

## Clients referred from Register of Deeds – 5 typical Questions

1. How do I file my business name with the county?
  - a. If you select Sole Proprietorship (or General Partnership in the case of more than one owner), you register the name of the business using the “Certificate of Assumed Name” form with the Register of Deeds (also called DBA). This simply records the name of the business along with your name and address (which could be the business address).
  - b. The name of your business must be unique to you so it cannot be currently in use. You can search the Register of Deeds records to determine if the name is available for you to use.
  - c. If you have a business name already and wish to discontinue it you should file a “Withdrawal of Assumed Name”
  - d. These forms are available at this website: <https://edpnc.com/start-or-grow-a-business/start-a-business/business-forms/>
2. Do I need a business license?
  - a. If you do business within the limits of a municipality, some require a registration. You should check with the local tax office at the town hall to get their requirements or go to their web site.
  - b. Some businesses require a privilege license from NC. The form and instructions list the businesses that require a license with their fees:  
<http://www.dor.state.nc.us/taxes/license/>
  - c. If our business sells beer, wine or spirits you will need to get a license from Alcoholic Beverage Commission (ABC) and the license from the local municipal tax office.
  - d. If you want to operate a food business you will need to see Rockingham County Health and Human Services. Visit their web site:  
<https://www.rockinghamcountync.gov/pview.aspx?id=21392&catid=26>
3. What other registration requirements do I need to know about?
  - a. You should apply on line for an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Federal Internal Revenue Service(IRS) <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online> This is like a social security number for your business and, together with your business registration documents; it will allow you to obtain a bank account for your business.
  - b. You should register any business related property with the county tax at 336-342-8401, email: [bzpersonal@co.rockingham.nc.us](mailto:bzpersonal@co.rockingham.nc.us) . You can register property on line at: <http://www.ustaxdata.com/rocktaxsite/page.cfm?ID=4>
  - c. You should visit zoning and planning once you know the location of your business to determine their requirements of your business. To arrange a meeting call Planning Department at (336) 342-8130.

- d. If you will be selling items you will need to register with the NC Department of Revenue to obtain a Sales and Use Tax ID. You should first visit their web site:  
<https://edpnc.com/start-or-grow-a-business/start-a-business/business-forms/>
  - e. If you plan to have employees you will need to obtain an NC employer tax account number to pay unemployment Insurance. To apply call: 888-737-0259 Beth King is the local DES rep. 336-339-4245
  - f. If your business employs 3 or more employees, you are required to have workers compensation insurance which protects employees with injury on the job. Information can be obtained from the NC industrial Commission (800) 688-8349.
4. Where can I go to get a grant (or a loan)?
- a. Grants are rarely, if ever, available to a startup business. If your business needs financing you should prepare for more traditional debt financing if you can qualify.
  - b. Grants that are available are more often for non-profit businesses, difficult to obtain and never a reliable source of funding.
  - c. Be cautious of anyone who tells you or implies that they can obtain a grant for your business.
  - d. You should develop a budget for your business startup and for the first year of operation. Based on this information, you can determine the financing that your business will require. This information is also an essential component of making a request for money.
  - e. Banks are reluctant to loan money to a startup business. In most cases they require two years of operation as evidenced by the business tax records. It is not impossible to obtain a startup loan however but you will need to plan very well and have your plan documented.
  - f. A good source of startup money other than family and friends is the NC Rural Center's Micro Enterprise loan. <https://www.ncruralcenter.org/lending/>
5. What other resources do I need to obtain?
- a. A separate bank account for your business is the first step in developing a recordkeeping system. It will help you prepare for taxes. Most banks require you to register your business and have an EIN.
  - b. SCORE provides information on alternative legal structure options on this web site:  
<https://www.score.org/resource/choosing-legal-structure-your-business>
  - c. An alternative business structure option is a Limited Liability Company, (LLC). This is accomplished by filing with the NC Secretary of state, Articles of Organization. You might do this as an alternative to filing with the county as a Sole Proprietor based on a number of reasons. You may obtain this form from this website:  
<https://edpnc.com/start-or-grow-a-business/start-a-business/business-forms/>
  - d. Depending on your legal structure, you will need to obtain advice about how to file your taxes. Owners of Sole Proprietors and LLC's are most frequently taxed as self –

employed individuals. Here is the IRS web site explaining self-employment taxes:

<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/self-employed>

- e. We recommend that you obtain tax advice early in the life of your business. In some cases, a tax advisor may advise you to consider registering your business as a S-Corp to obtain tax benefits. You may elect to incorporate your business by filing with the NC Secretary of State, Articles of Incorporation. . You may obtain this form from this website: <https://edpnc.com/start-or-grow-a-business/start-a-business/business-forms/>. To be considered a S-Corp by the IRS, you will need to file Form 2553 <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/s-corporations>