ESTABLISHING A NEW BUSINESS IN BELL:

1. **What is a “Business License”?**

   A business license is a permit issued by a public agency. It authorizes individuals or companies to establish and conduct a business within the agency's jurisdiction.

2. **Who needs to obtain a business license?**

   Anyone operating a business in the City of Bell must obtain a business license. In addition, a business must comply with the City's Municipal Code. Any business exempt by State or Federal regulations must show proof of exemption status. Business licenses are non-transferable and immediately expire if there is a change in ownership.

3. **How may I obtain a business license?**

   To obtain a new business license you must complete the Business License Application Packet available at Bell City Hall. Once the packet is complete, please submit the required documents to the Business License Division at City Hall.

   **NOTE:** PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT PRIOR TO SIGNING A LEASE OR OCCUPYING A NEW LOCATION, PROSPECTIVE BUSINESS OWNERS SHOULD VERIFY THAT THE SUBJECT PROPERTY HAS PROPER ZONING DESIGNATION WITH THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT AND SUBMIT A BUSINESS LICENSE APPLICATION TO PREVENT ANY UNNECESSARY DELAY.

4. **What type of identification do I need to provide the City when I submit my business license application?**

   All business applications must provide proof of the applicant/business owner’s identity, including:

   A. Sole Proprietors must provide a valid California Driver License or valid state issued identification.

   B. Partnerships must provide a valid California Driver license or valid state issued identification.

   C. Corporations must provide a copy of “Articles of Incorporation” and a valid California Driver License, or valid state issued identification for the company president or responsible party.

5. **What documents do I need to provide the City when I submit my business license application?**
All new business owners must submit the following:

1. Business License Application
2. Certificate of Occupancy Application
3. Statement of Intended Use Application
4. California Sellers Permit for Retail Businesses only
5. Health Permit for Restaurant, Grocery and Food Related Businesses only
6. Submit a copy of an Official Statement of Fictitious Name.

6. How much does it cost to process a business license application?

It costs an applicant $200 to process a new business license application which includes a $100 Business License Application fee and $100 Certificate of Occupancy fee.

**BUSINESS LICENSE RENEWALS:**

7. How do I renew my business license?

At the beginning of the calendar year, the City will mail all business owners a Business License Renewal Form including business license fee. This amount is based on the gross receipts generated by each respective business. A Business License Tax Sheet is included.

8. When is the annual business license renewal due?

Annual business licenses expire on December 31st of each calendar year. Renewals are mailed to the business owners on the third week of January.

9. How does the City calculate the fees for the annual Business License Renewal?

According to the Bell Municipal Code, the business license fee tax is based on gross receipts. The City also includes a cost of living adjustment based on the National Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the current year, which may fluctuate year to year.

10. Why do businesses need to provide Income Tax Returns to the City?

Similar to other cities, the City of Bell needs to verify that the reported gross receipts are consistent with that which is reported to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). This information is strictly confidential.

11. I have purchased an existing business in Bell. How do I register as the new owner?

If you have purchased an existing business in Bell, a new Business License package must be submitted to the City along with one of the following:

A. Original notarized bill of sale
B. Original notarized transfer letter  
C. Original escrow document.

Also, the existing business must be closed by the prior owner.

12. What is the process for moving my business to a different location within the City?

The process for changing a business address is the same as applying for a new business. A new Business License Application must be submitted, along with an address change fee of $45.00. Also, a new Certificate of Occupancy application must be submitted along with a fee of $100.00

How do I obtain the following?

A) **California Seller Permit**  
   State Board of Equalization  
   12440 E. Imperial Highway suite 200  
   Norwalk, CA 90605  
   (562) 466-1694

B) **Health Permit**  
   LA County Department of Environmental Health  
   5050 Commerce Dr.  
   Baldwin Park, CA 91706  
   (626) 430-5350

C) **Fictitious Business Name**  
   LA County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk  
   12400 E Imperial Hwy., Room 1201  
   Norwalk CA 90605  
   (800) 201-8999

D) **Federal Tax ID Number**  
   Apply by calling the IRS at (800) 829-4933 or by fax, mail or Internet at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

E) **California State Tax ID number**  
   Contact the CA Employment Development Department (EDD) at (888) 745-3886 or visit the website at [www.edd.ca.gov](http://www.edd.ca.gov).