*Shire of Dandaragan is open for business!*

Manufacturing, tourism, agribusiness, horticulture, home-based business, health and well-being, art and craft, property development, professional services and many more business types are welcome in our Shire.

When starting a new business a good place to start is the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC). It's a State Government body with a raft of information for potential and current business owners. The Shire of Dandaragan has signed the SBDC's "Small Business Friendly Local Government' charter and has undertaken an SBDC audit to ensure our policies and procedures support existing and potential small business development. Take a look around their website <https://www.smallbusiness.wa.gov.au/business-advice/starting-your-business> for further advice and links to research the process to go through to start your own business.

Some things to consider before you start:

**Professional advice**

Get advice from a good accountant / lawyer / financial adviser / business adviser. Look for appropriately accredited professionals that have relevant small business experience in your chosen industry.

**Business ownership structure**

Upon advice from your accountant or other professional adviser, decide which ownership structure your business is going to operate under. Any individual can operate a business (sole trader structure) but although this is the cheapest and easiest way to establish a business structure it might also be the most risky for your situation. This is worth seeking professional advice from appropriate professionals who will help you assess the risks, benefits and costs associated with different ownership structures.

**Business name**

Register your business name on the National Business Name Register at [www.asic.gov.au](http://www.asic.gov.au/). This is only a trading name so does not necessarily give you any trademark protection over that name. Consider contacting an Intellectual Property Lawyer to secure your business name, logo and any other design or unique aspects of your business.

**ABN**

Apply for an Australian Business Number (ABN). When you do this you will have the option whether or not to register for GST. Not all businesses have to be registered, especially if the turnover is less than the minimum required for a GST-registered business. If you are not sure get advice from your professional financial adviser or accountant on the best establishment structure for your business.

**Business licensing**

Check which licenses and permits your business may require. For the Shire of Dandaragan there may be planning and building permits for the construction, renovation or change of use for your business premises. If you are a mobile business you may require a permit to conduct business on Shire lands or if you are a home-based business there are registration processes to go through. You can contact the Shire office directly to enquire with the Planning Department about any licenses or permits and the associated fees that may be payable.

There may also be licenses or permits required by other government agencies or statutory bodies such as Departments of Transport or Primary Industries, Parks and Wildlife Services and more. As a guide the SBDC website has a 'Business License Finder' service that will assist in identifying which licenses your business may need. Check out <http://www.licence.smallbusiness.wa.gov.au/BusinessLicenceFinder/prod/home>. If there is a governing industry body in the area in which your business operates it would be a good idea to contact them about potential licensing issues.

**Insurance**

Get a good insurance broker to assess your business and let you know what insurance cover is recommended. The broker generally doesn't cost you anything up front and they provide you with several options for insurance coverage from available providers so you can compare offers and choose your level of cover and insurer from there. You may also consider personal indemnity insurance to cover you as a person for any risks that may occur during the business operating and workers compensation insurance for any employees that you have.

**Finances**

Setting up a business can be expensive if you are not well prepared for it. Insurance alone could cost several hundred dollars per month and that's before you even start trading. Licenses and registrations, accounting and legal fees, insurance, vehicle modifications or plant purchase, business cards or flyers or advertising, business accounting hardware and software, first aid kits and more quickly add up. And you may not make enough to pay yourself a wage in the initial trading period so do you have enough cash to pay your own personal bills while you build up the business? Do your homework, be aware of the upfront costs and make sure you have funding for everything required. Your accountant or financial adviser can assist you in calculating what would be an appropriate amount to have in reserve for personal use.

**trading**

The next point to consider is the mechanics of how, when and where you operate your business. What hours will you be open? Have you set aside time for bookkeeping and paperwork as well as the day-to-day trading of the business? Are your contact details easy to find? Do you need to establish a website or social media accounts? Do you have a refund policy? There are lots of questions to be answered!

The Shire of Dandaragan is open for business... we welcome your ideas and innovations and we look forward to welcoming you to our amazing region.