

HOW TO Form Your California LLC



01

Choose a Name for Your LLC

Select a unique name that includes "Limited Liability Company," "LLC," or "L.L.C.," and ensure it's not already in use by checking the [California Secretary of State Business Search](#).

02

Designate a Registered Agent

Designate a registered agent with a physical address in California to receive legal documents on behalf of your LLC; this can be an individual or a registered agent service.

03

File Articles of Organization (Form LLC-1)

Submit Form LLC-1 to the California Secretary of State online, by mail, or in person with your LLC name, registered agent details, and management structure; the filing fee is \$70, and you can file through the California Business Portal.

04

File an Initial Statement of Information (Form LLC-12)

File the Statement of Information within 90 days of forming your LLC, including key details such as your business address and managers/members; the filing fee is \$20, and this can also be done online via the California Business Portal.

05

Draft an Operating Agreement

Although not required by California law, creating an Operating Agreement is essential for defining your LLC's ownership structure, management roles, and internal operations.

06

Obtain an EIN (Employer Identification Number)

Apply for an EIN through the [IRS website](#) to handle taxes, hire employees, and open a business bank account.

07

Register for CA Taxes and Obtain Business Licenses

Register your LLC with the [California Department of Tax and Fee Administration \(CDTFA\)](#) for applicable taxes like sales tax, and obtain any required state or local business licenses based on your industry and location.

08

Pay the Annual LLC Franchise Tax

California LLCs must pay an annual franchise tax of \$800, regardless of income, and submit Form 3522 to the [California Franchise Tax Board](#).