



GREATER RVA



Entrepreneur **WELCOME PACKET**



... Ashland, Chesterfield ...
Hanover, Henrico, Richmond

Hello!

Welcome to the Greater RVA business ecosystem.

Whether you're a longtime local finally launching that idea, a first-time entrepreneur figuring out where to begin, a newcomer still getting the lay of the land, or a seasoned business owner looking for support, we got you!

This packet gives you an overview of the business resources available to you and tools you can use to navigate to the right people, programs, and support.

Flip through it, share it, keep it handy.

All we ask is that you Don't Go It Alone.





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Ways to Get Started Now

1. Study Up at Your Own Pace

Learn about business fundamentals and test your idea before you commit through Startup Virginia's **Online Entrepreneurship Certificate**. This self-paced program is designed for real people with real lives — go at your own speed. Topics covered: market research, business planning, financial basics, startup methodology, and foundations. Free through most localities; scholarships available.

→ startupvirginia.org

2. Get Matched & Connected

Try our **interactive Navigator quiz** that shows you resources and opportunities relevant to you and your business journey — no overwhelm, no generic lists. If you're still feeling lost, book an appointment with one of our navigators and we'll match you to the right support and walk you through next steps.

→ goodcompanyva.org

3. Register for Free Counseling & Mentorship

Check out the Small Business Administration (SBA)'s offerings and register with a **Small Business Development Center (SBDC) counselor** — completely free — for one-on-one tailored business planning, financial analysis, branding, market research, and strategic guidance.

→ capitalregionvasbdc.com

Or contact **SCORE Richmond** to request mentorship from real local entrepreneurs who've built what you're building. Services are free and confidential.

→ score.org/richmond



*****This map is updated regularly to reflect new resources.***

FREE one-on-one business advising, mentorship, educational programming, technical assistance around capital access, networking and more

40+ shared space directory including co-working, social clubs, commercial kitchens, artist and maker spaces and more across the region

20+ culturally competent and/or identify-specific programs and support organizations

1717 Collective > [Book a Meeting](#) with a Navigator

Each City and County offers a wealth of resources: [Ashland](#), [Chesterfield](#), [Hanover](#), [Henrico](#), [Richmond](#). Don't forget your [Public Libraries](#).

Pre-Revenue/Up to \$100k Shop around. Traditional institutions tend to start their loans at \$250,000. To get to /\$1 Million

Small Business Administration → SBA Loans → SBA Loans → Small Business Administration

• **NETWORKING & CUSTOMERS**

Chamber/BA Central VA. African American Chamber	Advertising Club of Richmond American Marketing Association	Small Business Administration (SBA) Small Business & Supplier Diversity (SBS)
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National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO)

MANUFACTURING [The Apple Cart](#) [Bearded Kitchen](#) [Richmond Food Truck Association](#)
[Richmond Region Tourism](#)

CREATIVE PROFESSIONALS

[Activation Capital](#) (Biotech, Energy, Healthcare, Life Sciences)
[AI Ready RVA](#)

MULTICULTURAL SUPPORT

Carytown Merchants Association (CMA)

[Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce](#)

Activation Capital
Balance RVA
www.balance.virginia.edu

Jack.RVA
headquarters.rva@jackrva.com
www.jackrva.com

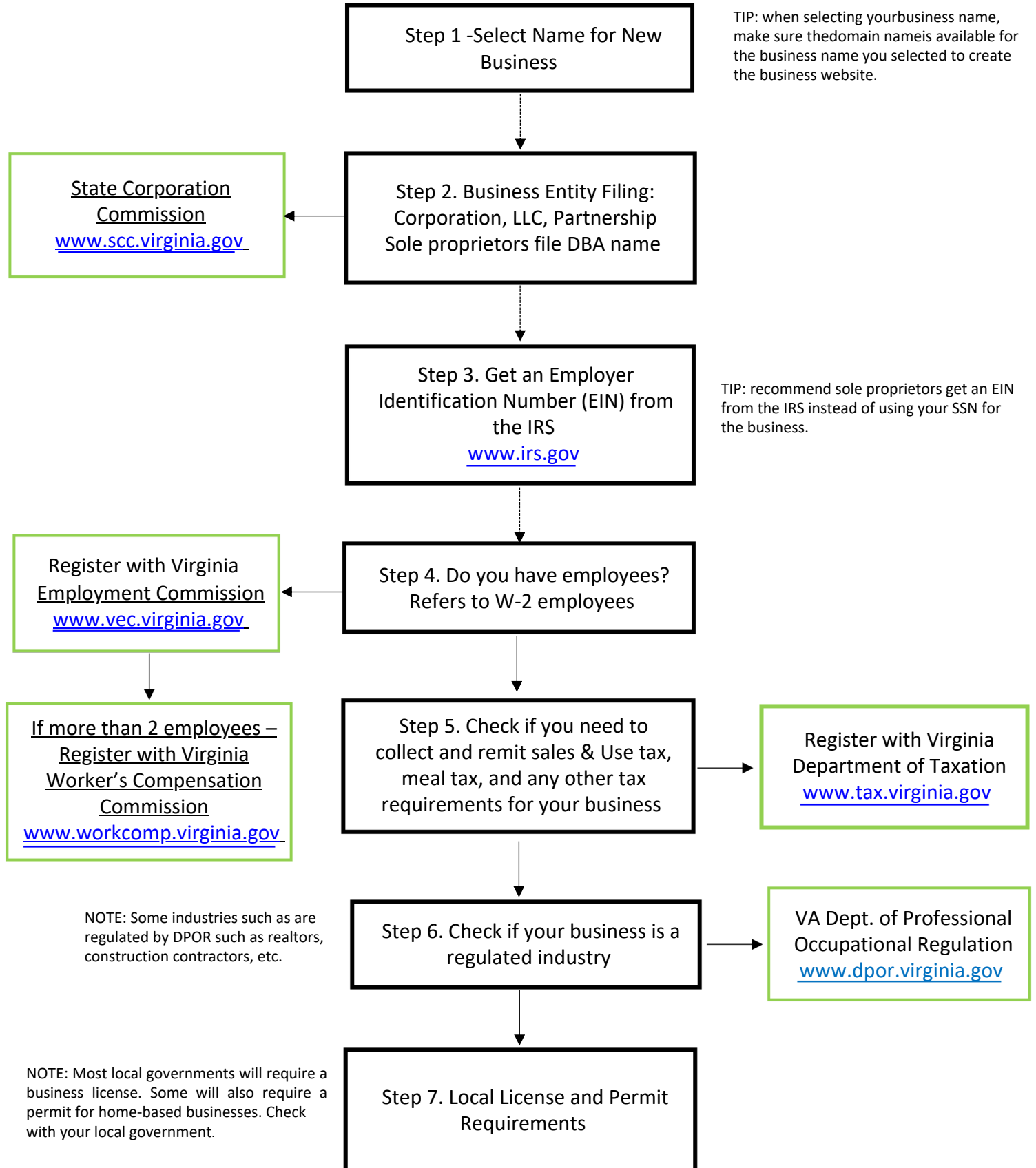
Chamber RVA 10791
www.chamber.org/rva

Chesterfield Education Foundation
www.chesterfieldeducationfoundation.org

[Airport Business Association](#) [Moody Sugar/Movers & Makers](#) [Community College Workforce Alliance](#)
[AACA Richmond Events](#) [Richmond Arts District/First Fridays](#) [Randolph Macon College](#)

www.ConnectLocal.com www.RVAAfterHours.com www.VirginiaStateUniversity.edu
[Connect Local](http://www.ConnectLocal.com) [RVA After Hours](http://www.RVAAfterHours.com) [Virginia Union University](http://www.VirginiaUnionUniversity.edu)
 Commercial Real Estate Division of CBRE R.I.S.E.

Steps to Starting a Business in Virginia



Tap Into Your Locality

Ashland

Population: 7,800+ | Strengths: Main Street Program, Agriculture, Energy Innovation

Known as the "Center of the Universe" the Town of Ashland has the walkable Main Street feel, tight-knit community identity, and growing support infrastructure that make it genuinely special for entrepreneurs. **Learn more:** <https://ashlandva.gov/97/Businesses>

Chesterfield

Population: 364,000+ | Strengths: Manufacturing, Logistics, Retail, Food & Bev

Chesterfield is home to thriving business corridors with major distribution centers, established supply chains, and a welcoming retail environment. Ideal for manufacturing, logistics, and retail entrepreneurs who want established infrastructure, accessible space, and a sizeable customer base. **Learn more:** <https://chesterfieldfits.com>

Hanover

Population: 109,000+ | Strengths: Manufacturing, Distribution, Agriculture, Workforce

Strategic location on the I-95 corridor with established manufacturers and particularly strong for businesses tied to agriculture, production, and distribution. Virginia Business named Hanover County one of the 2026 Best Places to Work in Virginia.

Learn more: <https://hanovervirginia.com/start-and-grow-your-business/>

Henrico

Population: 334,000+ | Strengths: Corporate Services, Tech, Life Sciences, Global Business

An economic hub with over 8,500 businesses and leading corporate centers. Strong opportunity for B2B services with proximity to major employers seeking vendors and partners.

Learn more: <https://henrico.gov/business/>

Richmond

Population: 226,000+ | Strengths: Food & Bev, Creative Industries, Social Enterprises

Vibrant urban center with creative neighborhoods, commercial kitchens, co-working spaces, business incubators, and . Home to 8 Fortune 500 headquarters, the Virginia Bio+Tech Research Park, and a thriving independent business culture.

Learn more: <https://richmondeda.com> and <https://rva.gov/minority-business>

WHY GREATER RICHMOND?



PRO-BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

12

Fortune 1000 headquarters in Greater Richmond

50%

more affordable office rents than the U.S. average

18%

more affordable industrial rents than the U.S. average

200+

international companies in the region from 30 countries

~28%

more affordable electric rates than the U.S. average

100%

clean energy at META and The LEGO Group's local operations



STRATEGIC LOCATION

3

interstates converge in Greater Richmond

~45%

of the U.S. population is within a 1-day delivery drive

37

direct routes from Richmond International Airport

4

subsea fiber cables carry high-speed data

2

of the largest U.S. railroads pass through the region

#1

most tech advanced port on the East Coast



EDUCATED + DIVERSE TALENT

#1

population growth in Virginia and #17 in the nation by percentage

42%

of residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher

43%

of the region is nonwhite and 9% is foreign-born

718,000+

workforce in the Richmond Metropolitan Statistical Area

1.37m

residents and growing by 251 net new residents per week

1.7m

higher education students within 150 miles of the region



SUPERIOR QUALITY OF LIFE

Class IV

nation's only whitewater rapids in an urban city center

4.9%

Greater Richmond's cost of living is less than the U.S. average

13

James Beard nominated restaurants in the last 10 years

14.7%

Greater Richmond housing costs less than the U.S. average

Top 10

award-winning art and history museums across the nation

350+

cultural and historical sites in Greater Richmond



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We Can't Wait to Meet You



Are You An Entrepreneur or Business Owner?



Share Your Story



**Building a business takes courage,
hard choices, and
perseverance.**



Share your story.

Help us make the
journey better for the
next entrepreneur

Scan the QR code below to get started

Why Your Story Matters in Greater RVA

With your help, we can make the journey of entrepreneurship in Greater RVA easier to navigate -- and more straightforward.

What Is Share More Stories?

The 1717 Collective has partnered with Share More Stories using their SEEQ Platform to conduct this study. SEEQ (SEEQ stands for Stories to Engage, Explore and Question) is a research and insights platform built around personal stories. Their mission is simple: creating better experiences, one story at a time.