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## **Beginning a Business in the State of Montana**

1. Select a business structure, here is a link explaining the options for structuring your business:  
<https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/launch-your-business/choose-business-structure>
  
2. Register your business with the Montana Secretary of State here: <https://sosmt.gov/business/>
  - a. When you're completing this registration, list yourself as the registered agent for your business
  - b. Select member managed if you are the individual responsible for making decisions for the LLC. Select manager managed LLC if you've handed over control of the LLC to an attorney
  - c. Incomplete LLC registrations are erased every night, try to finish your registration on the same day that you begin it.
  - d. Cost: \$70 for 12-month registration
  
3. As soon as you receive confirmation that your LLC registration is complete, apply for an employer identification number here: <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-onlin>
  - a. When you have an EIN, we recommend opening a business bank account so that you can begin differentiating your business expenses from your personal expenses. This will make tax time easier for you.
  - b. Once your business bank account is set up, you can set up an owners draw, this is one way you can pay yourself through an LLC
  - c. There is no cost to get an EIN
  
4. Business operating within the city limits of Missoula will need to apply for a business license online here: <https://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/129/Business-Licensing>
  - a. General business licenses are renewed on an annual basis, expiring on May 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. The city of Missoula sends out an email at the beginning of April encouraging business to renew licenses online and then send paper invoices at the beginning of May. Paper invoices are mailed so that business owners have the option to pay by check. We highly encourage online renewal.
  - b. If you have questions about what type of business license you need here is the business licensing department contact info below:
    - i. 406 552 6121 Mon-Fri 8am to 2pm
    - ii. [blic@ci.missoula.mt.us](mailto:blic@ci.missoula.mt.us)
  
5. Most businesses need insurance, read more about the options for business insurance here:  
<https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/launch-your-business/get-business-insurance>

If you have questions as you work through these steps please email or call me directly on my cell 207 650 7011. I'd love to stay updated on your progress! If you'd like to schedule an additional follow up appointment with me here is a link to my schedule: <https://missoulasbdc.youcanbook.me/>.



Thank you for reaching out to the Missoula SBDC!

## Additional Resources for Clients

Look into using your LLC to help you obtain better financing on big purchases such as a vehicle, even a home. It's more legwork to make a big purchase through your LLC but you may qualify for better financing rates.

LLC University is a great link to share with clients: <https://www.llcuniversity.com/montana-llc/>

Anytime I speak with a potential business owner who may have a business partner I make sure to speak about partnership agreements and exit agreements and offer to refer the client to Jenn at Sova Partners

Refer Bitterroot clients to Julie Foster at Ravalli County Economic Development Authority. Julie's contact info:

- [\(406\) 375-9416](tel:4063759416)
- [Info@rceda.org](mailto:Info@rceda.org)

The Missoula Job Service provides MT minimum wage posters at no cost:

- 406 728 7060
- [missoulajsc@mt.gov](mailto:missoulajsc@mt.gov)

Manufacturing clients can be referred to Steven Dybdal at MMEC:

- <https://www.montana.edu/mmec/>
- [steven.dybdal@montana.edu](mailto:steven.dybdal@montana.edu)

ONET is a great resource for employers who are working towards the goal of hiring their first employee:  
<https://www.onetonline.org/>

The Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) program is a grant funding resource, helping to off-set a portion of skills-based training costs for incumbent (existing) workers employed by Montana's small business. Incumbent Worker Training Program: <https://wsd.dli.mt.gov/employers/incumbent-worker-training-program/>

Also, there may be support for paying for some of these startup costs but I need to double check this referral:  
Contact: Crystal Buck, office at the Missoula Job Service building at 539 S 3rd Street West.

- Request: SNAP Employment Training Referral (Even though you would be working for yourself, this program has some support for people launching businesses as well.)
- How:
  - Call 1-888-706-1535, OR
  - Go to SNAP field office at 2677 Palmer St Ste 100, Missoula MT & request the referral in person. (Crystal thinks it's faster to go to the field office - this was Pre-Covid advice)
- Either way, SNAP sends the referral to Crystal & adds you to the next available program orientation that takes place on Mondays & Wednesdays.