



How to Start a Business in Mississippi Checklist

1. Form your business.

1.1. Review formation options in Mississippi.

There are six main types of business structures in Mississippi. Choose the one that suits your business best.

1.2. Check business name availability.

The Mississippi Secretary of State (SOS) website includes a free business name lookup tool that can be used to establish if a name has been registered with the state. Once you've checked the SOS database, you should perform a trademark search using the United States Patent and Trademark Office's database.

1.3. File a name reservation.

While you prepare to register your business, you can file a name reservation. This will prevent another business from claiming your chosen business name as their own.

1.4. Get an employer identification number.

There are three main filing options: electronic, fax, and mail. International applicants can apply over the phone. All applications should be submitted to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

1.5. Create a Mississippi Online Business Services account.

Businesses that need to file formation documents must do so online. You'll need to set up an Online Business Services account before you can do this.

1.6. Register your business in Mississippi.

Submit the requisite documents via your Online Business Services account. Sole proprietorships and general partnerships can skip this step.

1.7. Obtain necessary permits and licenses.

Check the Mississippi government website to determine whether you need to obtain any permits and/or licenses, and then proceed to apply for them. Your local small business development center can offer guidance in this regard, too. Also remember to check in with your town or city clerk to determine which local regulations exist, and then proceed to apply for the relevant licenses and/or permits.

2. Register your business for taxes.

2.1. Register as a tax-paying entity with the Department of Revenue.

Almost all new tax accounts can be registered via the Department of Revenue's Taxpayer Access Point (TAP). Before you can register these, you'll need to identify yourself as a new tax-paying entity on the system.

2.2. Register for corporate income and franchise tax.

This can be done online via TAP, or by submitting a hard copy application.

2.3. Register for income withholding tax.

Businesses that have employees must register to withhold income tax. You can do this online via TAP, too. Simply click "Register Now" and follow the on-screen prompts.

2.4. Register for unemployment insurance tax.

Businesses that have employees must register to pay unemployment insurance tax. You'll need to register with the Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES).

3. Hire and report your staff to the state.

3.1. Report your employees to the state directory.

This applies to newly hired and rehired staff, whether temporary or permanent. Independent contractors do not need to be reported.

3.2. Display the requisite posters in your workplace.

Federal and state laws dictate the posters you will need to display. You will be able to find these online.