

# North Carolina LLC Formation Checklist

## Step 1: Name Your North Carolina LLC

The name of your North Carolina LLC should be distinguishable from other business names in your state and must meet the North Carolina naming guidelines.

How to Complete This Step:

Review North Carolina's naming guidelines

- Your name must contain one of the following: limited liability company, ltd. liability co., limited liability co., ltd. liability company, LLC, or L.L.C.
- Your name cannot include words that could confuse your LLC with a government agency (FBI, Treasury, State Department, etc.).
- You need approval to use any of the following words in your LLC's name: bank, banker, banking cooperative, co-op, mutual, trust, architect, architecture, architectural, certified public accountant (CPA), engineer, engineering, insurance, pharmacy, prescription drug, drug, prescription, Rx, apothecary, realtor, surveyor, survey, surveying, and wholesale.
- Your name must be distinguishable from any existing business in the state.

[Brainstorm business names](#)

Check if the [web domain](#) is available

Make sure the name you want isn't already taken by doing a [name search](#) on the Secretary of State website.

Your Business Name:

Your Business URL:

## Step 2: Choose a Registered Agent

A [registered agent](#) is the person or company you choose to accept official communication on behalf of your LLC.

Your registered agent must be:

- 18 years or older
- A resident of North Carolina
- Available at all times during normal business hours (i.e., 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday through Friday) at their listed physical address (no P.O. boxes)

Many businesses choose to use a [registered agent service](#) for convenience and privacy.

Registered Agent Name and Address:

### Step 3: File Your Articles of Organization

The Articles of Organization is the paperwork required to register your LLC. This document is filed with the Secretary of State either [online](#) or by [mail](#).

You will need to provide the following information:

- Name of the LLC (Step 1)
- Members and/or organizers names and addresses
- Name and address of the registered agent (Step 2)
- Principal business address

This is also a good time to decide if your LLC will be [member-managed or manager-managed](#).

A member-managed LLC structure is when the members of the LLC are involved with the management of the LLC. A manager-managed LLC is when a few assigned individuals are responsible for managing the LLC.

### Step 4: Create an Operating Agreement

An [operating agreement](#) lays out the rules and management structure of your LLC.

Your operating agreement doesn't need to be filed with the state. You'll keep it in your LLC records file and return to it as needed to clarify rules and settle disputes.

### Step 5: Get an EIN

An Employer Identification Number ([EIN](#)) is like a Social Security number for your business. EINs are free and easy to get from the IRS using [Form SS-4](#) or by filling out the [online application](#).