

# Florida Business Launch Compliance Workbook

This workbook is designed to assist entrepreneurs and business owners in navigating the initial steps of launching a new business in Florida. It serves as a checklist to help identify and address common legal and administrative requirements at the state and local levels.

**Disclaimer: This document is for informational and organizational purposes only and is not a substitute for professional legal or financial advice. The information provided is a general guide and does not guarantee full compliance with all federal, state, and local laws, which are subject to change and may vary based on your specific business type and location. You should consult with a licensed business attorney and a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) to ensure that your business is in full compliance with all applicable regulations. This workbook is not intended to create an attorney-client relationship.**

## Part 1: Business Structure and State Registration

Florida does not have a single statewide business operating license. Instead, the requirements for your business will depend on your industry and location.

### Checklist:

- \* Business Entity Formation: Have you chosen a business structure (e.g., Sole Proprietorship, Partnership, LLC, Corporation)?

- \* Sole Proprietorship/Partnership: If you are operating under a name other than your personal name, you must register a "fictitious name" (also known as a "Doing Business As" or "DBA") with the Florida Department of State.

- \* LLC, Corporation, etc.: You must file the appropriate formation documents (e.g., Articles of Organization for an LLC, Articles of Incorporation for a Corporation) with the Florida Department of State's Division of Corporations (Sunbiz).

- \* Action Item: File the necessary documents with the Florida Department of State.

- \* Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- \* Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN): Do you have an EIN from the IRS? An EIN is generally required if you have employees or if your business is a partnership, LLC, or corporation.

- \* Action Item: Apply for an EIN online through the IRS website.

- \* Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Florida Department of Revenue Registration: Does your business engage in activities that are subject to state taxes, such as sales and use tax, reemployment tax, or corporate income tax?

\* Action Item: Register your business with the Florida Department of Revenue. This is often a requirement for businesses that sell goods or services.

\* Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Beneficial Ownership Information (BOI) Report: Is your company required to file a BOI report with the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN)?

\* Action Item: Determine if your business is required to file a BOI report and, if so, submit it to FinCEN.

\* Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Part 2: Local Licensing and Permits**

Most counties and cities in Florida require a business to obtain a "business tax receipt" (formerly known as an occupational license) to operate within their jurisdiction. If your business is located within a city, you may need a business tax receipt from both the county and the city.

### **Checklist:**

\* County Business Tax Receipt: Have you contacted your county tax collector's office to apply for a business tax receipt?

\* Action Item: Research the specific requirements for your county and apply for the local business tax receipt.

\* Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\* City Business Tax Receipt: If your business is located within city limits, have you contacted the city's licensing or finance department to apply for a city business tax receipt?

\* Action Item: Research the specific requirements for your city and apply for the city business tax receipt.

\* Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Zoning and Land Use Permits: Is your business location in a properly zoned area for your type of business? Some cities and counties require a Certificate of Use or a Zoning Permit.

\* Action Item: Verify the zoning of your business location with the local planning and zoning department. Obtain any necessary permits.

\* Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Part 3: Industry-Specific Licenses and Permits**

Depending on the nature of your business, you may need to obtain additional licenses, certifications, or permits from state agencies.

#### **Checklist:**

\* Professional/Occupational Licenses: Does your profession require a specific license in Florida (e.g., accountants, architects, contractors, real estate brokers, healthcare professionals)?

\* Action Item: Research the requirements with the appropriate state board or agency, such as the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR).

\* Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Regulated Industries: Is your business in a heavily regulated industry, such as food service, alcohol sales, agriculture, or environmental services?

\* Action Item: Contact the relevant state agencies (e.g., Department of Health, Department of Business and Professional Regulation, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services) to determine if special licenses or inspections are required.

\* Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Health and Safety Permits: If your business handles food, chemicals, or other regulated materials, have you obtained all necessary health and safety permits and undergone inspections?

\* Action Item: Contact the local or state health department for information on required permits and inspections.

\* Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Part 4: Employee and Workplace Requirements**

If you plan to hire employees, there are additional requirements you must meet.

#### **Checklist:**

\* Reemployment Tax: Have you registered with the Florida Department of Revenue to pay reemployment tax (formerly unemployment tax)?

\* Action Item: Register for and set up your reemployment tax account with the Florida Department of Revenue.

\* Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Workers' Compensation Insurance: Does your business meet the requirements for carrying workers' compensation insurance?

\* Action Item: Research the requirements and obtain a policy if necessary.

\* Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\* New Hire Reporting: Are you aware of the requirement to report all new hires to the Florida Department of Revenue?

\* Action Item: Establish a process for reporting new hires as required by law.

\* Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Part 5: Ongoing Compliance**

Compliance is not a one-time event. There are ongoing requirements to maintain your business's legal status.

#### **Checklist:**

\* Annual Report: Do you need to file an annual report with the Florida Department of State to maintain your business entity's "active" status?

\* Action Item: Set a reminder to file your annual report each year with Sunbiz.

\* Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Business Tax Receipt Renewal: Are you aware of the annual renewal process for your city and county business tax receipts?

\* Action Item: Note the renewal dates and budget for the annual renewal fees.

\* Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Record Keeping: Do you have a system in place to keep all of your legal and tax documents organized and accessible?

\* Action Item: Create a secure and organized system for storing all business records.

\* Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_