



How to Create and File an LLC for Free



Creating an LLC is one of the best ways to start your entrepreneurial journey and get the right legal structure in place for your new business. If money's tight, or you don't want to use a company formation service, we've got good news for you — you can form an LLC yourself. Although you'll still need to pay your state filing fees (they're unavoidable!), you can save on the costs of having your LLC filed through a professional incorporation business.

You might wonder why we'd share this information, especially since we work as company formation specialists. The answer? We want your business to succeed, no matter what. Although we can provide plenty of value when helping you start your business, if you want to roll up your sleeves and start an LLC yourself, it can be a great learning experience (although it is a fair amount of work).

Want to save time and try a simpler approach? Incfile now offers [\\$0 llc and business formation](#). We'll file your business filing paperwork for free—just pay your state fee!

Six Steps to Forming an LLC for Free

1 Gather Information

LLCs are formed with a state government, normally through the secretary of state or a similar agency. You'll need to gather the details of your business and provide them via a formal document. Depending on the state you're filing in, this document is known as your "Articles of Organization," "Certificate of Formation" or something similar.

If you're forming an LLC with other people, you'll need to gather and provide information about them, including their name, address and their ownership in the new business. You'll also need to provide details like your business name and address, details of your Registered Agent, the purpose of your business and the name of the incorporator.

2 Get a Business Name and Address

You'll need to decide on a name for your LLC that's not used by another business in the state. Each state does have specific business naming rules, but we have a guide to [choosing the right name](#) where you can also search to see if it's unique. You will also need an official address for your LLC (note that [LLC address requirements do vary by state](#)).

3 Get the Formation Document From the Secretary of State Website

You'll need to get a copy of the official company formation document from the company formation agency in your state. We've got a [complete guide to forming your LLC in each state](#), where you'll find a link to the relevant website. You can normally download the relevant document as a Word file or fillable PDF, and some states will allow you to file directly online. Review the document to find out what other information you might need to provide.

4 Get a Registered Agent

All LLCs are required to have a Registered Agent — a person or business who receives official notifications and correspondence about your business. You can choose to be a Registered Agent yourself, appoint another LLC manager as a Registered Agent or use a professional Registered Agent service. You will need to provide details of your Registered Agent in your company formation document.

At Incfile, all of our company formation packages provide a free Registered Agent service for the first year.

5 Look at Other LLC Formation Options

Some states will allow you to file a special type of LLC. For example, you might choose to set yourself up as a Professional LLC or a [Series LLC](#) (see details on what's allowed in our [state-by-state guide](#)).

6 LLC Paperwork: Fill Out and File the Formation Document

Once you have the formation document, you just need to fill it in, check it for accuracy and file it with the state agency. You will [need to pay your state's fee](#) to have your LLC formed, and usually [wait a certain amount of time](#) (although some states let you pay for expedited filing).



Congratulations — Your LLC Is Formed

Once you've filed the formal document with the state, you'll need to wait for a notification that your LLC has been officially formed. Your state formation agency will normally provide this by mail.

What to Do After You've Formed Your LLC

Now that your LLC is a legal business entity, there are a few other areas you'll need to take care of.

Get an Employee Identification Number From the IRS

You will need an Employee Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS. You'll use this when you're filing and paying taxes and when you're providing information on employees. You [can get this from the IRS yourself](#), or [we can get an EIN on your behalf](#).

Decide If You Want to Do Business Under a Different Name

Some businesses choose to trade under a different name from their official, legal name. This is known as an "assumed," "fictitious" or "doing business as" name. You need to file the relevant form with your company formation agency, or [we can file your assumed name for you](#). If you're happy to do business under your legal business name, you don't need to file this form.

Research and Apply for Business Licenses and Permits

Most businesses will need official licenses and permits to operate. These requirements may come from your city, county, other municipality or official bodies for your sector or industry. You will need to check on all the compliance and requirements you need to meet.

The Small Business Administration has a [helpful guide to federal permits](#), and you can contact your local and state governments to understand your local requirements. If you don't have time to navigate the [complex world of business permits and licenses](#), [we can help](#).

File a Regular Business Report and Pay a Fee

Most state governments require you to file a regular report on your business every year, although this does vary. This annual report contains high-level information on your business, and you are required to file it and pay a fee to remain in good standing. You can [learn about your ongoing filing requirements here](#).

Other Areas to Consider

Finally, here are a few other areas you can explore:

- Prepare, file and pay your self-employment, state, sales and federal taxes
- Choose if you want to be taxed as an S Corporation to reduce your self-employment tax liability by filing IRS Form 2553
- Trademark your business or brand name to protect it from infringement

We hope you've found this guide to filing your LLC for free to be useful. Remember that if you need any assistance with any part of setting up your business, [just get in touch](#) — we'd be happy to help.

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**Making entrepreneurship easy.
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Only pay the state fee

