

Getting started on your business idea:

Congratulations on your upcoming release! Delaware Libraries have free resources that can help support your transition.

Resources will be available to help you start your business. Almost everything is digital, so you will need access to a computer and understand how to use it. It is the key to unlocking assistance and necessary to directly use most resources. All 33 public libraries have computers and many have training to help you attain the computer skills you need.

Step 1: Go to the closest library and get a library card to start accessing free resources.

Step 2: Get a mentor to help guide and support you. SCORE Delaware Chapter has local mentors that provide free assistance with starting and running a business. Request a mentor at <https://www.score.org/delaware/local-mentors>

Step 3: Use your library card to read or listen to the book, *Who owns the ice house? : eight life lessons from an unlikely entrepreneur*. Ask a librarian for assistance to checkout the book or download the library's Hoopla app to your phone to listen to the book. This book describes the power of entrepreneurship to overcome adversity and achieve independence, regardless of one's circumstances and explains the eight core mindsets necessary for success: choice, opportunity, action, knowledge, wealth, brand, community and persistence.

Step 4: Connect with Launcher at <https://westendnh.org/programs/launcher/>. This program has supported the successful startup of more than 350 businesses throughout Delaware. Many of the graduates were formerly incarcerated. The 12-week program is offered in English and Spanish twice per year. After program completion, one-on-one support is provided by expert business advisors. Free workshops are available to continue learning about best practices to operate your business.

Step 5: Check out Inmates to Entrepreneurs at <https://inmatestoentrepreneurs.org/> to learn how to overcome the specific challenges of returning citizens. Take this free online course, Brian Hamilton's Starter U to learn about starting a business with very limited funds <https://starteru.brianhamilton.org/> The key is to start a business that requires a small amount of money for equipment and other start-up costs yet provides immediate cash payments. Examples are a house painting or lawn care business. If your long-term goal is a business that requires more upfront cash to start than you have, you can earn the needed cash and learn the basics of success while operating a cash-based business first.

If you have questions or need assistance, you can ask a librarian in person, call (302) 257-3030 or text (302) 613-7477.