Establishing Your Business in Arkansas

Before opening your business to the public, you must meet certain regulatory requirements. These requirements are based on laws written to protect business owners, their employees and their customers. This brochure provides a basic outline of regulatory requirements you must complete to open a business in Arkansas.

This overview includes local, state and federal regulatory, tax and insurance requirements. While we have made every effort to include relevant information, some cities and counties may have different or additional requirements. It is your responsibility to make sure your business complies with local, state and federal government regulatory requirements—we strongly suggest that you consult with your city and county clerk’s offices for more information.

Regulatory Requirements

Doing Business As Certificate (DBA)
To register a new business in Arkansas, you must first file a Doing Business As Certificate (DBA) with your County Clerk’s office to assure that the name you have selected for your business is available.

Register Your Legal Structure
After you secure your business name, you must register your business legal structure. The four basic types of legal structures in Arkansas are sole proprietorship, partnerships, corporations and limited liability companies. You must register sole proprietorships with your local County Clerk. Register corporations, partnerships and LLCs with the Arkansas Secretary of State, Business and Commercial Services Division.

Employer Identification Number
After you register your business legal structure, you must apply for an Employer Identification Number with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) so that your business can be officially recorded by the federal government as a tax-compliant entity.

Register with the Department of Finance
Once you have the Federal EIN, you must register your business with Arkansas’ Department of Finance and Administration using the Arkansas Taxpayer Access Point (ATAP) so that you can pay all the necessary state taxes according to your business’ legal structure.

Commercial Property Assessment
Filing a DBA and obtaining federal and state identification formally establishes your business as a legitimate entity and now allows you to move on to the local (city and county) regulatory process. Your next step is to have your commercial property assessed by the County Assessor’s office.

Obtain Licenses, Permits and Inspections
The “final step” in the regulatory process actually involves obtaining licenses, permits and inspections from various city, county and state agencies including a city business license. Other requirements include:

- Certificate of Occupancy
- Building Permit / Inspection
- Fire Code Inspection
- Food Establishment Permit
- Historic District Permit
- Remodeling Permit
- Sign Permit
- Zoning Approval / Permit
Arkansas Secretary of State
Business and Commercial Services Division
1401 West Capitol Avenue, Suite 250
Little Rock, AR 72201
Tel: 501.682.3409
www.sosweb.state.ar.us/corp_ucc.html

City of Tontitown
Code Enforcement
297 W Henri de Tonti
Tontitown, AR 72770
Tel: 479.361.9702
Fax: 501.421.0012
www.tontitown.com/cc.html

Tontitown Fire Department
Tontitown, AR 72770
Tel: 479.361.2185
Fax: 479.361.9666
www.talf.org/

West Fork City Clerk
262 W Main
West Fork, AR 72774
Tel: 479.839.2342
Fax: 479.839.3335
http://west-fork-ar.com/city.html

West Fork Fire Department
209 W Main
West Fork, AR 72774
Tel: 479.839.2233

Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville
Sam M. Walton College of Business
Donald W Reynolds Center for Enterprise Development, Suite 210
145 North Buchanan
Fayetteville, AR 72701
Tel: 479.575.5148
http://bitocl.arkansas.edu/

Small Business Administration
Arkansas District Office
2120 Riverfront Drive, Suite 250
Little Rock, AR 72202-1796
Tel: 501.324.7379
Fax: 501.324.7394
www.sba.gov/ar

Northwest Arkansas SCORE
614 E. Emma Street, Room M412
Springdale, AR 72764
Tel: 479.725.1809
http://northwestarkansas.score.org/chapters/nwarsc

West Fork Public Library
198 Main
West Fork, AR 72774
Tel: 479.839.2626
http://wcls.lib.ar.us/Libraries/newwestfork.htm

Ozark Literacy Council
2596 Keystone Crossing
Fayetteville, AR 72703
Tel: 479.521.8250
Fax: 479.582.0846
www.ozarkliteracy.org

Small Business and Educational Resources