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Business Registry

**General Economic Development
Committee (GEDC)**

January 14, 2010



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History

- December 2007: Audit and Finance Committee
- June 2008: Mesa City Council adopted Ordinance 4852
- February 2009: General Economic Development Committee



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Current Practices

- Mesa currently issues a Transaction Privilege Tax (TPT) License to businesses that conduct taxable activities
- Mesa requires all businesses located in the city to obtain a Fire Safety Operational Permit (FSOP)
- Economic Development purchases business data annually from a third party (Claritas, Inc)



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Current Practices Drawbacks

- TPT Licenses only apply to businesses with taxable activities
- Fire Prevention has difficulty identifying new businesses in Mesa
- Purchasing data from a third party is expensive and the data is only a "snapshot" in time.



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Benefits of a Registry

- Improved awareness of the types of businesses in Mesa
- Communitywide access to accurate business information
- Promote accountability for proper business practices:
 1. Fire/Life Safety Issues
 2. Planning and Zoning Issues
 3. Environmental Issues

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Registry Objectives

- Streamline the business registration process
- Minimize fees for opening/operating a business in Mesa
- Protect legitimate Mesa businesses

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TPT & FSOP Analysis

- 14,270 entries with either a Fire and/or TPT address (excluding "Vacant" locations)
- Claritas, Inc: 14,959 business in Mesa (excluding home-based businesses)
- Reference USA: 14,845 businesses in Mesa (excluding home-based businesses)



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Short-Term Benefits

- Quarterly Business Registry Report
- Mesa "Success Packets"
 1. Guide to Opening a Business in Arizona
 2. Business Registration Guide
 3. Site Selection Guide
- Website Enhancements

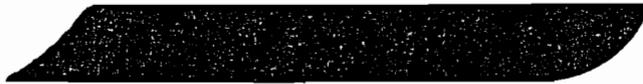


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Long-Term Benefits

- Interactive Licensing Guide
- Sales Tax & Licensing Project:
 1. New Tax Licensing System
 2. Online Licensing & Payment



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Questions/Comments





Guide to Opening a Business in Arizona

The Arizona Department of Commerce provides an online step-by-step checklist for opening and operating a business in Arizona. The online checklist provides Federal, State and Local information for taxes, licensing and much more. The following are some of the features of the application:

- a customized step-by-step checklist
- ability to link over and download most of the business forms you may need
- telephone numbers and addresses of Federal, State and Local licensing agencies

The process generally takes 10-15 minutes to complete. You can go back and review a section by clicking on the "back" button at anytime. In addition, at any given time, you may click on "my report" to view your customized step-by-step checklist. There is no limit to the number of times you can go through the program.

Please note: Licensing and registration is done through the appropriate governmental offices and not through this program.

The program can be accessed online with following URL:

<http://www.azcommerce.com/webapps/smallbusvr/intro.asp>

City of Mesa - Office of Economic Development
20 East Main Street, Suite 200 Mesa AZ 85201
480-644-2398 (phone) 480-644-3458 (fax)
Email: econdev.info@mesaaz.gov
Website: www.mesaaz.gov/economic



Mesa Business Registration Guide

Prior to seeking licensing and permits from the City of Mesa, new businesses will likely have:

- Determined there is a market for their business
- Registered the business name
- Established Financing (if necessary)
- Defined or completed a legal structure for the business

If a new business has not completed all of the above steps, please refer to the "Guide to Opening a Business in Arizona" prior to seeking licensing and permitting with the City of Mesa.

Important Questions for the Tax & Licensing Department:

- Do I need a City of Mesa Sales Tax License?
- Do I need a City of Mesa, Fire Safety Operational Permit?
- Do I need any special license for my type of business from the City of Mesa?
- I plan on serving liquor, what are the procedures for a Liquor License and does my site location meet state and City requirements for the sale of liquor?
- How do I file my sales tax reports and how often?
- Does my business require that I get fingerprinted?
- Do I need a sales tax license for an internet business?

Helpful Information:

- City of Mesa Tax & Licensing Department Website: www.mesaaz.gov/salestax
- City of Mesa Tax Brochures: www.mesaaz.gov/salestax/brochures
- City of Mesa Tax Forms: www.mesaaz.gov/salestax/forms
- City of Mesa Frequently Asked Questions: www.mesaaz.gov/salestax/faq

Contact Information:

Tax & Licensing
55 North Center Street
480-644-2316
www.mesaaz.gov/salestax



Mesa Site Selection Guide

This guide identifies some important questions new businesses should be asking prior to purchasing or leasing space. This guide is not to be considered a comprehensive list of all city codes, regulation or policies that may be part of individual site locations.

Important Questions for the Planning Division:

- What is the Zoning on the property?
- Is my use permitted in the Zoning District?
- Is the property vacant?
 - If vacant, is there an approved site plan on file that must be followed for development?
- What planning related procedures must be completed for my business to be located at this site?
- Is the site I'm considering non-conforming to current site development codes?
- Will my business at the existing location invoke current site development codes due to a change in use of the property or change in occupancy?
 - If so, what will the requirements be and what is the process I must follow?
- I'm planning to some building and façade renovation, are site plan modifications and design review needed?
- I want to create a separate tract on the property for my business, what are the requirements to divide the property and create a new lot?

Important Questions for the Building Safety Division:

- Am I doing any work that would require a permit?
- What is my occupancy classification?
- What was the previous business operation at this site and what occupancy classification was held by that business?
- Does my business change the use or occupancy classification and invoke full building, fire and civil code requirements?
- Do I need construction plans and if so, do they need to be prepared by an Arizona registrant?
- Do I need any clearances from the county or state to obtain a city permit?
- Do I need to use a licensed contractor for the work being proposed?
- Does this site have any special utility, street or engineering fees that must be paid upon development?
- What are permit and impact fees and how can I obtain a City of Mesa Building Safety fee schedule?
- Do I need an Occupancy Verification Permit if I am not doing any work to the site or building?
- What do I need to do if I plan to store and/or use hazardous materials?
- What do I need to do if I plan to utilize high-piled storage (i.e. over 12 feet)?



Mesa Contact Information

Office of Economic Development: Contact the Office of Economic Development if you are interested in opening, expanding or relocating a business in Mesa. The Office of Economic Development can provide information on **property availability, demographics, tax and incentive information** and personalized **business assistance**.

Office of Economic Development
20 East Main Street, Suite 200
480-644-2398 (phone)
www.mesaaz.gov/economic

Planning Division: Contact the Planning Division to verify the property you are interested in is **properly zoned** and that you will be allowed to operate your business there. The Planning Department can help you verify if you will be required to make any **on-site improvements** prior to occupying the building in order to bring the property up to current code. The Planning Department can also help verify **parking requirements** and discuss **signage options** for your business.

Planning Division
55 North Center Street
480-644-2385
www.mesaaz.gov/planning

Development Services: Contact the Development Services Department to obtain information on how to **start and complete construction projects**. The Development Services Department can provide **cost-saving tips** on how to **expand or modify** your building.

Development Services
55 North Center Street
480-644-4273
www.mesaaz.gov/building_safety

Tax & Licensing: Contact the Tax & Licensing Department to determine the type of regulatory **licenses** you will need to operate your business. The Tax & Licensing Department can help ensure your business is in **compliance with Transaction Privilege Tax, Use Tax and Transient Occupancy Tax**.

Tax & Licensing
55 North Center Street
480-644-2316
www.mesaaz.gov/salestax