



## BUSINESS START-UP CHECKLIST

- Determine what type of business to operate. Find a suitable location for the business.
  
- Research the business competition. Think about techniques for advertising and marketing your business.
  
- Select an attorney, an accountant, and other needed advisors to handle the legal, accounting and tax matters associated with the business start-up.
  
- Discuss with advisers (attorneys, accountants, etc.) the form of business entity most appropriate, given the objectives of the owners and the type of business that will be conducted.
  
- Create a business plan, a financial and management outline of your company.
  
- Conduct a name availability search at the appropriate state office, searching under both an entity and assumed business name ("DBA").
  
- Have an attorney prepare articles of incorporation or LLC or partnership documents and file with the appropriate state office.
  
- File a certificate of assumed name ("DBA") with the appropriate state offices for unincorporated businesses conducting operations under a name other than the owner's name.
  
- Check with an attorney about any filings that may be required in any other states in which business may be conducted outside of the state of incorporation.
  
- Coordinate with the business tax and legal advisors in filing an IRS Form 2553 if "Subchapter S" status is elected for a corporation.

- File a Form SS-4 to obtain a Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN).
  
- Have owners make initial capital contributions to business and issue appropriate evidences of ownership (stock certificates, etc.).
  
- Obtain from the appropriate state office sales tax certificates and any state tax ID numbers.
  
- File with the state unemployment office any required documents.
  
- Secure property, liability and worker's compensation insurance for business premises, vehicles, and other risk exposures as needed.
  
- Working with the business's tax and accounting advisor, purchase bookkeeping, payroll, withholding and any other software that may be needed to operate the business, and have employees trained to use it.
  
- Conduct appropriate business entity meetings.
  
- Hold elections for board of directors, officers or other positions as provided for in business entity operating documents, agreements or bylaws.
  
- Work with the business's accountant and tax advisor to prepare federal and state tax returns, and to provide advice on the best method of accounting (cash basis or accrual).
  
- Obtain any permits, licenses, or zoning variances required by city, county or local ordinances.
  
- Contract with a communications provider for telephone (or VOIP) and internet service.
  
- Create a web presence both in the form of a web page and through search engine optimization to draw increased internet traffic to the business site.

- Review the business owner's estate documents, such as wills and trusts. Establish the appropriate life insurance coverage on the owner and change beneficiary designations when appropriate.
  
- Send announcements to clients, financial institutions, and vendors of the business name, location, phone and fax numbers, e-mail addresses and designated start date.
  
- Set up any employee benefits, such as retirement plans, life insurance, disability insurance, health insurance, etc.

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