

8-Step Guide for Launching a New Business

There are many steps to consider when establishing a business. The Secretary of State's Business Services Division is pleased to provide the following checklist to help ensure your business meets statutory and regulatory compliance in Montana. The list may not be inclusive of all the requirements you will need to fulfill for your business. It is recommended that you seek appropriate legal and/or financial advice before making important business decisions.

Determine Your Business Structure

A list of organizational structures is provided at sos.mt.gov/Business/Startup. It is recommended that you consult with an attorney, accountant, and/or financial advisor to help determine which business structure is right for you.

Reserve a Business Name

You can reserve a business name for up to 120 days while you prepare to file your organizational documents. You cannot transact business or conduct affairs with a name reservation. **Skip this step if you are ready to file organizational documents.**

File Organizational Documents

Depending on the type of structure you have chosen, you will need to file the appropriate business forms with the Secretary of State's Office. The office provides all the necessary forms online at sos.mt.gov/Business/Forms.

Apply for Tax ID Numbers

The Internal Revenue Service requires **federal tax identification numbers** for partnerships, corporations and businesses that hire employees. To obtain a federal tax ID number, call the IRS toll-free at 1-800-829-4933.

Apply for Professional Licenses

Montana law requires **licensing** for some professions. To determine whether you need a business or occupational license, contact the MT Department of Labor and Industry at (406) 841-2333.

Apply for Local Licenses

Every city and county has specific requirements for doing business within its jurisdiction. Call or visit your county courthouse or city office to learn more about the **requirements in your area.**

Apply for Workers' Compensation

If you plan to hire employees, you are required to provide **insurance coverage** under Workers' Compensation Laws. This information is available from the MT Department of Labor and Industry at (406) 444-6532.

File an Annual Report

Corporations and Limited Liability Companies are required by law to **file an Annual Report** with the Secretary of State's Office. If you fail to file the Annual Report with the accompanying fee each year, your company can be involuntarily dissolved.