Getting in touch...  
Small Business Development Center (SBDC)  
Kinsey Hicks, Program Coordinator  
901 N. Broad St., Suite 320  
Rome, GA 30161  
706.622.2006 or khicks@georgiasbdc.org  
www.georgiasbdc.org

Getting in touch locally...  
Gilmer County Chamber of Commerce  
Paige Green  
696 First Avenue, East Ellijay, GA 30540  
706.635.7400 or paigeg@gilmerchamber.com  
www.gilmerchamber.com

City of Ellijay Downtown Development Authority  
Mona Lowe  
197 N. Main St., Ellijay, GA 30540  
706.635.4711 x5 or bht@ellijay.com  
www.ellijay-ga.gov

City of Ellijay Business License Office  
and Zoning and Building Inspection Office  
Don Schneider  
Ellijay City Hall  
197 N. Main St., Ellijay, GA 30540  
706.635.4711 x3 (Business License)  
706.635.4711 x2 (Zoning and Inspection)

City of East Ellijay, Licensing/Inspection/Zoning  
Mack Wood  
East Ellijay City Hall  
107 Oak Street, East Ellijay, GA 30539  
706.276.3111

Gilmer County Planning & Zoning/Licensing Office  
James Holloway  
10 Broad St., Suite 002, Ellijay, GA 30540  
706.635.3406 www.gilmercounty-ga.gov

Gilmer County Office of Environmental Health  
Andrea Martin  
1 Broad St., Suite 003  
Ellijay, GA 30540  
706.635.6050  
www.nghd.org/GilmerEnvironmental

Ellijay—Gilmer County Water & Sewer Authority  
Gary McVey  
1023 Progress Road, Ellijay, GA 30540  
706.276.2202  
www.egcwsa.com

Georgia Department of Revenue (Regional Office)  
1401 Dean St., Suite E  
Rome, GA 30161  
706.295.6061  

Georgia Department of Labor - Blue Ridge Office  
1048 Appalachian Hwy.  
Blue Ridge, GA 30513  
706.632.2033  
http://www.dol.state.ga.us

Georgia Secretary of State’s Office  
315 West Tower  
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
404.656.2817  
www.sos.georgia.gov

U.S. Internal Revenue Service  
1008 Professional Blvd.  
Dalton, GA 30720  
404.338.7962  
www.irs.gov/businesses

START HERE!  
An Entrepreneur’s Guide to Gilmer County, GA

www.gilmerchamber.com  
706/635-7400
Getting an Idea...

The Business Plan
The first step in starting a business is putting together a plan. There are many factors that go into putting together a business plan. These factors include an Outline of Goals, Marketing Strategy, Financial Management, and Operation Schedule.

⇒ Outline of Skills/Goals
- What are the goals of the business?
- Who owns the business?
- What advantages do you have?

⇒ Marketing Strategy
- What market do you serve?
- How will you market/advertise your product?
- How will you price your product?

⇒ Financial Management
- Where will you find funding?
- What is your business’s operating budget?
- What are your immediate/extended costs?

⇒ Operation Schedule
- Who will manage day-to-day operations?
- What type of employees will you need?
- What equipment/facilities will be needed?

Getting Financed...

Although it is a common belief that free grants are available to support small business start-up and growth, this is not true! There is no such thing as free money.

However, there are many low-interest loans and financial support programs which can help you start and grow your business. A few of these resources are listed below. We also encourage you to work with a local financial institution with which you may already have a relationship. Contact the Chamber of Commerce for more information or a list of local financial institutions.

Small Business Administration Loans – This federal loan program helps small businesses acquire guaranteed capital at a fixed rate. Visit www.sba.gov for the latest information and available loan programs.

Department of Community Affairs – DCA oversees and offers many loan opportunities for businesses. Please visit www.dca.state.ga.us/economic/Financing/index.asp for more information.

USDA Loans – This federal program offers financial assistance to small businesses in rural areas. Please visit www.rurdev.usda.gov or call 800.670.6553 for more information.

Microloans – This special type of loan is given by non-profit organizations to support low-income, low-employee entrepreneurs. For more information on microloans, contact ACE, Inc., at 706.348.6609 or visit www.aceloans.org.

Getting Licensed...

Getting licensed with the state – Certain businesses require licensing with the state. Contact the Secretary of State’s office (see the back panel) to see if your business requires special licensing.

Licensing and Sales Tax ID – Your business may be required to obtain a seller’s permit, and all businesses must receive a Tax ID number. Contact the Georgia Department of Revenue and the Federal Internal Revenue Service to obtain these permits (see back panel).

Getting Connected...

It takes a strong network of support to get your business off the ground. Here are a few partnerships you should consider when starting your business...

Chamber of Commerce – This organization is dedicated to the promotion and growth of business. Be it a call for a business listing or hosting a special event, the Chamber staff can help bring new customers through your front door. The Chamber also provides wonderful networking opportunities to meet other local business owners. (see back panel)

Department of Labor – Hiring employees is one of the most important decisions you will make as a business owner. The Department of Labor (see back panel) can help you find the right people to help make your business succeed.

Advertising – Advertising and marketing is what keeps your business competitive and in the minds of your customers. There are several local media outlets to help reach your audience. Contact the Chamber of Commerce for a listing.

Quality Real Estate – Location! Location! Location! One of the keys to success is finding the right location for your business. Call the Chamber of Commerce for a listing of real estate agents.

Insurance – Your business is your life, so don’t take any chances when it comes to protecting your assets. Call the Chamber of Commerce for a list of agents.

Drugs Don’t Work – Utilizing this service will reduce your Worker’s Compensation costs by 7.5%. Contact the Chamber of Commerce for more information.

To learn more about doing business in the State of Georgia and how the state can help you start your own business, visit www.georgia.org/Business/SmallBusiness/