Michael Watson
SECRETARY OF STATE

Success

You are well on your way to starting your own business. Based on your answers, we have created a list of what you will need to provide to the State, county and city government.

Please note, this information is supplied as a guide and should not take the place of legal advice. The Secretary of State's Office recommends the consultation of a lawyer or accountant when forming a business.

Start your business in Mississippi

The Mississippi Secretary of State's Office would like to assist you in starting your new business. What may seem like a daunting task may be accomplished with relative ease, once you have chosen the type of business which best fits your needs. It is important to consider all of the possibilities when choosing your business structure.

Business Entities

Business may be conducted in Mississippi using many different types of entities, which may require registration with the Secretary of State. Each has advantages and disadvantages. When choosing how you want to operate your business, it is important to keep in mind:

- How many owners you will have.
- The relationship among the co-owners.
- The ability to sell your ownership interest.
- Liability for taxes and business debts.
- Record keeping requirements.

We recommend consulting with an attorney or accountant to determine the appropriate type of entity before setting up your business.

Business Plan

Now that you are starting your business, you will want to begin writing your business plan. A business plan is just a roadmap defining your business and identifying your goals, and how you will achieve them. There are basic components every good plan should include, and resources available to help you craft a business plan.

For more information and assistance with writing a business plan, contact the Mississippi Small Business Development Center.

MS.gov Business resources quick links

Financing

The old saying “it takes money to make money” holds true for any new business venture. How you finance your business can affect your ability to hire staff, buy goods, acquire licenses, expand and grow.

For more information on business financing contact the Mississippi Small Business Development Center.

Crowdfunding - Invest Mississippi

Crowdfunding is a way for businesses to raise money by soliciting and accepting small monetary amounts from a large number of people.

- Equity Crowdfunding: a way for businesses to raise capital by accepting investments of small monetary amounts from multiple people. Investors receive an equity interest in the business based on the amount of their investment. The exchange of equity in the business for a monetary investment is a security and subject to State and federal securities laws.
- Donation Crowdfunding: a way for individuals or businesses to collect pledges or donations of money from multiple people (donors) who support a platform or cause and, in turn, receive a reward or experience. Donation crowdfunding is typically done via websites such as Kickstarter.com, GoFundMe.com, and Indiegogo.com. Unlike equity crowdfunding, donations are not subject to State and Federal securities laws because donors do not receive ownership in the business.

Equity Crowdfunding is now available in Mississippi through administrative rules recently adopted by our Agency.

For more information on Invest Mississippi Crowdfunding, visit https://www.sos.ms.gov/crowdfunding. Or you may contact our Office.

Mississippi Secretary of State
Securities Division
125 South Congress Street
Jackson, Mississippi 39201
(601) 359-1334
crowdfunding@sos.ms.gov
https://www.sos.ms.gov/crowdfunding

**The Secretary of State does not recommend any securities and does not confirm the accuracy or determine the adequacy of a crowdfunding offering. A filing of an offering with the Secretary of State under this Rule does not mean the Secretary of State has passed on the merits of the offering.*

Regardless of the State you open or business, or the entity you choose, please contact our Agency..

For assistance with Mississippi state business requirements contact:

Mississippi Secretary of State
Business Services
125 S. Congress St.
Jackson, Mississippi 39201
(601) 359-1633
https://www.sos.ms.gov/

Open Your Business

Most new businesses in Mississippi are required to register with the Secretary of State's Office. To see if your business is required to register, contact:

Mississippi Secretary of State
Business Services
125 South Congress Street
Jackson, Mississippi 39201
(601) 359-1633
business@sos.ms.gov
Secretary of State Doing Business in Mississippi Guide

Online services and forms

- Online Services Directory
- Secretary of State online business filing system

County and City

Municipal Information

Mississippi County contacts

Permits

You may be required to apply for permits and licenses from your local government (e.g., city or county). Different locations have different requirements. The following are common types of local permits and licenses.

- Business Licenses / Tax Permits

  From your city or county clerk or revenue department. Many jurisdictions require a trader's license or tax certificate in order to operate.
- Building Permits

  From your city or county building and planning department. This permit is generally required if you are constructing or modifying your place of business.
- Health Permits

  From your city or county health department.
- Occupational Permit

  From your city or county building and planning development department. This permit is required for home-based business in some jurisdictions.
- Signage Permits

  From your city or county building and planning department. Some jurisdictions require a permit before you can erect a sign for your business.
- Alarm Permits

  From your city or county police or fire department. If you have installed a burglar or fire alarm, you will likely need an alarm permit.
- Zoning Permits

  From your city or county building and planning department. This permit is generally required if you are

developing land for specific commercial use.

- Alcohol, Beer, and/or Tobacco Permits

  Any business selling alcohol and or tobacco must obtain both city and state permits.

Alcoholic Beverage Control
1286 Gluckstadt Road
Madison, Mississippi 39110
(601) 856-1301
https://www.dor.ms.gov

Beer and/or Tobacco Permit
Department of Revenue
Attention: Sales Tax
500 Clinton Center Drive
Clinton, Mississippi 39056
(601) 923-7015
https://www.dor.ms.gov/business

Tobacco Control Board
805 South Wheatley Boulevard
Suite 400
Ridgeland, Mississippi 39157
(601) 991-6050
http://www.msdh.state.ms.us

Filing Federal Business Taxes

The Federal Employer ID Number (EIN) is used to report withholding taxes. Almost all businesses are required to obtain one.

Apply for a Federal Tax ID number:

United States Internal Revenue Service
1 (800) 829-4933
http://www.irs.gov

NOTICE:
Reporting of Beneficial Ownership Information to the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN)
Beginning January 1, 2024, certain types of corporations, limited liability companies, and other similar entities created in or registered to do business in the United States must report information about their beneficial owners—the persons who ultimately own or control the company—to the Department of the Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN). Additional information about the reporting requirements, including answers to questions such as "is my company required to report beneficial ownership information to FinCEN," "who is a beneficial owner," and "when do I need to report my company's beneficial ownership information" is available on FinCEN's beneficial ownership information webpage, FinCEN.gov/BOI. You can also subscribe to FinCEN Updates for future guidance documents.

Filing State Business Taxes

Businesses operating in Mississippi are required to register for one or more tax-specific identification numbers, licenses or permits, including income tax withholding, sales and use tax (seller's permit), and unemployment insurance tax.

Some forms will ask for an NAICS number, which is a number associated with the type of business you have so that it can be categorized appropriately. The NAICS Association website has a list of NAICS numbers for reference.

Contact the Mississippi Department of Revenue for more information about business registration and your tax obligations.

Department of Revenue
500 Clinton Center Drive
Clinton, Mississippi 39056
(601) 923-7700
https://www.dor.ms.gov/contact-us

Links

- Mississippi Tax Payer Access Point
- Excise Tax
- Income Tax Withholding Tax Tables
- Franchise Taxes

Business Insurance

Stay protected as a business owner, you will want to consider obtaining business insurance to protect your business and yourself.

Insurance

Though business insurance is an added expense, in many cases, it is also tax deductible. There are many different types of insurance and the level of coverage needed may depend on many aspects of your business. Please visit the Small Business Administration website for more information.

Workers Compensation Insurance (WCI)

In most states, you must fill out Workers Compensation Insurance forms. If your business does not fall into the category requiring this insurance, you may still need to attest you do not provide WCI. Please visit or contact the Workers Compensation Commission to determine what forms are required for your business. For more information, please contact Mississippi Workers' Compensation Commission.

Other Registrations

After setting up your business entity, you may have additional required registrations with other governmental agencies.

- The Internal Revenue Service: Many entities, such as corporations and nonprofits, are required to obtain a Federal Tax ID Number or a Federal Employee Identification Number (EIN). Other entities may need this number, particularly if the business will have employees. You must contact the IRS in order to obtain a Tax ID number. Please visit www.irs.gov for more information.
- Mississippi Department of Revenue: The Mississippi Department of Revenue collects state taxes including income tax and sales tax. Most entity types will be required to register with the Department of Revenue. Companies may register online at www.dor.ms.gov.
- Unemployment Insurance Registration: If your company has employees, you may need to register for unemployment insurance with the Mississippi Department of Employment Security. If you are not certain about the need for unemployment insurance, seek professional financial or legal advice. Additional information can be found online at www.mdes.ms.gov.
- Charities Registration: A nonprofit Corporation planning to solicit contributions from the public through any means, including the Internet, may be required to register with the Secretary of State's Charities Division prior to beginning any solicitation efforts. This registration is separate and in addition to any required filings with the Business Services Division. To discover whether your charity must register, you may call the Charities Division at 601-359-1371.
- Obtaining 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt Status: If a nonprofit Corporation is organized and operated exclusively for a charitable, religious or educational purpose, it may also qualify for federal tax exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Please visit www.irs.gov or consult a tax advisor for further information on obtaining tax exempt status.

Special Registrations

Companies engaging in certain types of business may be required to file additional registrations, pass examinations or provide certifications to other agencies or boards of the State of Mississippi. If you believe your business may have such a requirement, please contact the appropriate agency or visit their website. For your convenience, some of the state agencies or boards are listed below.

A complete list of Mississippi Agencies can be found here

Agency	Contact
Agricultural Aviation Board of Mississippi	662-258-3474
Department of Agriculture and Commerce	601-359-1100
Board of Architecture	601-856-4652
Department of Banking and Consumer Finance	601-359-1031
Board of Barber Examiners	601-359-1015
Board of Chiropractic Examiners	662-773-4478
Board of Cosmetology	601-354-5315
Board of Dental Examiners	601-944-9622
Board of Engineers and Surveyors	601-359-6160
Department of Environmental Quality	601-961-5241
Department of Revenue	601-923-7700
Board of Contractors	601-354-6161
Examiners for Licensed Professional Counselors	662-716-3932
Examiners for Social Workers &Marriage/Family Therapists	601-987-6806
State Board of Funeral Service	601-932-1973
Gaming Commission	601-576-3800
Board of Registered Professional Geologists	601-354-6370
State Department of Health	601-576-7400
Institutions of Higher Learning	601-432-6647
Department of Insurance	601-359-3569

Board of Massage Therapy	601-919-1517
Board of Medical Licensure	601-987-3079
Mississippi Auctioneer Commission	601-364-2387
Board of Nursing Home Administrators	601-362-6914
State Board of Nursing	601-987-4188
State Board of Optometry	601-919-1343
Board of Pharmacy	601-605-5388
Real Estate Commission	601-932-6770
Department of Transportation	601-359-7600
Alcoholic Beverage Control Office	601-856-1301
Department of Public Safety	601-987-1212