

Business Start-Up Checklist

The following are some of the steps you may need to take when starting a business in the state of Kansas. This is not a comprehensive list, so be sure and consult your state and local authorities to ensure compliance to all regulations.

The Kansas SBDDC at JCCC can assist you in many areas. Please view what we offer at www.jcccsbdc.com.

- Create financial and personal goals for where you want to be in one, three and five years.
- Prepare a feasibility study by doing some preliminary research: Does your business idea answer a need for a definable and reachable market? Does your business idea have a potential to meet the personal and financial needs described above?
- Prepare initial financial projections to determine if the business can be profitable and meet your expectations for cash out of the business each year.
- Choose a business name. Search for conflicts using the following tools:
 - Internet search (e.g. Google)
 - Kansas Secretary of State Business Entity Search (<https://www.kansas.gov/bess/flow/main?execution=e1s1>)
 - Trademark search at US Patent and Trademark Office (<https://www.uspto.gov/trademarks>)
- Prepare a rough draft of your written business plan, including industry and market research, marketing plan, management team, and operations plan.
- Finalize a written business plan including capital requirements and create an operations timetable.
- Determine the type of financing that best fits your situation, and then work to obtain the money you need.
- Consult an **attorney** regarding the appropriate entity structure and the legal requirements of setting up and operating your business.
- If in partnership or LLC with more than one member, put buy-sell agreement in place. Each owner should have independent legal representation in the process. Refer to “Partnership Agreement Guidelines” from Kansas SBDC office.
- Register your business entity with the Kansas Secretary of State’s office if LLC, Corporation or other legal entity. Note that S-Corp is an IRS filing designation, not a legal entity.
- Consult an **accountant** (CPA recommended) to review the financial and tax requirements of setting up and operating your business, paying and estimating your self-employment taxes, and to analyze your financial projections.
- Develop a strong relationship with a small business-friendly **banker**. Set up separate business accounts (checking, savings, and credit card) and meet with the appropriate loan officer to discuss financing needs, if required.
- Consult with **insurance agent** that specializes in serving small businesses. Obtain appropriate insurance for your business, to include business liability, workers compensation (if employees), business auto insurance (personal not valid in business use), and other as required.
- Register your business with the Kansas Department of Revenue to obtain your business tax identification number – needed for sales & use tax and other state taxes.

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- ❑ If doing business in other states, check with the secretary of state's office in each state to confirm and comply with fictitious name (dba) or foreign entity registration requirements.
- ❑ Obtain a Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS website:
<https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online>.
 - This is *required* if you will have employees but even if you won't have employees it is highly recommended for all businesses to avoid sharing of personal SSNs.
- ❑ Determine what state, county and local licenses, fees, building permits, sign permits, and other regulations that apply to your business.
- ❑ If you will have employees, explore the following requirements:
 - Payroll (I-9, W2, W4, and Withholding) – outsourcing of payroll is recommended
 - Federal and state department of labor regulations
 - State and local unemployment taxes
 - Workers compensation insurance
 - Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA)
 - Breakroom signs and posters
- ❑ Determine FDA and Kansas food safety regulations if you will manufacture, store, or serve food.
- ❑ Invite fire department to walk through building to identify risks and solutions.
- ❑ Select and register your internet domain name through an accredited registrar service. Additionally, consider registering similar domain names and redirect to avoid customer confusion.
- ❑ Set up your website. Initial website may be "brochure style", but functions such as merchandising and calls to action should be added as soon as possible.
- ❑ Set up your accounting system. Pre-packaged software for small businesses (e.g. QuickBooks, Zoho, Freshbooks, etc.) are recommended. Hint: search internet for "Top Small Business Accounting Software" for comparison.
- ❑ File for trademark protection if branding of business or product is important.
- ❑ Establish a secure IT platform for your business to avoid cyber-attacks.
- ❑ Develop your professional network.

Some Helpful Links:

Tax Guide for Small Business (IRS Publication 334): <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p334.pdf>

Kansas Secretary of State website for Business Services and Forms: sos.ks.gov

Occupational Safety & Health (OSHA) help for small businesses: <https://www.osha.gov/smallbusiness>

Great Plains OSHA Education Center: <https://www.mcckc.edu/OSHA>

- This center will help you understand standards and learn the skills you need to avoid costly fines and dangerous accidents.

Common Business Licenses/Permits in Kansas: <https://ksbiz.kansas.gov/start/obtain-licenses-and-permits/>

FDA Registration (manufacturers, processors, and storage facilities): <https://www.fda.gov/home>

Food Safety License (state of Kansas): <http://agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/food-safety-lodging/food-safety-licenses>