

SETTING UP IN HONG KONG



InvestHK 投資推廣署
The Government of the Hong Kong
Special Administrative Region

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Setting up a company in Hong Kong is easy, quick and inexpensive. This leaflet highlights the major steps involved. For tailor-made advice, our inward investment experts based in Hong Kong and cities worldwide can help. Their contact details can be found at: www.investhk.gov.hk

1. Select Company Type and Company Name

The most common types of company to carry on business in Hong Kong are a limited company, branch office/s of parent company or representative office. You may choose a company type that you find most suitable for your business requirements.

To form and register a local limited company in Hong Kong, the company name must not be the same as a name appearing in the index of company names kept by the Registrar of Companies. You may conduct a company name search free of charge through the Companies Registry's Cyber Search Centre (www.icris.cr.gov.hk) or the Company Search Mobile Service (www.mobile-cr.gov.hk).

2. Register and Incorporate a Company

A company can be incorporated in Hong Kong with any amount of share capital. There is no statutory requirement for the minimum amount of paid-up capital.

Every company must have at least one registered shareholder and maintain a significant controllers register ("SCR"). All companies formed and registered under the Companies Ordinance are required to keep its SCR at the company's registered office or a prescribed place in Hong Kong. When you set up a private local limited company, at least one director (must be a natural person) and a company secretary are required. There is no requirement for shareholders to be Hong Kong residents and the director can be the company's sole shareholder. The company secretary who is a natural person must ordinarily reside in Hong Kong. If the company secretary is a body corporate, its registered office or place of business should be in Hong Kong.

Business registration applies to every business in Hong Kong. You can apply for the Certificate of Incorporation and the Business Registration Certificate in one go from the Companies Registry. For incorporation of a company limited by shares through the Companies Registry's "e-Registry" portal (www.eregistry.gov.hk), or via the "CR eFiling" mobile application which can be downloaded free of charge from App Store or Google Play, both certificates can normally be issued within an hour. If you choose to deliver the documents in hard copy form, the certificates will normally be issued within four working days. For a company limited by guarantee, the certificates will normally be issued in about three weeks.

3. Opening a Bank Account

Before applying to open a company bank account, you must complete the registration and incorporation of the company. The process and documents required to open a company bank account vary, depending on the type of company and the bank that you choose.

Invest Hong Kong is the department of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government responsible for attracting Foreign Direct Investment, supporting overseas and Mainland businesses to set up and expand in Hong Kong. We partner with clients on a long-term basis and are available at any stage of their business development process.

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4. Choosing Business Premises

A wide variety of business premises are available in Hong Kong, a compact city with an efficient transport system. Good value sites can be found within a short travelling distance of the central business district.

Leasing is normally arranged through an estate agent and the same regulations apply to local and foreign companies. Leases in commercial or industrial buildings are typically two or three years with an option to renew; a serviced office or co-working space allows for short-term leases; and there are also specialist or high-tech facility centres such as Hong Kong Science Park and Cyberport, etc.

5. Immigration and Visas

Hong Kong is a separate travel area from Mainland China. Hong Kong has visa-free entry for residents from about 170 countries or territories for trips ranging from seven to 180 days. Foreign nationals need to obtain visas before coming to Hong Kong to live, work or invest.

Every adult (and child aged 11 years or above) who enters and is permitted to stay in Hong Kong for more than 180 days must apply for a Hong Kong Identity Card within 30 days of arrival. Applying for the card from the Immigration Department is simple and is free.

Get in touch now: www.investhk.gov.hk

Useful Links

Companies Registry
www.cr.gov.hk

Companies Registry's "e-Registry"
www.eregistry.gov.hk

Companies Registry's Cyber Search Centre
www.icris.cr.gov.hk

Companies Registry's Company Search Mobile Service
www.mobile-cr.gov.hk

The Hong Kong Association of Banks
www.hkab.hk

Hong Kong Immigration Department
www.immd.gov.hk

Inland Revenue Department
www.ird.gov.hk

Labour Department
www.labour.gov.hk

Rating & Valuation Department
www.rvd.gov.hk

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