



CONSTRUCTION STARTER GUIDE

A guide to starting your Construction Business in Nova Scotia

Let us navigate you toward success! For personalized help to start your business contact a **Business Navigator at 1-833-734-1300.**



CREATE YOUR BUSINESS

• **Create a business plan** that includes items such as: Market research, your organizational structure, a description of your facilities or services offered, a revenue forecast and budgetary requirements, etc.

There are various government agencies and other organizations that offer free help for planning, and start-up financial assistance (at various interest rates). Call a Business Navigator to find out more at 1-833-734-1300.

- **Request and secure a Business Name through the Registry of Joint Stocks** at [RJSC Connect](#) or contact 1-800-225-8227
- **Register your Business** within 90 days to ensure your business name is secured and to receive your unique Business Number.

Types of Businesses include sole proprietorships, partnerships and corporations. If choosing to incorporate, legal advice is recommended for preparation of documents.

- **Activate your Business Number** with CRA at 1-800-959-5525. Activation is mandatory if you have employees, you import or export, and/or your gross revenue exceeds \$30,000.
- **Workers Compensation Insurance** may be mandatory for your staff or an option you may want to consider. Contact WCB at 1-800-870-3331 or [www.wcb.ns.ca](#) to discuss your specific requirements. **Research any additional insurance** requirements such as business liability and property insurance.



YOUR LOCATION

- **If you plan to open an office**, contact your municipality or town to confirm your preferred location is zoned for your business type. For HRM, contact 311. Now that your location is approved, you must create a site plan.



TRADE REQUIREMENTS

All buildings need to be built to meet the minimum public health, fire and structural safety and property protection standards. Mandatory training, permits and inspections help to ensure that these standards are met.

It is important to review the **Trade Regulations** based on the type of work you intend to do. Visit www.nsapprenticeship.ca/trades to understand what services you can provide as a journeyman, apprentice or an uncertified worker. The regulations also provide information on wage requirements.

Things to know:

- While general construction is not a regulated trade, trades such as electrical, and plumbing (etc.) are specified as a compulsory certified trades.
- For every 3 apprentices you must have 1 journeyman. However, you may apply for a ratio variance if required, find this form on <https://nsapprenticeship.ca>.
- An apprentice or journeyman is required to keep their identity card in their possession when on site and produce it on request.

Contact Business Navigation or Apprenticeship Nova Scotia for more information.



CREATE YOUR PLAN

Create your site plan

A site plan must show lot dimensions and the footprint of the proposed building or addition and any projections such as decks, roof overhangs and doorsteps. It must also indicate exact distance from all property boundaries and the location of the driveway entrance.

Create your building plan

- (a) A floor plan of the interior layout of each level (both existing and proposed) must show the following information:
 - rooms showing dimensions and labeled as to use;
 - location of all plumbing and electrical fixtures;
 - size, spacing and span of the floor framing members;
 - location and size of exterior steps, decks, stairs, etc.; and
 - the floor area of each room and the total floor area of the dwelling, including the basement and any attached garage.
- (b) Detailed notes are required on all heating, ventilation and other mechanical systems.
- (c) Building elevations must show the finished grade and the size and location of windows, and the height of the building from finished grade to the highest point of the roof.
- (d) A typical cross section, taken through the wall from the footing to the roof, must show
 - footing and foundation wall size;
 - floor assembly construction; and
 - roof assembly construction.

For more detail and specific requirements please contact your municipality or town. For HRM contact 311.



PERMITS AND INSPECTION

Most construction permits (Homes, Decks, Renovations, Sheds) are processed by the municipality in which you are **doing work**. For HRM visit, www.halifax.ca/permitsinspections

In order to avoid delays in receiving your permits, please ensure you provide ALL of the following information when applying:

- copies of the Site Plan
- copies of a detailed construction (building) plans and specifications (based on the type of work);
- copy of notification receipt from Department of Environment & Climate Change for the design and installation of the on site sewage disposal system, if required;
- the name of the contractor for the Streets and Services permit;
- applicable fees and deposits shall be made in person by cash, debit card, credit card or cheque

Inspectors need to be able to identify the property for inspection. Please ensure the civic number is posted and is visible from the street.

Please give yourself at least 10 days to receive your necessary permit. As previously mentioned, completed plans are required to receive your permit.

To request an **Electrical Permit and Inspection** visit, Nova Scotia Power's website www.nspower.ca

Notification to Department of Environment & Climate Change is required prior to commencing installation of **on-site sewage disposal systems** for new home construction, where central sewer services are unavailable. A Qualified Person or Professional Engineer, holding a certificate of qualification from Department of Environment & Climate Change, must design and inspect these systems. Contact Department of Environment & Climate Change at 902-424-3600 or visit their website to find an office near you.

Need more help?

Contact a **Business Navigator** at 1-833-734-1300 or email biznav@novascotia.ca

Business Navigation offers personalized and timely help with regulation and requirements, including registration, permits and licenses to save you valuable time.



PREPARE FOR EXCELLENCE

As a Construction Worker you may be subject to additional training regarding workplace safety.

Contact Occupational Health and Safety 1-800-952-2687 and Construction Safety Nova Scotia, <https://constructionsafetyns.ca/> to determine your specific requirements around first aid, WHMIS, non-smoking areas, personal protective equipment, ventilation.

Access the Small Business Safety Toolkit at www.Workplace-Safety-Toolkit.ca

It is important to dispose of your **waste** materials properly. Please visit <https://novascotia.ca/nse/waste/facilities.asp> to find a waste disposal company in your area. Any cost for disposal will depend on material and weight.

Post all required signs, licences and permits as outlined by your inspector.

Mark your calendar. Schedule equipment maintenance and set reminders to renew your permits and licences.

Be ready for inspections. Your site may be inspected for safety at anytime.

For Employer/Employee Obligations and Rights including minimum wage, hours of work, terminations, vacation/holiday pay (etc.), contact the **Nova Scotia Labour Standards Division** at 1-888-315-0110.

For payroll and tax assistance contact CRA at 1-800-959-5525.

For road access (new or upgrades to roads and driveways) **and highway signage** for your business contact Transportation and Active Transit at 1-844-696-7737.

Contact **Nova Scotia Power** regarding electricity connection at 1-800-428-6230