

ENTREPRENEUR & START-UP BUSINESS SOFT LANDING

Step 1: Business Orientation

The City of Socorro offers an Entrepreneur Orientation online or live. The free orientation will serve as an introduction to resources available to business owners and new startups. It is meant to introduce components of a business plan and various aspects of business development. The orientation benefits a start-up that begins to outline its business goals, whether it's starting a new business or looking to expand.

Coaching Services – To be scheduled on a need basis

- One-on-one, No-cost, and Confidential
- Business Plan Review & Development Assistance
- Marketing Plan Review & Development Assistance
- Business Management Technical Assistance

Who Qualifies?

- For-profit businesses and start-up businesses located in the City of Socorro.

Step 2: Determining Your Business Structure

Legal Structure

This step is important because financial and legal implications vary depending on the legal structure. Once you settle on a legal structure, properly record the business name with the state and/or county.

In the State of Texas, there are several legal options for setting up your business structure. Given the legal implications when choosing your business structure, new business owners should always seek the guidance of a professional tax consultant, accountant, and/or attorney to verify all legal requirements are met before choosing a business structure. The [El Paso Bar Association, Lawyer Referral Service](#), provides resources for entrepreneurs seeking legal advice.

Legal Business Structures in the State of Texas:

- Sole Proprietorship
- General Partnership
- Limited Partnership
- Registered Limited Liability Partnership
- Limited Liability Company
- Corporation

File Paperwork

Once your research is complete and has consulted with a legal professional, the following information will guide you to the appropriate local or state agency to file the required paperwork for the business structure you have selected.

- **Sole Proprietorship** - Assumed Name, Doing Business As (DBA) - In El Paso, you would file your paperwork for your Assumed Name, Doing Business As (DBA) at the El Paso County Clerk's Office. A DBA ensures the business name you plan to use is not being used by someone else in El Paso County. The Assumed Name is good for 10 years unless changes are made. [Complete the Assumed Name Records Certificate of Ownership for Unincorporated Business or Profession Form.](#)
Please consult the [El Paso County Clerk's Office](#) as prices and procedures are subject to change without notice.
- **Partnerships, Limited Liability Companies, and Corporation** - In the State of Texas, all partnerships, limited liability companies, and corporations are all filed through the Texas [Secretary of State Office](#) . Please review their website for information regarding these types of business filings.

Step 3: Federal, State, City of Socorro, and Employment Tax Responsibilities

An equally important step in the development of a business is to determine and comply with the various overlapping tax responsibilities of the new business. The following information will help guide you to the appropriate Federal, State, and City of Socorro agencies that administer business taxes.

Federal Tax

The [Internal Revenue Service \(IRS\)](#) governs all things related to tax collection at the federal level. In addition, the IRS provides a wealth of business tax-related information for small business owners. Simply click on the above link and you will soon be on your way to understanding your business federal tax responsibilities. The local IRS Tax Payer Assistance Center provides walk-in face-to-face assistance.

State Tax

The [Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts](#) is responsible for administering and collecting state and local sales tax for businesses operating in the State of Texas. The above link provides an informative guide that will educate you on what, when, where, why, and how of sales and franchise taxes.

Local Tax

Locally, business taxes apply to entrepreneurs who own tangible property and use their property to produce income. The [El Paso County Appraisal District \(EPCAD\)](#) handles the property tax administration for the City of Socorro and all local governments in El Paso County.

Businesses require registering with the **City of Socorro**. The [Permits and Applications](#) link provides further information on business registration requirements and applications.

Employment Tax

[Internal Revenue Service](#) - Provides specific information regarding your federal employment tax responsibilities.

[Texas Workforce Commission](#) - Provides specific information regarding your state and local employment tax responsibilities.

Step 4: Business Licenses and Permits by Business Type

According to [Texas Wide Open for Business](#), the State of Texas does not require a general "business" license; however, several regulatory agencies have to license and permit requirements based on the type of service or products associated with your business. Those business occupations that are regulated by the state, should check the state occupational licensing and permitting requirements, please visit the [Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation](#) (TDLR), specifically the TDLR Licensed Programs tab, for more information.

Step 5: Business Employer Requirements

[Texas Wide Open for Business](#) section on employer requirements is a one-stop-shop for small business owners. The information provided will help entrepreneurs understand and comply with federal and state employer requirements. There are several labor, safety, and reporting laws relating to the employment of personnel, thus it is vitally important for small business owners to increase their knowledge and ensure they comply. Additionally, the Texas Workforce Commission publishes a great resource for employers. [The Especially for Texas Employers](#) is a step-by-step guide that walks employers and employees thru every aspect of Texas employment law.

Small Businesses Health Insurance

As a small business or entrepreneur, offering health insurance to employees is optional. If you need help looking for the type of health insurance for your business, you may visit the [Texas Department of Insurance](#) for guidance.

Workers Compensation

Workers' compensation is a state-regulated insurance system that provides covered employees with income and medical benefits if they are injured on the job or have a work-related injury or illness. Except in cases of gross negligence, workers' compensation insurance limits an employer's liability if an employee brings suit against the employer for damages. In Texas, private employers can choose whether or not to carry workers' compensation insurance coverage. [Visit Texas Department of Insurance](#)

[Small Business Resources](#)

The [Small Business Resources](#) section provides a comprehensive directory of non-profit agencies, local, state, and federal governments.

Certifications:

- **Small Business Certifications (DBE/SBE)** - Various small business certifications may be available to a small business. New businesses are encouraged to review the [Texas Department of Transportation Partnership programs](#) that allow a small business to obtain one of these certifications. These certifications are intended to promote and encourage disadvantaged

business enterprises (DBEs) and small business enterprises (SBEs) to participate in business opportunities to compete for work on local and state contracts, and to encourage contractors to provide subcontracting opportunities to certified DBEs and SBEs by soliciting such firms for subcontracting opportunities.

- **State of Texas Historically Underutilized Business (HUB)** - You may also be eligible for the [State of Texas Historically Underutilized Business \(HUB\) certification](#) if proof of citizenship or naturalization and a Federal Tax Identification Number is provided. Please note: Do

DISCLAIMER: New businesses and entrepreneurs should consult a professional tax consultant and/or attorney to verify your new business meets all legal requirements for operating a business