

Starting a Bed & Breakfast: A Complete Guide to Success

Delaware's proximity to several big cities makes it an excellent site for a Bed & Breakfast offering a taste of farm living that so many strive for. Customers will seek a unique location with a relaxing environment. There are many aspects of running a bed and breakfast to fulfill for it to be a successful venture. Consider themed rooms or weekend activities. The following checklist should be used as a guideline in conjunction with the general checklist for success. A particularly helpful group to be involved with is the:

Professional Association Innkeeper International
PO Box 90710
Santa Barbara, CA 93190
(805) 569-1853

- As you begin planning your Bed & Breakfast, consider a site where expansion might be possible.
- When starting any business, you will have to contact your town or count planning and zoning office for their specific regulations as this differs in each area of Delaware.
- Allow for plenty of room for parking your maximum number of guests.
- Decide if you will need to erect new buildings, use existing buildings, or extend existing buildings. Make sure all of your buildings are in code with the Delaware Fire Marshal:
1537 Chestnut Grove Road
Dover, De 19901
(302) 738-5665
- Prepare for plumbing and electric for all of your rooms or an adequate sized bathroom to be shared by several guests.
- Contact the Delaware Division of Natural Resources and Environmental Control for information on septic systems.
DNREC: 89 Kings Highway Dover, DE 19901
(302) 739-9910 www.dnrec.state.de.us/dnrec2000
- Plan for a commercial style kitchen if housing many guests or

updating existing cooking facilities if housing a small number of guests.

- Contact the Delaware Division of Health and Social Services about the preparing and selling of foods:

1901 N. DuPont Highway
New Castle, DE
(302) 255-9040

- You will need to have a food establishment permit and if you will be running the kitchen, will be stated in the permit as the “Person-in-Charge”
- This kitchen will be inspected by the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services.
- Under the “Food Code” you will be expected to:
 - Use reliable, safe sources that are inspected and regulated.
 - Know your drivers (show ID)
 - Check the appearance of delivery vehicles and contents.
 - Match your order list to the delivery- return excess or items not ordered.
 - Reject any food in opened or damaged packaging.
 - Lock up your outdoor coolers and freezers when unattended.
 - Make frequent visual checks of walk-ins and dry storage areas.
 - Consider video cameras or audible alarms for detecting intruders.
 - Prevent access to these areas by unauthorized persons.
 - Limit the amount of exposed food

- Be observant to customers in self-service areas and around wait stations.
- Remove wastes frequently- lock bulk waste units, cover grease drums with screw-down tops and locking bands.
- Also contact the DDHSS about the use of bedding and mattresses in an establishment.
- They will, of course, need to be clean and new- it is highly frowned upon to have used bedding materials in any guest accommodation setting.
- You may also need to contact the Division of Weights and Measures (DDA) if you sell packaged goods from your farm.
- Determine if you will have individual meal settings or if you will serve your food family style.
- Consider what foods you will be serving: If you are serving any meat, poultry, or eggs, you will need to contact the:

Delaware Department of Agriculture
 2320 S. DuPont Highway
 Dover, DE 19901 (302) 698-4500
www.state.de.us/deptagri

- Consider offering a large room for seminars or business meetings. Determine if you are within capacity guidelines with the Delaware Fire Marshal.
- If you will need additional help, contact the Delaware Division of Labor and purchase worker's compensation insurance.