

# Guide to Opening a Business in Ridgefield

## 1 ESTABLISH YOUR BUSINESS



> Create a business **concept** and **plan**.



> Find an **available retail space** in Ridgefield. Commercial areas in town include Ridgefield Center, Copps Hill, Danbury Road (Rt. 35), Route 7, and Branchville. A local **commercial realtor** may be able to help. If you are interested in **new construction**, contact the Planning & Zoning Department to discuss your concept and approval processes.



> Think about **zoning**. Different zoning districts allow different **types of uses**. Check zoning information to ensure that your proposed business is allowed in the space you are considering. Contact the Planning & Zoning Department if you need assistance.

## 2 OPEN YOUR BUSINESS



> Obtain **required permits** from the Town of Ridgefield based on your business type:

### > **Zoning – Change of Use Permit**

- Required to open any business in a space where the type of business is changing use categories, i.e. a former restaurant becoming a salon or a bank becoming a doctor's office.
- Contact Planning & Zoning for assistance.

### > **Health – Various licenses are required based on business type:**

- Food Service Establishment, Food Vendor, Catering
- Day Care Centers
- Beauty/Nail Salons
- Contact the Health Department for assistance.

### > **WPCA/Sewer**

- If your business will require additional sewer capacity that the previously existing business, you may need approval from the WPCA for increased sewer units. Contact the WPCA for assistance.

**> Building**

- For any modifications to a space (interior or exterior), a tenant fit out and/or a sign installation, (see below for further signage requirements) a Development Application through the Land Use Office is required. Contact the Building Department to determine which application types will be required (i.e. electrical, gas, plumbing, etc.)

**> Liquor License**

- If your establishment intends to serve alcohol, you will require a Liquor License through the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection.



**> Schedule any final inspections** with each Town department, obtain a Certificate of Occupancy and/or Certificate of Zoning Compliance.



**> Get a sign(s):**

- Proposed signs should comply with the allowable zoning regulations for your zoning district.
- Signs, as well as any other exterior modifications, may require a public meeting and review by the Architectural Advisory Committee (AAC), the Village District Consultant (VDC) and/or the Planning & Zoning Commission.
- Contact the Planning & Zoning Department to submit an application and schedule a meeting.



**> Contacts & Resources**

**Ridgefield Chamber of Commerce**  
 383 Main Street, 2B  
 (203) 438-5992  
[info@ridgefieldchamber.org](mailto:info@ridgefieldchamber.org)

**Building Department**  
 66 Prospect Street  
 (203) 431-2753  
[building@ridgefieldct.org](mailto:building@ridgefieldct.org)

**Planning & Zoning**  
 66 Prospect Street  
 (203) 431-2766  
[pzadmin@ridgefieldct.org](mailto:pzadmin@ridgefieldct.org)

**Economic & Community Development Commission**  
 400 Main Street  
 (203) 546-2547  
[ecdc@ridgefieldct.org](mailto:ecdc@ridgefieldct.org)

**Health Department**  
 66 Prospect Street  
 (203) 431-2745  
[health1@ridgefieldct.org](mailto:health1@ridgefieldct.org)

**WPCA**  
 66 Prospect Street  
 (203) 431-2734  
[dvanness@ridgefieldct.org](mailto:dvanness@ridgefieldct.org)

**CT Department of Consumer Protection Liquor Control Board**  
 (860) 713-6200  
[dcp.liquorcontrol@ct.gov](mailto:dcp.liquorcontrol@ct.gov)



**> Is Your Business Home-Based?**

Ridgefield’s Zoning Regulations have certain provisions for businesses that are based out of a residence, also known as a Home Occupation. If you intend to open a business out of your primary residence, you may be able to receive a Zoning Permit or Special Permit for a Home Occupation if your business complies with the regulations. Contact the Planning & Zoning Department to inquire if your business may qualify and how to get started.