunities, publicity and advertising exposure (through a telephone referral network, a bi-monthly newsletter, website, free advertising offers and annual Membership Directory), continuing business education (through workshops and seminars), and legislative representation at meetings of the City Council, Planning, Public Works and Parks and Recreation Commissions.

The Chamber serves its business community at large by addressing areas of particular importance at the City and State level.

## What We Offer New Businesses Like Yours

Members just starting out in business will benefit from the added exposure and automatic listing in our annual Membership Directory and on our website, [www.hbchamber.net](http://www.hbchamber.net). The Chamber refers only its members to the many people who call for business information and your name will be added to the referral list. Membership Mixers will put you in touch with hundreds of business contacts. Business counseling is available at the Chamber offices. You can get involved in your community by serving on a Chamber Committee.

## Annual Activities

Membership Mixers .....	Monthly
Receptions .....	Bi-annual
Arts and Crafts Fairs .....	Bi-annual
Annual Installation Dinner and Community Awards .....	Annual
Police and Fire Medal of Honor Luncheon .....	Annual

## **Local Resources for Hermosa Beach Businesses**

The following resources are available for new and existing businesses. If you have any question about these or other services, call the Hermosa Beach Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau at (310) 376-0951.

### ***Local Chamber of Commerce***

Hermosa Beach Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau  
1007 Hermosa Ave.  
Hermosa Beach, Ca 90245  
(310) 376-0951

The Hermosa Beach Chamber of Commerce can help you establish your business in the community. We typically hold monthly mixers, where members share information and make business contacts. The Chamber also makes referrals to member businesses as well as through our website, business directory and telephone inquiries. The Hermosa Beach Chamber of Commerce also works with the city government to improve the business climate. Feel free to contact us with any of your business needs or questions.

### ***State Level***

California Chamber of Commerce  
(800) 331-8877

The California Chamber of Commerce works in Sacramento to represent California businesses on issues such as taxes, workers compensation benefits, business liability... just to name a few. The California Chamber of Commerce also publishes books and holds seminars to help business owners deal with labor laws and environmental regulations which increasingly affect all businesses. The Hermosa Beach Chamber can provide you with more information about accessing the California Chamber web site.

## **Classes about Operating a Business**

Contact local community colleges, university extension, and adult schools to find out what business classes they offer.

- Small Business Development Center  
13430 Hawthorne Blvd.  
Hawthorne, CA 90250  
(310) 937-3177  
[www.southbaysbdc.org](http://www.southbaysbdc.org)
- El Camino College  
16007 Crenshaw Blvd.  
Torrance, CA 90506  
(310) 660-3406  
[www.elcaminocollege.edu](http://www.elcaminocollege.edu)

## **Crime Prevention**

Call or visit the Hermosa Beach Police Department for information and guidance in making your business safer, local laws, handling bad checks, etc.

## **IRS Tax Workshop (Federal Taxes)**

The IRS offers workshops on federal forms and requirements for businesses and employers. Sometimes, a state representative is available to answer a few questions. For information, dates, locations, call the IRS tax assistance hotline at (800) 829-1040. Generally, the workshops last four hours and are held monthly, or quarterly depending on the community demand.

## **California State Tax Workshops**

The Franchise Tax Board offers various workshops and seminars to small businesses. For information you may call (800) 400-7115, or go to the web site: [http://www.taxes.ca.gov/seminars\\_and\\_workshops/index.shtml](http://www.taxes.ca.gov/seminars_and_workshops/index.shtml)

## **Los Angeles**

**Event:** Small Business Tax Workshops

**Date(s):** Once a month - call for date

**Time:** 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

**Location:** PACE Business Development Center, 1055 Wilshire Blvd. St 900 B, Los Angeles, CA. 90017, (Corner of Wilshire & Bixel -- City of Hope Building)

**Remarks:** Any size business - no charge -- class given by a certified public accountant

**Sponsor By:** PACE SBA Women's Business Center, (213) 989-3275,  
[msanchez@pacela.org](mailto:msanchez@pacela.org)

## **Referrals for Professional Business Advisors**

Call the Hermosa Beach Chamber of Commerce office at (310) 376-0951 for referrals for an attorney, CPA, consultant or any business professional.

## **Business Loans**

Small Business Administration  
Los Angeles Region  
330 N. Brand Blvd., #1200  
Glendale, CA 91203  
(818) 552-3215

The U.S. Small Business Administration is an independent Federal agency created by Congress to assist and counsel small business. The mission of the SBA is to help people get into business and to stay in business. The agency also provides prospective, new and established persons in small business community with financial assistance, management counseling and training.

## **Special Loans**

The SBA guarantees small business bank loans which typically have low interest rates. The maximum loan is \$750,000. You must apply through a local bank willing to work with the SBA. The bank should contact the SBA for an application.

## **Other Lenders**

Hancock Urban Development Corporation  
3600 Wilshire Blvd., #926  
Los Angeles, CA 90010  
(213) 382-4300

Pacific Coast Financial Development Corporation  
3255 Wilshire Blvd., #1501  
Los Angeles, CA 90010  
(213) 739-2999

SCORE Counseling  
SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives)  
At the Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce  
425 - 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266  
(310) 545-5313 by appointment only

Service Corps of Retired Executives work in conjunction with SBA by providing FREE, expert assistance through a network of 11,000 counselors. SCORE offers one to one management assistance, workshops and seminars to assist small business solve their operating problems.

## **Small Business Development Centers**

SBDC Hosted by Santa Monica College  
3400 Airport Ave., Ste. 76  
Santa Monica, CA 90405  
310-434-3566

Sponsored by the state, this center provides services to new and existing businesses. It offers business plan classes (through community colleges), one to one technical assistance and sponsors low cost workshops.

## **Small Business, Minority, Handicapped or Women Owned Businesses**

Many large companies have special programs which help you “break into” their purchasing network. If you offer products or services needed by larger companies, call the company’s main number and ask for “Purchasing Assistance Programs for Small or Minority Owned Businesses.”

## **Economic Data and Demographics**

Business, Transportation and Housing Agency  
980 9<sup>th</sup> St., Ste. 2450  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 323-5044

The Business, Transportation and Housing Agency provides state wide economic and business information, primarily concerning the industrial economic data, legislation, local economic and small business development.

## **International Trade**

Importing Products:  
World Trade Center of Los Angeles  
350 S. Figueroa  
Los Angeles, CA 90079  
(213) 680-1888 (call for specific county)

Exporting U.S. Products:  
Export Small Business Development Center  
110 E 9<sup>th</sup> St, #A669  
Los Angeles, CA 90079

US Department of Commerce International Trade Administration  
11150 West Olympic Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90064  
(310) 235-7104

## **Local Requirements for Hermosa Beach Businesses**

### **#1 Overview: Who do you contact? The City or the County?**

Both the city and county have planning and building departments. If you are in an unincorporated area, the county controls all your requirements. If you are in an incorporated area, the city controls most of your requirements. Typically, the county continues to control health and food permits, hazardous waste regulations.

By the way ... if your business is located outside Hermosa Beach, you are in an unincorporated area, even if you have a Hermosa Beach post office box!

### **#2 Zoning and Home Occupation Requirements**

Before signing a lease or beginning a business, every business should verify that their planned use and location comply with zoning regulation. The Community Development Department monitors zoning compliance.

**Who to Contact:**

City of Hermosa Beach Community Development & Zoning Department  
1315 Valley Drive, Room 103  
Hermosa Beach, CA 90254  
(310) 318-0235

**What to Do:**

Call or visit the Community Development Department to verify that your proposed use and location comply with zoning requirements. Ask if there are restrictions and allowances for that location.

If your proposed use doesn't comply, you may apply for a conditional use permit or a zone change. Ask the Community Development Department what information they need from you, and approximate cost, the estimated time, and the likelihood that your special use will be approved. Be sure to ask what Planning Commission and /or city council meeting you will be required to attend.

**To Start a Home Business**

You must agree to comply with the city's home occupation restrictions. These are listed on the next page. Prior to granting a business license, the city will conduct an inspection of you proposed business area.

**#3 Business License and Business Tax**

You must obtain a business license for every city where you conduct business. Business license fees vary according to the type of business (service, contractor, restaurant, etc.) All businesses, including home businesses must pay a \$45.00 business inspection fee.

**Who to Contact:**

City of Hermosa Beach License Office  
1315 Valley Drive, Room 101  
Hermosa Beach, CA 90254  
(310) 318-0206

**What to Do:**

Make sure you have registered your business with all the government offices first (see the Business Start-Up Kit).

Call or visit the License Office to obtain a:

Business License Tax Application  
Inspection Request  
Personal Identification Form

Copies of the forms are shown on the next pages. Submit the application with your check. The License Office will automatically route your application to the necessary departments for approval.

**Renewal:** Business licenses are good for one year. The City will automatically send you a form to renew your business license and pay the next year's business license fee.

#### **#4 Sign Ordinance**

The city has two concerns with signs: general appearance and public safety. Thus, it requires sign permits and building permits whenever you install, move, or remove signs. Typically, you must pay a sign permit fee and a building permit fee.

All business signs must be approved by the community development department. The number and size of each sign often depends on your total store frontage. Some cities are very particular about the colors you use and whether the sign flashes or not, etc. We suggest you find out their requirements before you spend any money! A copy of the sign ordinance is available at the City Community Development Department. NOTE: Home occupations are usually not allowed to have business signs.

#### **Who to Contact:**

City of Hermosa Beach Community Development Department  
1315 Valley Drive, Room 103  
Hermosa Beach, CA 90254  
(310) 318-0235

#### **What to Do:**

Before you invest any money in signage or banners, measure your store frontage, then call the community development department and ask the following basic requirements:

Number of signs or banners permitted

Size of each sign or banner

Total sign or banner allotment

Placement

Design/color restrictions

Ask the community Public Works Department to mail you a sign or banner permit application so you will know what documentation to provide. Most applications require the building owner's approval, plans & specifications, colors and material descriptions, and design review approval.

Before you construct the sign, submit the completed application (with your fee) to the Public Works Department. Ask them how long the approval process will take and if you have to attend any planning approval meetings or take any other action.

Once your permit is approved, go to the building department. Ask them if you must have a building permit to install the sign (see #5 for details). Usually, any sign that isn't painted on a building requires a permit.

Now you can construct and install the sign or banner.

## **# 5 Other City Permits**

Depending upon the kind of business you are starting, the location you have chosen, and what kind of remodeling you need to do, you may be required to obtain certain permits or pay assessments. A rule of thumb: before you begin any remodeling or even a simple re-arranging (of signs, planters, ect.) be sure to call the city to find out what permits are needed, the cost, and the proper procedure.

### **Who to Contact:**

Building, Electrical, Plumbing Permits  
City of Hermosa Beach  
1315 Valley Dr., Room 103  
Hermosa Beach CA 90254  
(310) 318-0235

Fire and Safety & Hazardous Waste  
Hermosa Beach Fire Department  
540 Pier Ave.  
Hermosa Beach, CA 90254  
(310) 376-2479

Los Angeles County Environmental Health Department  
South Bay District Office  
(310)519-6050

### **What to do:**

If you plan to do renovation or use existing equipment, talk to the building department before you lease space or begin your business. Find out if there are hidden requirements, such as bringing the building up to code. Many businesses have wanted to upgrade a sink, but found that the city or county health department requires new flooring, electrical changes, and a handicapped entrance. Also don't assume that because your predecessor used the existing sink, you can. Again the city building department and county health officials may require upgrades before you are issued occupancy permits.

## **# 6 City Regulations Affecting Businesses**

The City has many regulations affecting certain types of businesses or situations. For examples include parking restrictions and banning certain hazardous materials. Contact the Community Development Department for information about most restrictions. To find out about hazardous materials restrictions, call (310) 318-0235

## **#7 Los Angeles County Health/Food Permit**

If you sell or handle food, you must obtain a permit from the Los Angeles County Environmental Health Services Department. Warning: the regulations for selling and handling food are extensive and precise. Do Not sign a lease or buy equipment until you have talked with all agencies discussed below.

### **Who to Contact:**

Los Angeles County Health Services Department  
313 N. Figueroa St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 240-8117

California prohibits you from selling food prepared in your home. This rule includes caterers who the state says should be preparing food in a professional, approved facility. In practice, it is difficult and costly for the state to monitor home caterers, and therefore their clients assume the risk of consuming potentially unhealthy food. However, the state has the right to (and sometimes does) “close down” home catering businesses.

### ***Don't make this mistake . . . . .***

Just because a facility is being used to prepare or sell food today, doesn't mean the Health Services Department will let you use the same facilities. Before you sign a lease, call the County Environmental Health Services Department and ask them to do a walk-through with you. They can advise you whether the equipment and facility are generally acceptable. Also, ask to see the county's files on the facility to see the violations or problems.

### **What to do:**

Before you can get a permit, you must submit a plan for approval. Before you prepare a plan:

Check your location – do traffic count. Is there enough traffic to support your business?

Check city (or county) zoning to make sure your planned use is approved. Determine exactly what food you want to sell (or handle) – pretzels, potato salad, etc. The exact type of food determines the requirements you must meet. Remember, these regulations are very extensive and very precise.

### **Now you're ready to prepare a plan:**

Call the County Environmental Health Services Department and get a copy of the regulations for your type of food establishment serving your specific type of food.

Prepare a complete detailed plan showing what equipment you will use (including model number), what material will be used to finish the walls, floors, and ceilings,

plumbing ,electrical, ventilation ... talk to The County Environmental Health Services Department for final approval.

## **Fees**

The county requires plan approval and charges for this service.

After your plan is approved, you must pay an annual health permit fee, for yearly inspection services and health permit. The county will inspect your business at least four times a year, and more often if they receive complaints. Permit fees depend on the number of seats your restaurant services or the type of establishment (snack bar, cocktail lounge, ect.) Common fees are \$200-\$500/annually.

## **Other Agencies**

Assuming your plan is approved by the Health Services Department, you need to get approval from the:

*City Building Department* (for building electrical & plumbing) see #5.

*Local Sanitary Sewer District* (especially if your food operation will discard large amounts of grease or other materials).

*Fire Department*

*Your Insurance Broker.* Many Insurance companies have specific guidelines to lower rates.

## **# 8 Who to Call...**

To establish these services.

### **Telephone:**

Verizon (888)244-4440 (Business & Residential)

### **Electric Service:**

Southern California Edison (SCE)  
505 Maple Ave.  
Torrance CA 90509  
(800) 655-4555

### **Gas:**

Southern California Gas Company  
PO BOX 2815  
Torrance CA 90509  
(800) 427-2200

**Trash and Recycling Service:**

Consolidated Disposal Service  
1449 W Rosecrans Ave.  
Gardena CA 90249  
(562) 663-3567

**Water:**

California Water Service  
2632 W 237<sup>th</sup> Street  
Torrance, CA 90505  
(310) 257-1400

**Weights & Measures:**

Agricultural Commissioner:  
11012 So, Garfield Ave.  
South Gate, CA 90280  
(213) 940-8916

**State Requirements:**

State of California Government Offices Operator  
(916) 322-9900

This specialized operator will direct you to the proper department for any questions you may have about state government.

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