

Business start-up checklist

Starting a small business can be very rewarding, but ensuring you cover all your bases before jumping in is critical. Here is a quick checklist to get you started.

1 Determine your company name and structure.

sole-proprietorship, incorporation, partnership

2 If incorporating, contact a lawyer and appropriate registries. If you need help, MNP can assist.

a. Obtain a business number

Alberta is one of the more recent provinces to partner with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) to provide federal business numbers for newly created corporations, non-profit organizations, and unincorporated businesses such as sole proprietorships and partnerships.

A federal business number allows access to several federal and tax programs, along with some provincial programs. There is no cost to obtain a business number.

3 Open a company bank account.

(You will need your certificate of incorporation)

4 Obtain business licenses and / or permits.

Most cities or counties require you to obtain a business license, even if you operate a home-based business. This is a license granting the company the authority to do business in that city / county.

5 Obtain business insurance.

There are many types of insurance for businesses, but they are usually packaged as "General Business Insurance" or a "Business Owner's Policy" This can cover everything from general liability to company assets.

6 If you hire employees, you will need a payroll account with CRA.

You should also investigate whether workers compensation board (WCB) coverage should be set up for yourself or your employees.

7 Register for GST

In most cases, unless your new small business's gross income is under \$30,000 for four consecutive quarters, you will have to register for the goods and services tax (GST). That threshold for the small supplier exemption doesn't apply to all businesses – taxi and limousine services, for instance, always have to register for GST / HST.

Even if you're not making much money to start, you may want to register for GST / HST immediately because of input tax credits, which allow you to claim back the GST / HST your business has paid out on purchases for business use.

8 Set up an accounting and record-keeping system.



For more information, contact your local MNP advisor.

Wherever business takes you

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