

HOW TO:

REGISTER YOUR FICTITIOUS OR "DOING BUSINESS AS" (DBA) NAME



Provided by:

SBA

Small Business Administration





Register Your Fictitious or "Doing Business As" (DBA) Name

A fictitious name or “Doing Business As” (DBA) name is a business name that is different from your personal name, the names of your partners or the officially registered name of your LLC or corporation. DBA names can also be called trade names or assumed names.

For example: John Smith sets up a painting business and chooses to name it “John Smith Painting.” Because “John Smith Paining” is considered a DBA (assumed) name, John will need to register it as a fictitious business name with a government agency.

This process is known as registering your “Doing Business As” (DBA) name.

A DBA is needed in the following scenarios:

1. **Sole Proprietors or Partnerships** – If you wish to start a business under any name other than your real one, you’ll need to register a DBA name so that you can do business under the DBA name.
2. **Existing Corporations or LLCs** – If your business is already incorporated and you want to do business under a different name, you will need to register a DBA.

How to Register your “Doing Business As” Name

Depending on where your business is located, you’ll need to register your DBA name through either your county clerk’s office or your state government. **Note:** Not all states require the registering of fictitious business names or DBAs.

Use the following chart to find out the requirements for fictitious name filing in your state and to access more information on the process.

State	DBA Filing Requirements
Alabama	Alabama does not require businesses to register a fictitious name. Businesses may elect to register a trade name with the Secretary of State.
Alaska	Register a Business Name in Alaska
Arizona	The registration of trade names is not required in Arizona but is an accepted business practice that can help you avoid another business from using your business name. Trade names are registered with the Secretary of State. Application for Trade Name Registration Trade Name Registration Information
Arkansas	Any sole proprietorship or general partnership operating under a

	<p>name other than the owners must file a Doing Business Under an Assumed Name Certificate.</p> <p>Domestic and foreign corporations must file an Application for Fictitious Name with the Secretary of State. Domestic corporations must also register with the county clerk of the county in which the corporation's registered office is located (unless it is located in Pulaski County). Fees vary depending on the entity.</p>
California	Individuals or entities doing business for profit under a name different from the owner(s) full legal name(s) must file a Fictitious Name Statement with the registrar-recorder/county clerk office in the county where the business resides.
Colorado	Register a Trade Name Online
Connecticut	Any person doing business in Connecticut under any name other than their own, must either register a trade name in the town where their business is conducted or register with the Connecticut Secretary of State as a corporation.
Delaware	<p>For sole proprietorships and general partnerships, Fictitious Name Certificates are registered in the Superior Court Prothonotary's office in the county where you are doing business.</p> <p>New Castle County Fictitious Name Certificate Kent County - call for form (302) 739-3184 Sussex County - call for form (302) 856-5742</p>
District of Columbia	Individuals, corporations or partnerships may register a business name (trade name) different from the entity's true name. However, you do not need to register the name used for your corporation, partnership, or LLC as your trade name, since it is considered your true name.
Florida	All Florida businesses operating under a fictitious name must register with the Division Corporations, Online Fictitious Name Registration .
Georgia	<p>Individuals or entities doing business under a name different from the owner(s) full legal name(s) must complete a Trade Name Filing with the Clerk of Superior Court in the county where the business is principally located.</p> <p>If you incorporate your business with the Secretary of State, registering a corporate name does not control the use of fictitious or trade names, and issuance of a corporate name does not affect the commercial availability of the name.</p>
Guam	Rules for the Use of Fictitious Names in Guam Certificate of Transacting Business Under a Fictitious Name
Hawaii	Application for Registration of Trade Name Trade Name Registration Information

Idaho	Assumed Business Name Registration Forms
Illinois	When a business name is different from the owner(s) full legal name(s), the Illinois Assumed Name Act requires sole proprietorships and general partnerships to register with their local county clerk's office . Corporations, LLCs, LLPs, and limited partnerships register an assumed name as part of their required business filings with the Illinois Secretary of State .
Indiana	If a business is using a name other than its official name, it must file a Certificate of Assumed Business Name with the county recorder of each county in which it has a place of business, and with the Secretary of State . Sole proprietorships and general partnerships need only file with the County Recorder's office.
Iowa	Sole proprietorships and general partnerships doing business under an assumed name must file a Trade Name Report with the local county recorder's office. This rule does not apply to corporations, LLCs, LLPs, and limited partnerships registered with the Iowa Secretary of State.
Kansas	The State of Kansas does not require a business to register an assumed business name.
Kentucky	Corporations, nonprofits, LLCs and partnerships (general, limited, and limited liability) must file a Certificate of Assumed Name with the Kentucky Secretary of State . Sole proprietorships should file an assumed name certificate with the county clerk's office where the business is located.
Louisiana	Sole proprietorships and general partnerships operating under an assumed name must register with the Parish Clerk of Court office where the business is located. You may download the Application to Register a Trade Name , get it notarized, and submit it to your Parish Clerk of Court office. Corporations, nonprofits, LLCs, LLPs, and limited partnerships must submit the application to the Louisiana Secretary of State .
Maine	Sole proprietorships and general partnerships doing business under an assumed name are required to file a certificate with the municipal or town clerk where the business is located. Corporations, LLCs, LLPs, and limited partnerships register a Statement of Intention to do Business under an Assumed or Fictitious Name with the Maine Secretary of State .
Maryland	Addresses and phone numbers for help applying for a trade name in Maryland can be found on the Trade Name Registration Info page. Trade Name Application

Massachusetts	Massachusetts requires anyone who is conducting business under an alias (i.e., any name other than their own), including corporations, to file a business certificate ("doing business as") in the city or town where the business is principally headquartered.
Michigan	Sole proprietorships and general partnerships using a business name other than the legal names of the owner(s) must file an Assumed Name Certificate with the county clerk under which the person(s) will do business. Corporations, LLCs, LLPs, and limited partnerships register an assumed name as part of their required business filings with the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) .
Minnesota	Minnesota Secretary of State Assumed Name Registration
Mississippi	The State of Mississippi does not require a business to register an assumed business name.
Missouri	Missouri law requires any person or business entity which transacts business in the state under a name other than their own "true name" to register that business name with the Missouri Secretary of State as a Fictitious Name Registration. Online Registration of Fictitious Name
Montana	Montana Secretary of State Application for Reservation of Name Application for Registration of Assumed Business Name
Nebraska	Nebraska Secretary of State Application for Registration of Trade Name
Nevada	All persons and entities doing business in the state of Nevada under an assumed or fictitious name that is different from the legal name must file a Fictitious Firm Name Certificate with the county clerk of each county where the business is being conducted.
New Hampshire	New Hampshire Secretary of State Trade Name Registration Forms
New Jersey	Sole proprietorships and general partnerships doing business under an assumed name should register with the county clerk office where business will be conducted. Contact information for each county can be found on the New Jersey Division of Elections page. For-profit and nonprofit corporations, limited liability companies and limited partnerships may legally do business under an alternate name by registering with the New Jersey Division of Revenue .
New Mexico	The State of New Mexico does not require a business to register an

	assumed business name.
New York	<p>Sole proprietorships using a name other than the owner's name should file a Business Certificate with the county clerk's office in the county where the business is located.</p> <p>General partnerships operating a business under an assumed name should file a Business Certificate for Partners with the county clerk's office in the county where the business is located.</p> <p>Corporations, LLCs, LLPs, and limited partnerships register an assumed name as part of their required business filings with the New York Department of State.</p>
North Carolina	<p>Requires forms to be filed at the County Register of Deeds Office in the county in which your business is conducted.</p> <p>Certificate of Assumed Name Forms</p>
North Dakota	<p>North Dakota Secretary of State</p> <p>Trade Name Registration</p>
Ohio	<p>Ohio Secretary of State</p> <p>Trade Name Registration Forms</p>
Oklahoma	<p>Oklahoma Secretary of State</p> <p>Trade Name Registration</p>
Oregon	<p>Oregon Secretary of State</p> <p>Assumed Name Registration</p>
Pennsylvania	<p>Pennsylvania Department of State</p> <p>Fictitious Name Registration Requirements Application for Registration of Fictitious Name</p>
Puerto Rico	<p>Businesses in Puerto Rico can register both their trademark and trade name (i.e. fictitious name) through the Department of State's Registry of Marks and Commercial Names.</p> <p>Registro de marcas y nombres comerciales (registry of marks and commercial names)</p>
Rhode Island	<p>Businesses operating under an assumed name may be required to file an assumed name certificate with the city or town clerk where business is located. In addition, all corporations, LLCs, LLPs and limited partnerships conducting business in Rhode Island must register a Fictitious Business Name Statement with the Rhode Island Secretary of State.</p>
South Carolina	Only foreign (out-of-state) businesses may adopt a fictitious name.

	<p>A fictitious name can be obtained for a foreign (out of state) business that is authorized to transact business in this State because its legal entity name is already registered in the State of South Carolina. The following entity types may apply: a foreign Corporation, a foreign LLC, a foreign Non-Profit Corp., a foreign Professional Corp., and a foreign Statutory Close Corporation.</p> <p>Visit South Carolina Business One Stop for more information.</p>
South Dakota	<p>South Dakota Secretary of State</p> <p>Fictitious Business Name Registration</p>
Tennessee	<p>Tennessee does not require registration or filing of DBAs or fictitious names for sole proprietorships and general partnerships. Corporations, LLCs, LLPs and limited partnerships register an assumed name as part of their required business filings with the Tennessee Secretary of State.</p>
Texas	<p>All businesses in Texas operating under an assumed name must file an Assumed Name Certificate with the county clerk's office in the county where the business is primarily located.</p> <p>Corporations, LLCs, LLPs and limited partnerships must file an Assumed Name Certificate with the Texas Secretary of State in addition to a separate Assumed Name Certificate with the county where the main office of the registered business is located.</p>
U.S. Virgin Islands	<p>Lieutenant Governor of the Virgin Islands</p> <p>Certificate for Registration of Trade Name</p>
Utah	<p>All Utah businesses operating under an assumed name must file a Business Name Registration/DBA Application. Visit these resources for more information.</p> <p>Information for Corporations Information for Sole Proprietorships and General Partnerships</p>
Vermont	<p>Vermont Secretary of State</p> <p>Trade Name Registration Form Trade Name Registration Information</p>
Virginia	<p>If business is conducted in Virginia under a name other than the legal business name, an assumed or fictitious name certificate must be filed in each county or city where business is to be conducted. In addition, if the entity is a limited partnership, a limited liability company or a corporation, it must obtain a copy of each fictitious name certificate, attested by the Clerk of the Circuit Court where the original was filed, and file it with the Clerk of the State Corporation</p>

	<p>Commission.</p> <p>Read the Virginia Business Registration Guide for more information on business registration requirements for all types of legal entities.</p>
Washington	<p>Washington State Department of Licensing</p> <p>Trade Name Registration</p>
West Virginia	<p>West Virginia Secretary of State</p> <p>Trade Name Registration</p>
Wisconsin	<p>State of Wisconsin</p> <p>Registration of Firm Name (aka "Doing Business As")</p>
Wyoming	<p>All businesses may reserve or register a trade name with the Wyoming Department of State.</p> <p>Trade Name Reservation Form</p>