

Cleaning services

Business start-up guide

Cleaning service business industry overview

There is steady demand for cleaning services from governments and businesses that need their premises regularly cleaned. Demand is rising for domestic cleaning services from high and dual-income households as well as the elderly population.

Cleaning service business operators provide a wide range of domestic and commercial cleaning services..

Starting or buying a cleaning service business involves many essential steps. Legally, you must ensure that you apply for and receive the correct licences.

This guide explains how to start a cleaning service business in Queensland. It will help you understand the challenges and opportunities of entering the cleaning service industry so you can make good business decisions.

Getting into the cleaning service industry

Before you start a cleaning service business in Queensland, you need to understand how the industry works, what things you need to consider in your planning, and the legal requirements you must meet.

Finding a competitive edge in Queensland's cleaning service industry

There is a lot of competition in Queensland's cleaning service industry because there are many small business operators, as well as domestic and commercial cleaning service franchises. There is also some competition from people who do their own household or business premises cleaning.

To give your business a competitive edge, you need to compete on price, services offered and customer relationships.

Commercial cleaning service contracts are usually for 1 year, so you will have regular opportunities to contact businesses and offer lower prices in order to win the next contract. Use a business model that can be scaled up or down, based on how many customers you have and staff you need to hire, to stay competitive on price.

Another way to compete is to offer as many services as possible. Large cleaning service operators offer their major business clients a full-service contract that includes cleaning, security, catering, maintenance and other services such as pest management. If you are able to offer some of these services, either as part of your business or using sub-contractors, you will give your business a competitive edge.

Key success factors for a cleaning service business

To start a successful cleaning service business, you need to:

- compete on tender
- communicate effectively
- use cleaning service techniques that add value to your service
- have experience or get training in business management
- have or develop contacts who can help find your first customers.

Cleaning service industry entry barriers

There is little to stop you from entering the cleaning service industry. Start-up costs are low, and can be even lower if you choose a franchise business model. You also need very little skill to begin.

(Source IBISWorld, March 2012)

Cleaning service industry requirements

If you offer pest management as part of your cleaning service, you may need a Pest Management Technicians Licence from Queensland Health.

There are a number of licensing and registration regulations that govern water use for business, and storing bulk cleaning chemicals. When starting a cleaning service business you need to consider the following requirements.

Storing flammable and combustible liquids

To store flammable and combustible liquids over certain levels on your business premises, you may need a Licence to Store Flammable and Combustible Liquids from [Workplace Health and Safety Queensland](#). The levels of flammable and combustible liquids you can store vary, as well as the fees, so check with your local council.

Assessment of Off-Site Plans for Dangerous Goods

[The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service \(QFRS\)](#)

Commissioner may give a person a notice requiring information concerning any dangerous goods. The commissioner may by notice in writing require a person, within the time specified in the notice, to prepare and lodge an off-site emergency plan relating to those dangerous goods.

Discharging trade waste into the sewerage system

If you plan to discharge trade waste into the sewerage system you may need an Application for Approval to Discharge Trade Waste. This application is managed by your [local council](#) and the fee will vary. This permit is not transferable.

Legislation that may apply to your business

- *Building Act 1975*
- *Dangerous Goods Safety Management Act 2001*
- *Debts Tax Act 1990*
- *Fair Trading Act 1989*
- *Fire and Rescue Authority Act 1990*
- *Local Government Act 2009*
- *Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994*

- *National Measurement Act 1960*
- *Pest Management Act 2001*
- *Pest Management Regulation 2003*
- *Queensland Building Services Authority Act 1991*
- *Queensland Building Services Authority Regulation 2003*
- *Retail Shop Leases Act 1994*
- *Stamp Act 1894*
- *Statistical Returns Act 1896*
- *Subcontractors' Charges Act 1974*
- *Trading Hours (Allowable Hours) Act 1990*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

To access copies of legislation, visit www.legislation.qld.gov.au.

Useful industry contacts

Business Support Unit

For more information on licences, regulations, market research, business planning and other support services phone 13 25 23 or visit business.qld.gov.au

Cleaning Contractors Alliance

Phone (02) 9712 1566

Visit www.cleaningcontractors.com.au

Individual Cleaners Association

Visit www.individualcleaner.org

National Cleaners Suppliers Association

Visit www.ncsa.org.au