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YESYORKCOUNTY.COM



**GRAND OPENING
GUIDE**

WELCOME TO YORK COUNTY!

We are so pleased you have chosen to locate your business here. The Office of Economic Development (OED) offers free Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Assistance to all York County businesses. These services include planning assistance, scheduling speakers, providing the ribbon and large ceremonial scissors, taking event photos, and drafting and distributing a media release announcing the event.

The OED is committed to your success! We offer many programs and resources to help grow your business. We encourage you to visit www.YesYorkCounty.com for details on the vast array of resources that can help your business thrive in York County. If our staff can ever be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us!

1 | PLANNING YOUR EVENT

1. Determine the type of event you wish to have. Formal versus casual, large versus small, private versus public, etc.
2. Determine the Event Date – Public events normally take place on a weekend to help draw a larger crowd, while private ceremonies can take place anytime that’s convenient for you and your staff.
3. Contact the Office of Economic Development at 757-890-3317 or econdev@yorkcounty.gov at least two weeks prior to your event. Our staff can answer any questions you may have; and upon request, can schedule speakers for your event from the York County Board of Supervisors and any of the area’s Chambers of Commerce. The OED can also provide you with a list of local dignitaries and County staff for your invitation list.
4. If you wish to display temporary signs or banners, contact the Building Safety Office at least two weeks prior to the event at 757-890-3522. Event signage is allowed, but requires a free permit. Be sure to allow enough time for processing your application. Once approved, order and/or print event signage.
5. Begin promoting your event. Send invitations, printed or electronic, to your selected invitees; and for public events, begin visibly marketing your event via your website, flyers, social media sites, ads, printed invitations, etc. OED staff can provide you with a marketing ideas sheet that can help you creatively promote your business and event. While the OED does not typically provide support for re-opening events, we are still happy to help promote the and share your press release afterwards
6. Provide OED staff with the requested information about your business. This typically includes: owner’s name, manager’s name, number of employees (now and at full capacity), square footage of your space, and your investment (optional), and something unique about your business or concept (i.e. what makes you, your business, or your concept different, why you decided to start the business, special community programs you offer, etc.). This information will be used to prepare the remarks for your ceremony and a press release afterwards.
7. Decide if you will offer refreshments at the event. If so, make necessary preorders and/or preparations.
8. Decide if you will offer facility tours at the event. If so, prepare your staff in advance for these tours.

2 | SUGGESTED ORDER OF EVENTS

1. Welcome guests – Company representative

2. Dignitary recognition (in this order) – Company representative does introductions
 - a. Federal Elected Officials (The Honorable...)
 - b. State Elected Officials (The Honorable...)
 - c. County Board of Supervisors (The Honorable...)
 - d. Elected Officials (Commissioner of Revenue, School Board, etc.) (The Honorable...)
 - e. Appointed Officials (Economic Development Authority, Planning Commission, etc.)
 - f. County Administrator and/or Staff
 - g. Chamber Representatives
3. Description of business and introduction of attending staff – Company representative
4. Speaker introduction(s) – Company representative
5. Brief congratulatory remarks from speaker(s) – Usually a local dignitary and/or chamber representative
6. Cut ribbon – Done by company, government, and chamber representatives - Photo opportunity
7. Closing remarks – Company representative
8. Offer attendees a tour of the facility (optional) and/or refreshments (optional)

3 | COUNTY PERMIT INFORMATION

1. If an outdoor event is planned, please note that any tent larger than 900 square feet and/or 50-person occupancy requires a permit. Permits can be obtained in the Building Safety Office, located at 103 Service Drive.
2. Temporary signage is allowed, but requires a free permit from the Building Safety Office. Applications are available online at www.yorkcounty.gov/buildingsafety or by contacting Building Regulation at 757-890-3522.
3. Please be aware that the York County Zoning Ordinance has specific regulations regarding certain types of promotional items (Spinners, Wind Dancers, Balloons, etc.). For additional information on utilizing these types of items, please contact the Building Safety office at 757-890-3522.

4 | TIPS TO MAKE YOUR EVENT GREAT

1. Be creative. For example, banks sometimes use paper currency for the ribbon and then donate it to a local charity.
2. Remember the ribbon – it should be a large ribbon that will show up in photographs. If York County is assisting with your ceremony, the ribbon will be provided for you at no charge, as will the large ceremonial scissors.
3. Remember to bring real scissors – the large promotional ribbon cutting scissors do not always cut well. Another option is to precut the ribbon and connect it with a small piece of tape.
4. Ribbon cutters should stand behind the ribbon, in front of the door, facing the crowd.
5. Contact the media to get publicity and coverage of the event and your business (Media contact list available online at www.YesYorkCounty.com). It is often difficult to attract the media to ribbon cuttings; therefore, it is beneficial to also send out a press release and photo to the media contacts after the event. If the OED is assisting with your ceremony, we can do this on your behalf, upon request.
6. Contact a local chamber for further promotion of the event via their email contact lists. York County is represented by three Chambers of Commerce (contact lists available online at www.YesYorkCounty.com). If the OED is assisting with your ceremony, we can do this on your behalf, upon request.
7. Mail invitations at least 2 – 3 weeks in advance and follow up with an email reminder the week of the event. (Suggested Ribbon Cutting invitation list available online at www.YesYorkCounty.com)
8. Don’t forget your camera!