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[Home](#) > [Business](#)

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Florida's allure remains

With the cost of homeowners insurance and property tax largely unresolved, it may seem more businesses and residents are leaving than coming to South Florida.

But at least one company with insight on the inflow says Florida is still a popular state to open a business.

New York-based *Business Licenses LLC* provides services to people who are seeking business licenses across the country. Florida was second only to California as the most active states for business licensing over the past year. Georgia, North Carolina and Washington are the other states in the top five most active states.

"We're basing the results on the number of requests that we constantly get. We handle hundreds of these every single day," says David Polatseck, president of Business Licenses.

In Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties, the most frequent business licenses (in order of activity) were for construction, food-related industries, real estate, consulting, retail and e-commerce, according to the firm.

Polatseck says start-up business owners often fail to recognize the number and type of business licenses they are required to have.

Sole proprietors who do not incorporate their businesses are still liable for licenses and permits, he says.

"Consumers should know that if they are not licensed properly, they can be closed down, padlocked or heavily penalized."

Besides state licenses, county and city licenses may be required. Licenses also have to be renewed at different times, which some business owners fail to do.

Business Licenses taps into that need by offering a "business license compliance package." Consumers either can get the information about the licenses required or pay for a complete preparation package where all the licenses are prepared for them. The cost through Business Licenses ranges from \$19.99 for license research to about \$175 for a preparation package, Polatseck says.

For more information, visit businesslicenses.com. Business owners also can find information about licenses needed in Florida at myflorida.com.

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