

# TOP 10

## Frequently Asked Questions



### 1. How do I register my business name or get an Assumed Name: Doing Business As (DBA)?

Visit the Bexar County Clerk's Office at the Bexar County Paul Elizondo Tower, next to the Courthouse to register the business name, 1st floor 101 W. Nueva, Suite 120 (Notary public onsite) or <https://bexar.org/2958/Assumed-Business-NamesDBAs> or (210) 335-2223. Copies of misplaced certificates can be obtained. You can check if the name is available with the state before submitting any paperwork at <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/corp/namefilingsfaqs.shtml>

### What does it mean to be incorporated or unincorporated?

Incorporated businesses are independent legal entities, while unincorporated businesses are simply extensions of their owners. One of the chief implications of this legal distinction is that owners of unincorporated businesses are generally personally liable for the business's liabilities, while owners of an incorporated business are generally not liable for the business's debts. Below is general information from the Texas Secretary of State web site about different types of Texas business organizations for selecting a Business Structure. Generally, businesses are created and operated in one of the following forms: <https://www.sos.state.tx.us/corp/businessstructure.shtml>

For more information on SOSDirect and general questions (512)463-5555

- **SOLE PROPRIETORSHIP:** The most common and the simplest form of business is the sole proprietorship. In a sole proprietorship, a single individual engages in a business activity without necessity of formal organization. If the business is conducted under an assumed name (a name other than the surname of the individual), then an assumed name certificate (commonly referred to as a DBA) should be filed with the office of the county clerk in the county where a business premise is maintained. If no business premise is maintained, then an assumed name certificate should be filed in all counties where business is conducted under the assumed name.

- **LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY:** A Texas limited liability company is created by filing a certificate of formation with the Texas Secretary of State. The Secretary of State provides a form that meets minimum state law requirements. Online filing of a certificate of formation is provided through SOSDirect. The limited liability company (LLC) is not a partnership or a corporation but rather is a distinct type of entity that has the powers of both a corporation and a partnership. Depending on how the LLC is structured, it may be likened to a general partnership with limited liability, or to a limited partnership

where all the owners are free to participate in management and all have limited liability, or to an "S" corporation without the ownership and tax restrictions imposed by the Internal Revenue Code. Unlike the partnership, where the key element is the individual, the essence of the limited liability company is the entity, requiring for its creation more formal requirements. 1 William D. Bagley & Phillip P. Whynott, *The Limited Liability Company*, §2.10, (2d ed. 2d rev. James Publishing, 1995).

The owners of an LLC are called "members." A member can be an individual, partnership, corporation, trust, and any other legal or commercial entity. Generally, the liability of the members is limited to their investment and they may enjoy the pass-through tax treatment afforded to partners in a partnership. As a result of federal tax classification rules, an LLC can achieve both structural flexibility and favorable tax treatment. Nevertheless, persons contemplating forming an LLC are well advised to consult competent legal counsel. A limited liability company can be managed by managers or by its members. The management structure must be stated in the certificate of formation. Management structure is a determination that is made by the LLC and its members. The Secretary of State cannot give advice about management structure.

## 2. Where do I get an Employer Identification Number (EIN)? Why do I need it for my business?

Contact the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) at [www.IRS.gov](http://www.IRS.gov) or IRS San Antonio, 8122 Datapoint Dr Suite 210, San Antonio, TX 78229, (210) 841-2090

An Employer Identification Number (EIN) is also known as a Federal Tax Identification Number, and is used to identify a business entity. Generally, businesses need an EIN. You may apply for an EIN in various ways, and now you may apply online. This is a free service offered by the Internal Revenue Service and you can get your EIN immediately.

You will need an EIN if you answer “Yes” to any of the questions for business operations on the [www.IRS.gov](http://www.IRS.gov) website or if your financial institution has requested. Most security professionals also recommend using the EIN instead of your SSN when transacting business.

## 3. Where do I get a State of Texas sales tax permit?

Complete the application if you are engaged in business in Texas and:

- Sell or lease tangible personal property in Texas; or
- Sell taxable services in Texas.

Texas State Comptroller offices are located in San Antonio or contacted at [www.window.state.tx.us](http://www.window.state.tx.us)

Field Office: 10010 San Pedro Avenue Suite 410  
San Antonio, TX 78216-3862  
(210) 342-2300 or (800) 252-5555  
Monday and Wednesday, 9 a.m to 4 p.m, Friday 8 a.m- 12 p.m

## 4. Where can I get information on permits needed for my business?

**A.** The City of San Antonio Development Services Department is a one stop shop for required contractor’s registration, permits, licenses, zoning, and certificates to operate a business in San Antonio. They are located at 1901 S. Alamo St., San Antonio, Tx 78204 and can be reached at (210) 207-1111 or online at [www.sanantonio.gov/dsd/](http://www.sanantonio.gov/dsd/)

**B.** Businesses located in unincorporated areas of Bexar County need to contact the Bexar County Public Works Department at (210) 335-6700, visit 1948 Probandt St., San Antonio, Tx 78214, or go to [www.bexar.org/1462/permits](http://www.bexar.org/1462/permits)

**C.** The San Antonio Metropolitan Health District issues permits and performs health inspections for food service, care, medical, and other industries. They can be reached online at [www.sanantonio.gov/health](http://www.sanantonio.gov/health) or by phone at (210) 207-8780

**D.** Businesses located in Bexar County municipalities and communities listed below, need to contact the appropriate offices to obtain required permits:

Alamo Heights	Helotes	Schertz‡	CDPs
Balcones Heights	Hill Country Village	Selma‡	Cross Mountain, Lackland
Castle Hills	Hollywood Park	Shavano Park	AFB, Macdona, Randolph AFB,
China Grove	Kirby	Somerset	Scenic Oaks, Timberwood Park
Cibolo‡	Leon Valley	St. Hedwig	
Converse	Live Oak	Terrell Hills	Unincorporated communities
Elmendorf‡	Lytle‡	Universal City‡	Adkins, Atascosa, Leon
Fair Oaks Ranch‡	Olmos Park	Von Ormy	Springs, Losoya, Martinez,
Grey Forest	Sandy Oaks	Windcrest	Sayers, and Wetmore

(Note: ‡This populated place also has portions in an adjacent county or counties).

## 5. Where can I get training or counseling on starting a business and or writing a business plan?

UTSA Small Business Development Center offers training and counseling on international trade and government contracting as well as a variety of other subjects. They can be contacted at <http://sasbdc.org/> or (210) 458-2460 for Advising and (210)458-2047 for Training.

**SCORE** Free Business Mentoring. Volunteers provide professional guidance and information to maximize the success of America's existing and emerging small businesses. Additional contact information can be found at <https://sanantonio.score.org/> or (210) 649-0833. Email them at [info.0164@scorevolunteer.org](mailto:info.0164@scorevolunteer.org).

## 6. Are there any grants to start a business?

No – but the SBA offers Small Business Loans through various financial institutions in and around Bexar County.

For local micro-lending institutions or start up loans please contact:

- LiftFund at <http://www.liftfund.com/> or (888) 215-2373
- Small Business Administration at [www.sba.gov/district/sanantonio](http://www.sba.gov/district/sanantonio) or (210) 403-5900
- Information about community grants and assistance for non-profits is available from the San Antonio Area Foundation at <http://www.saafdn.org/> or (210) 225-2243

## 7. How do I certify my business as HUB, SBE, MBE, AABE, HABE, ASBE, NABE, DIBE, DBE, VBE or LGBTE?

Note: Certification is not required to respond to any County Solicitation.

### LOCAL

[www.sctrca.org](http://www.sctrca.org) or (210) 227-4722

- South Central Texas Regional Certification Agency (SCTRCA)

### FEDERAL

<https://www.sba.gov/offices/district/tx/san-antonio>

- SBA 8(a), SBE, SBA, HUB Zone and Empowerment Zone

<http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/office/civil-rights/tucp.html>

- Texas Unified Certification Program is a certification process for the Federal
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Programs in Texas.

### STATE

<http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/prog/hub/>

- Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) – Central Master Bidder's List

### PRIVATE SECTOR CERTIFICATIONS

<http://smsdc.org/> or <http://www.wbea-texas.org>

- Southwest Minority Supplier Development Council (CSTMBC) & Women's
- Business Enterprise Alliance (WBEA) – Private Sector – Fortune 500
- Companies/ MOU with the state of Texas
- National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC)
- National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC)
- Southwest Minority Supplier Development Council (SMSDC)
- Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC)

## 8. How do I become a Bexar County Vendor?

Visit the Bexar County Supplier Portal at [www.bexar.org/purchasing](http://www.bexar.org/purchasing) to register as a Supplier or contact the Purchasing Department at (210) 335-2211. For more information, visit <https://www.bexar.org/616/Supplier-PortalVendor-Registration>

## 9. How do I register to do business with other agencies, school districts or the State or Federal Government?

<http://www.bexar.org/133/Opportunities>

The Opportunity Link is an initiative of the Bexar County Small Business and Entrepreneurship Department (SBED) to address business development and small, minority and women-owned business participation in public procurement opportunities.

## 10. How do I find out about pre-bid meetings, events, trainings and networking events?

[www.bexar.org/SMWBE](http://www.bexar.org/SMWBE)

**STEP 1:** On the SBED Homepage, click on the Calendar Button

**STEP 2:** Subscribe to calendar notifications by clicking on the Notify Me button, and you will automatically be alerted about the latest events in our community.

### Title VI Nondiscrimination Policy Statement

Bexar County, as a recipient of Federal financial assistance and under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, ensures that no person shall on the ground of race, religion (where the primary objective of the financial assistance is to provide employment per 42 U.S.S. § 2000d-3), color, national origin, sex, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any Department programs or activities.

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For more information, please contact the Bexar County Small Business and Entrepreneurship Department at (210) 335-2478 or [www.bexar.org/sbed](http://www.bexar.org/sbed)

*“Linking Your Business to Opportunity for Acceleration!”*