

<http://sos.oregon.gov/business/Documents/business-guides/start-business-guide.pdf>

Starting a Business

Steps for Setting up Shop

When starting a new business, there are many important decisions to make and rules and procedures to be addressed. First and foremost, are you [required to register your business](#) in Oregon?

Although there is no single source for all filing requirements, the following steps will assist in starting your business.

1. Do your research

The [Business Xpress](#) is a cooperative effort of state agencies designed as a first stop for starting a business in Oregon. An online [Business Wizard](#) provides customized referrals with information regarding government or organization contacts for your business. The [How to Start a Business in Oregon](#) guide (PDF) provides a [checklist](#) to guide you through the process of registering your business.

2. Create a business plan

It helps to begin with a plan. A business plan is a blueprint of every aspect of your business. Sales, marketing, advertising, promotion and location are some of the aspects of creating a plan. For a tutorial on creating a business plan, visit the [U.S. Small Business Administration](#).

Oregon has many programs available to assist businesses. The Oregon Business Guide lists three categories of business assistance programs.

- [Management and Technical Services](#)
- [Financial Resources](#)
- [Marketing and International Trade](#)

Oregon's Economic and Community Development Department provides reports and services for and about Oregon businesses.

3. Select your business name and structure

[Choose a business structure](#). Select a business entity type from the following list for a brief overview of the principal types of legal business structures available in Oregon. A legal representative and accountant should be consulted before determining the type of business entity to form. Read about [choosing a legal structure](#).

- Sole proprietorship
- Corporation
- Nonprofit
- Limited liability company (LLC)
- Limited partnership (LP)
- General partnership
- Limited liability partnership (LLP)

Choose a business name. Check the [Business Registry Database](#) for name availability.

Note: Sole proprietors may conduct business under their own name or choose an assumed business name.

4. Register your business

The Oregon Secretary of State's Corporation Division is the place to register your corporation, nonprofit corporation, assumed business name, limited liability company, limited liability partnership, Oregon trademark or service mark. Go to [Forms and Fees](#) to file a business online or download forms to print and mail.

5. Learn your tax obligations

Understanding your tax obligations is important for any business. The Business Information Center provides information about [Oregon](#) and [federal](#) income taxes.

Learn about requirements to [report personal property](#) to your county assessor's office. You will also want to [check other taxes](#) that may apply to your business.

Most businesses will need to apply to the Internal Revenue Service for a federal [Employer Identification Number \(EIN\)](#). You can [apply online](#) through the IRS. For more information:

- [Form SS-4, application for EIN, requires identification of responsible party](#)
- [Updating incorrect business entity information](#)
- [Change in application for EIN](#)
- [Use of nominees in the EIN application process](#)

6. Check what licenses, permits or certifications you need

Many occupations and business activities require licenses, permits or certifications from state agencies or boards. The state of Oregon offers a searchable [License Directory](#) with over 1,100 licenses, permits and certifications. The Business Information Center also provides information on state license requirements. Construction and landscape contractors need to register with the Construction Contractors Board or Landscape Contractors Board.

Cities and counties may also require businesses to have a license or permit. Check with your city and county government to determine the license, permit or zoning requirements for your area.

7. Learn about other requirements

[Protect your idea](#). Learn about registering patents, copyrights, trademarks and service marks with the state of Oregon and federal government.

[Check with the Department of Environmental Quality \(DEQ\)](#). Some business activities require you to contact DEQ.

Determine whether you comply with the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#). Many businesses are subject to this federal law which prohibits discrimination against disabled persons.

8. Meet ongoing registration requirements

Keep your reporting and registration obligations current. Businesses registered with the Secretary of State Corporation Division must file annual reports and renew registration information. We mail payment coupons approximately 45 days before your renewal due date. Check [Renew Online](#) for more information.

Nonprofit organizations engaging in charitable activities need to file annual reports with the Oregon Department of Justice (DOJ), Charitable Activities Section, and with the Internal Revenue Service. Check [Information for Nonprofit Organizations](#).

Many occupational or business licenses require annual renewal. Check with the licensing agency for requirements. The [Referral List](#) provides contact information for government agencies.