



How to Start a Business in Arkansas Checklist

1. Form your business.

1.1. Review Arkansas formation options.

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

1.2. Check name availability.

The Secretary of State website includes a free business name lookup tool. Use it to ensure that you've chosen a unique business name.

1.3. Reserve your business's name.

Corporations and limited liability companies (LLCs) can file a name reservation request while they prepare to register their business. This will prevent another business from claiming the 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. Register your business in Arkansas.

Almost all types of business formation documents must be submitted to the Secretary of State. Sole proprietorships and general partnerships don't have any such mandatory filing requirements but must register a trade name if using something other than their legal first and last names.

1.6. Obtain necessary permits and licenses.

Discover Arkansas offers information about which occupations are licensed at the state level. Your local small business development center can offer guidance in this regard, too. You should also check with them to find out which local licenses and/or permits you need, and then proceed to apply for each of them.

2. Register your business for taxes.

2.1. Sign up for taxes via the Arkansas Taxpayer Access Point.

Arguably the easiest way to apply for most taxes is via the Arkansas Taxpayer Access Point (ATAP). For example, businesses with employees can use to register for income withholding tax, and those who provide specified goods or certain services can register for sales tax.

2.2. Register for unemployment insurance tax.

Businesses that have employees must register to pay unemployment insurance tax. You'll need to create an online account with the state's Division of Workforce Services.

3. Hire and report new employees.

3.1. Report your staff to the state.

This applies to newly hired and rehired staff, whether permanent, temporary, or seasonal. Reports must be submitted to the Arkansas New Hire Reporting Center.

3.2. Obtain workers' compensation coverage.

Almost all businesses that employ three or more individuals are required to offer this form of coverage.

3.3. Display the mandatory posters and notices.

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