

CHECKLIST: How to Start a Business in Southern Nevada

The following is a checklist for starting a business in Las Vegas, Henderson, North Las Vegas, Boulder City, and Clark County Nevada.

Step One: Are you ready?

Visit nsbdc.org and download the Business Readiness Self- Assessment

You can also request a personal counselor or view the various workshops and business plan/ development courses available across the State by clicking their training calendar: [Business Training Calendar](#)

Another resource as a mentor/training is **Nevada Business Opportunity Fund**, in partnership with VEDC, is a federally certified community development financial institution (CDFI) that delivers a comprehensive array of business services and programs specifically targeted to help micro, small, women and minority owned businesses in low-income and disadvantaged communities to receive the tools and resources needed to successfully start or expand their business.

NWBC provides one-on-one professional consulting at no-charge to those seeking advice on start-up, expansion or stabilization strategies for their business. Our experienced consultants offer insight into areas from resources and solutions to everyday business challenges. Call today for a free appointment.

Nevada Women's Business Center

550 E. Charleston Blvd, Suite E

Las Vegas, NV 89104

T : (702) 734-3555 F : (702) 749-4396

Step 2 Get a mentor

Visit scorelv.org to request a personal mentor who will partner with you at every step, help you write a business plan and be a sounding board for you thoughts. The local chapter of **SCORE** has more than 50 volunteer Certified Mentors with many years of experience, probably including knowledge of your particular interests. Your mentor will develop a training program specific to your needs and suggest courses or workshops that you can attend for a nominal fee (free to veterans).

Part of your business plan will include finding out who and where your customers are. The **Clark County Library** lvccld.org maintains several databases to help you do the market research to obtain this information. Get a library card which will than give you free access from your own computer or at any library. Your SCORE Mentor or a librarian can assist.

Step 3. Choose your name

This is one of the most important steps and requires looking into a crystal ball. Should you choose a name that indicates you're in Nevada or would you someday expand outside the state? Should you use your own name in the business name or should you keep it generic in case you want to sell down the road? No matter which name you choose, make sure no one else has it. Check the list of names already taken with **the Nevada Secretary of State**. [Secretary of State Business Center](#)

Step 4 Decide on a business address

Your business address is one piece of information you'll need for almost all the paperwork you complete to open your business. Whether it's your home address or an actual office, it saves a lot of time and money to decide on the address from the start.

Most applications allow you to designate a separate mailing address, which is handy if you want to use a PO Box or your home address, but the actual business address will be public record, so choose wisely.

A final consideration on the business address: Your business address needs to be an actual physical location where you conduct business. A post office box, private mailbox or "virtual office" will not meet this requirement. If your business is mobile or is the type where you meet customers or clients at their location, you can probably operate from your home if you choose. If you need an office only occasionally to meet with clients, consider using the services of an office suites business where you can rent a meeting room or office by the hour, as needed.

Zoning: You will need to check zoning laws prior to picking a business location.

For information on zoning contact: **Clark County Current Planning Division** at (702) 4554314 or online at www.clarkcountynv.gov/depts/comprehensive_planning/zoning/pages/default.aspx

If you plan to operate in the City of Las Vegas contact their office at (702)229-6301

City of North Las Vegas contact them at (702) 633-1537

City of Henderson at (702) 267-1500,

Boulder City at (702) 293-9292

City of Mesquite at (702) 346-2835 ext. 3305

Step 5: Apply for your EIN number

The Employer Identification Number, issued by the **IRS**, is like your business' social security number.

Without an EIN, you would use your own social security number which puts you at risk for identity theft.

[Apply for an Employer Identification Number \(EIN\) Online](#)

Step 6. Form your entity and get your state business license.

It's best to meet with an attorney to choose the best entity for your business. Once you've made the decision, file the proper forms at the **Nevada Secretary of State's office**. [Nevada Secretary of State : Business Center](#)

You can apply for a city business license as a sole proprietor, but without a formal entity, you will be personally liable for all the business debts and if the business is ever sued, your personal assets will be at risk. Forming and maintaining an entity costs a few hundred dollars a year but the protection it provides is well worth the price.

The first set of documents you submit to the Secretary of State's office with a filing fee will be either: Articles of Organization (LLC), Articles of Incorporation (corporation) or Certificate of Limited Partnership. Once the Secretary of State has processed those documents, you'll receive a form to submit with your Initial List of Managers/Members/Officers/Partners. Send it back with another filing fee and your state business license fee of \$200. Next, you will receive your corporate charter, which means your entity is officially formed.

Your state business license will accompany your corporate charter.

The Secretary of State usually turns around an application in a few weeks, but another \$125 will expedite your paperwork so you receive the final documents within 24 hours.

IMPORTANT: You will need the corporate charter to open your business bank account. In order to proceed with the process, you will need the corporate charter. Depending on your circumstances and time frame, it may be worth the extra money.

Step 7: Register with the Nevada Department of Taxation

To apply for a city business license, you must show that you have registered your business with the **Nevada Department of Taxation**. The license you need depends on whether you're a retailer, a service provider, or if you purchase items you consume from companies that don't charge you sales tax.

Use the Taxpayer Information Packet to get started: [Taxpayer Information Packet](#)

Step 8: Apply for your local business licenses

It is wise to check on local incentives before determining where you will establish your business. Many cities have incentives and economic development corporations offer special lending opportunities for certain properties. Additionally, business license fees vary based upon the cities and counties in which one conducts business. It would be prudent to research ahead of time prior to making a decision.

www.cityofnorthlasvegas.com

www.lasvegasnevada.gov

www.cityofhenderson.com

<http://www.clarkcountynv.gov/>

Here's where things can get tricky. First off, where is your business located? The license is based on the business address and not the mailing address. If you're in the City of Henderson, you will go to their licensing bureau. The same applies to Boulder City. The City of North Las Vegas doesn't currently post business license applications online. Instead, you must request an application for your specific business through their website.

Is your business in the City of Las Vegas? Are you sure? The border between the City of Las Vegas and Clark County is nowhere near a straight line. To be sure you're applying for a license in the correct jurisdiction, enter your business address into the Jurisdiction Locator [Business License Jurisdiction Locator](#). The jurisdiction you're in will be in the "Jurisdiction" field. Don't get tripped up by looking at the "Minor Civil Division" field which usually says "Las Vegas Township." The Jurisdiction field will show you whether you need a license from the City of Las Vegas or Clark County.

If you have a mobile business that services the entire valley, you'll need a license from every jurisdiction in which you plan to do business. This process is cumbersome, time consuming, and expensive but necessary to avoid being cited for doing business without a license.

If you have a home based business, most city license applications include a Home Occupation Permit which requires you to acknowledge that you're either the homeowner or someone doing business there with the owner's permission. Because residential zoning is, well, residential, you'll have to promise that you won't create a traffic jam with people parking in front of your house and that you won't hang neon signs outside your front door. If you live in a homeowner's association, be sure to check whether your CC&Rs allow you to operate your business from home.

How much does the business license cost? It depends on the jurisdiction and the type of business it is.

Some jurisdictions are more expensive than others and some businesses have more stringent application requirements and are therefore more expensive to license.

An important note: your entity is applying for the business license, not you as an individual. Instead of listing your name as the applicant, list your entity name. It's also important to remain consistent when listing your business name. It's

tempting to leave off the LLC or the Inc when writing it hundreds of times on applications, but it's important that you don't. On ALL official documents, you must list the entire name of your business, INCLUDING the type of entity. The entity designation is part of your business name. Be sure you list the entire business name, entity and all, or risk creating confusion across agencies that is a nightmare to untangle

Step 9: Fictitious firm name

A fictitious firm name, or a DBA, is required if the name of your business differs from the name registered with the Secretary of State. For example, if your business is XYZ, LLC but the name of your company is Becky's Cooking Supplies, you'll have to file a fictitious name form with Clark County. In this case, whenever you list the name of your company on an official document like a contract, list it as "XYZ, LLC dba Becky's Cooking Supplies." [Fictitious Firm Names](#)

Step 10: Hiring Employees

When hiring employees, it is important to know the difference between an employee and an independent contractor. [Independent Contractor \(Self-Employed\) or Employee?](#)

Department of Labor/ Wage and Hour: www.dol.gov/whd

600 Las Vegas Blvd, Suite 750, Las Vegas, NV 89101

Contact: (702)388-6001

Workforce Connections' One-Stop Career Center

6330 W Charleston Blvd., Suite 190 | Las Vegas, NV 89146

(702) 636-4380 | crouse@nvcareercenter.org www.nvcareercenter.org

Worker Compensation: <http://dirweb.state.nv.us/wcs/wcs.htm>

1301 N. Green Valley Parkway, Suite 200, Henderson, NV 89074

Contact: (702)486-9080

FINANCING:

Nevada Business Opportunity Fund: www.vedc.org/nevada

Provide loans from \$50,000.00 to \$250,000.00. They also offer training and business assistance free of charge.

Contact: Leanna Jenkins

550 E. Charleston, Suite E, Las Vegas, NV 89104

Phone: (702) 734-3555 Email: ljenkins@vedc.org

Accion Nevada

Erin J. McDermott | Market Manager and Regional Lending Officer

Cell 702.250.3372 | E-Fax: 1.877.678.3655 | Main: 1.800.508.7624

www.accionnv.org Email: emcdermott@accionnv.org

Clearinghouse CDFI

Brian L. Maddox, Director of Nevada Operations

2300 W. Sahara Avenue, Suite 1100, Las Vegas, NV 89102

P: (702) 522-2283 or (949) 334-2823

www.clearinghousecdfi.com Email: Brianm@clearinghousecdfi.com

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

The Nevada PTAC Procurement Outreach Program (POP) under the **Governor's Office of Economic Development** (GOED) works with Nevada businesses to expand into the government marketplace and compete successfully for contracts with federal, state and local government agencies.

The program provides a wide range of free services for Nevada businesses across the state including workshops and webinars, individual counseling, access to bid opportunities, contract specifications and buyer matchmaker events. All of the Nevada PTAC/POP program's efforts help to "level the playing field" for Nevada businesses in the government contracting arena. We are committed to strengthening Nevada businesses, generating employment and diversifying our statewide economy.

The first step is to speak with a Procurement Specialist so that we may learn more about your business and determine next steps specific to your business and industry.

To schedule an appointment with a Procurement Specialist in our Las Vegas office, please call (702)486-2700 or email: procurement@diversifynevada.com

The Local Emerging Small Business (ESB) Program is a new certification program for Nevada small businesses interested in doing business with state and local government agencies.

Administered by the Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED), the ESB Program was created to encourage the development and growth of small businesses in Nevada. The program seeks to assist small businesses in obtaining work with state and local government agencies.

Are you a Women, Minority Owned or Small Business?

The staff at the **Women Business Enterprise Council West (WBECWest)** can assist you and your business through the certification process FREE of charge. For more details on benefits and opportunities for Women's Business Enterprise (WBE) Certification, visit www.wbecwest.org

Local contact is Anna Siefert: anna@wbec-west.org

The **Nevada Department of Transportation's** federal Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program is all about securing equal opportunity in business. <http://www.nevadadbe.com/website/dbe-program.php>

HELPFUL CONTACTS At-A-GLANCE

Business Plans & Mentoring

SCORE	(702) 388-6104	www.scorelv.org
Nevada Small Business Development Center	(702) 876-0003	www.nsbdc.org
Nevada Business Opportunity Fund	(702) 734-3555	www.vedc.org/nevada

EIN/Sales Tax/Tax Forms

Internal Revenue Service	1-800-829-1040	www.irs.gov
Nevada Department of Taxation	1-866-962-3707	www.tax.nv.gov

Business Formation/Licensing/Fictitious Name

Nevada Secretary of State	(775)684-5708	www.nvsos.gov
City of Las Vegas	(702) 229-6281	www.lasvegasnevada.gov
City of Henderson	(702)267-1730	www.cityofhenderson.com
City of Boulder City	(702)293-9244	www.bcnv.org
City of Mesquite	(702)346-2835 Ext 3305	www.mesquitenv.gov
Clark County	(702)455-0000	www.clarkcountynv.gov

Hiring Employees

U.S. Department of Labor	1-866-4-USWAGE	www.dol.gov
Workforce Connections One Stop Career Center	(702)822-4200	www.nvcareercenter.org
Worker's Compensation	(702)486-9080	http://dirweb.state.nv.us/wcs/wcs.htm

Financing

Small Business Administration	(702)388-6611	www.sba.gov
Nevada Business Opportunity Fund	(702)734-3555	www.vedc.org/nevada

Government Contracts

Governor's Office of Economic Development	1-800-336-1600	www.diversitynevada.com
---	----------------	--

Workshops for Small Business Owners

Nevada Small Business Development Center	(702)876-0003	www.nsbdc.org
SCORE	(702)388-6104	www.scorelv.org
West Charleston Library	(702)507-3940	www.lvccld.org

Women and Minority Business Assistance

Women's Business Enterprise Council-West		www.wbec-west.com
McCarran Airport-Disadvantaged Business Enterprise	(702)261-3443	www.mccarran.com/DoingBusiness/
Business Development Advisory Council (BDAC)	(702) 455-2897	www.clarkcountynv.gov
Nevada Department of Transportation	(775) 888-7497	www.nevadadbe.com/website/index.php