THE CEO NETWORK

Entity Formation Checklist

Prepare an LLC or other business formation with state-specific requirements in mind.

1. Choose the structure and state

Compare LLC, corporation, partnership and sole-proprietor structures using the SBA overview. Select the state where you will form and operate. State filing requirements, fees, annual reports and licensing vary; this checklist is not individualized legal or tax advice.

2. Check the name

Search the selected state's official business registry for name availability. Separately check federal trademark resources; approval of a state business name does not establish trademark rights.

3. Prepare filing details

Consult your state's official filing instructions for the entity name, addresses, organizer or member information and registered-agent requirements. Prepare only the documents that office actually requires; do not assume one state's forms apply elsewhere.

4. Plan ownership and records

Discuss ownership, management and an operating agreement with qualified counsel where needed. Keep formation documents, ownership records and a calendar of renewal deadlines. Formation alone does not establish credit or guarantee funding.

5. Confirm identifiers and permits

Review the SBA guidance on business identifiers, licenses and permits. Use official agency channels and confirm whether your business needs each item. An EIN application through the IRS is free; this is an official administrative resource, not a CEO Network tax service.

6. Prepare banking and ongoing compliance

Ask your bank which documents it requires for a business account. Check state and local reporting, licensing and renewal duties. If you operate in more than one state, confirm whether additional registration is required.

Official resources

SBA — Choose a business structure

SBA — Register your business

SBA — Licenses and permits

USPTO — Trademark basics

General education only. State requirements vary. Confirm current instructions with the official state filing office and consult licensed professionals for your situation.