



# SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS!

*Let's get ready for a brighter 2022*

Start the New Year off right with these simple tips. As you prepare for 2022, take time to complete our New Year Checklist for small business owners. And remember, the Cook County Small Business Assistance Program's professional advisors are here to help you navigate these steps! Schedule your free session today at [cookcountysmallbiz.org](https://cookcountysmallbiz.org)

## ACCOUNTING

- Prepare your financial documents**  
Set your accountant up for success by organizing your tax documents now.
  - \_Balance sheet
  - \_Income statement
  - \_Receipts for business expenses
  - \_Grant or loan documents (e.g., PPP, EIDL)
- Review your accounting software to ensure you are familiar with its capabilities and tools**  
Many accounting platforms will handle tasks like time tracking, invoices, payroll and more.
- Audit your accounting processes**  
Create a daily/weekly checklist for staying on top of your accounting.
- Organize your receipts**  
Get your receipts and W2s in order now.

## BUSINESS PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

- Evaluate your staffing and make sure it meets your current and planned needs**
- Review your business processes and note opportunities for efficiencies**
  - \_SWOT (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis
  - \_Gap assessment
- Write out your 2022 goals**  
Develop a strategic plan for the year ahead by taking time to reflect on your current organizational priorities.
- Find an accountability partner**  
Check in with them monthly or quarterly to ensure you are tracking toward your goals.
- Reach out to a business advisor who can guide you in the right direction**  
Sign up to receive FREE professional business advising with the Cook County Small Business Assistance Program. Visit [cookcountysmallbiz.org](https://cookcountysmallbiz.org) to find out more!



## **CERTIFICATIONS, LICENSES, AND PERMITS**

Check that all of your certifications, licenses, and permits are up to date—then add renewal dates to your calendar. Research additional certifications, licenses, and permits.

## **FINANCES AND ACCESS TO CAPITAL**

- Evaluate your cash and credit availability for 2022**  
Meet with your accountant/bookkeeper.
- Meet with your business advisor or bank to discuss opportunities for additional capital**  
Schedule the conversation now to know what options are available.
- Explore whether you can lower your credit card or debt interest rates**  
Research—and take advantage of—the lowest available rates on any debts or credit cards.

## **INSURANCE**

- Compare rates before your policy renews—and be sure to ask about available discounts**
- Talk to your insurance company about your coverage and eliminate any gaps**

## **MARKETING**

- Build a 2022 marketing calendar**  
The calendar should outline major milestones throughout the year, holidays, key business dates, and the content you plan to create.
- Audit your website for accuracy**
  - \_Services
  - \_Photos
  - \_Mission statement
  - \_Additional areas
- Update your social media and search profiles**
  - \_Google Business Profile
  - \_Facebook
  - \_Instagram
  - \_LinkedIn
  - \_Others