



Starting a Business in NC

Starting a business is exciting but if not done properly and completely it can quickly become a nightmare. Here are the basic steps to setting up your business in North Carolina.

1. Determine what business structure you want (Sole Proprietorship, Corporation or LLC) and choose a name. Have several names in mind in case the name you prefer is not available. Go to the NC Secretary of State website, www.sosnc.gov, “I want to”, then under the Business section, go to “Check Name Availability” to verify your chosen name hasn’t already been used.
2. File your charter at NC Secretary of State at www.sosnc.gov. Go to Business Registration, then Register Online. This will create your Articles of Incorporation if you haven’t written them or allow you to upload them if you have created your own. I recommend that you use theirs initially or as a template for creating your own. May not be necessary if you choose Sole Proprietorship.
3. Once your filing is approved, get your Federal Tax ID by going to www.irs.gov. Then go to “Apply for an Employer ID Number” about halfway down the page.
4. Determine if you need to register with the state. Typically, this only needs to be done if you will collect, then pay, sales tax or if you have employees. To do this, go to the NC Department of Revenue at www.ncdor.gov. Look under Taxes and Forms for Business Registration. Go down the page to General Information and Complete Your Registration.
5. Check to see if you need any additional licenses or permits. For example, alcohol sales must have a county license. For food sales, you will need a Health Certificate. Other requirements may exist depending on what type of business you are starting.
6. If you have employees, you will also need to register with Employment Security Department and NC DOR.
7. If you have a Trade Mark or Service Mark, those will need to be registered separately. Check with the Secretary of State website for more guidance.
8. Set up a good bookkeeping service and/or retain an accountant. I recommend Patriot Software or QuickBooks Online AND hiring an Accountant to oversee and assist with your bookkeeping.

Completing all these steps will have your business set up and ready to begin your new venture without delays or potential problems in the future.

For more information, contact your Tax Advisor.

The information contained within this White Paper is provided for informational purposes only and is not intended to substitute for obtaining accounting, tax, or financial advice from a professional accountant.