

# Business Startup Tips for *Safe at Home* Participants

The secretary of state's **Business Outreach Office** is an excellent resource for individuals starting a business. Visit their website to find steps to starting a business, links to helpful organizations and government agencies as well as a startup guide and answers to frequently asked questions.

The Business Outreach Office recommends beginning the process by consulting with professionals such as accountants, attorneys, financial advisers or other experts for advice regarding your small business.

## **Additional Resources**

**Missouri Sourcelink** offers information and guidance on every aspect of owning a business, from filing forms to hiring employees.

**SCORE** is also a notable resource that offers educational resources such as workshops, mentoring, and business plans to business owners at no cost.

Address Confidentiality Program



Denny Hoskins • Secretary of State

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Starting a business is always challenging. However, navigating the startup process while protecting your confidential address as a *Safe at Home* participant can be particularly daunting. In response to the questions we've received from participants about this process, we've collected a few resources and tips to guide you through the process.

When starting a business in the state of Missouri, you must register with several agencies on the federal, state and local level to operate legally. *Safe at Home* participants are allowed to use their substitute address in place of their business and home address on forms that do not typically allow a post office box address. Registering a business through the secretary of state's office requires a specific procedure to ensure your address stays safe. This guide will offer:

- tips for navigating the business startup process as a *Safe at Home* participant
- instructions for filing necessary forms with the secretary of state's office
- appropriate data you should provide if you wish to keep your address from becoming public record

A comprehensive guide to all official business filings can be found on the [Business Outreach Office](#) page of the secretary of state's website. For information about additional business requirements at the local, state or federal level, review the Business Services [Steps for Starting a Business](#) guide.

## A Look at Missouri Businesses

508,000

total businesses in Missouri

133,000

business are owned by women

44,000

businesses are owned by minorities

## How to Get Started

- 1) [Check the availability of your business name](#) using the online business services system. No address is required for this step.
- 2) Register your business as a Limited Liability Company, Corporation, Partnership, etc. For purposes of this example we will use an LLC.
  - Go to Business Services website and print form [LLC-1](#) (Articles of Organization)
  - Using a post office box in the Business Services' online registry will automatically reject your filing. **To file your documents using your substitute address, you must print and complete the forms on paper** and send them to the *Safe at Home* program office for forwarding to Business Services. You may also file the forms in person at one of the Business Services offices listed below.
  - When submitting this form, you must also **submit a copy of your authorization card** and use it as a cover page with the documents.
  - You must submit payment with your form, but **you will be charged the lower filing fee, as if you were filing online.**
  - You will designate your registered agent on this form. The **registered agent must have a physical address**, but you do not have to be your own registered agent. The registered agent may be anyone, but most suggest that he or she be an attorney as this person is responsible for receiving legal documents on behalf of you and your company. Missouri SourceLink provides a [listing of service companies](#) that may act as a registered agent for a new business formation.
  - You may use your registered agent's address or your *Safe at Home* address in place of your business's physical address if you have an at-home business.
- 3) Consider [Fictitious Name Registration](#) if the business will operate under a name other than your own or the exact name of the entity. Complete the [Corp. 56](#) form (Registration of Fictitious Name). You may use your *Safe at Home* address on this form.

## Important Reminders

- You may use your *Safe at Home* substitute address with any state or local government agency. If one of these agencies asks for your confidential address, refer them to the *Safe at Home* office before you disclose your address. **If you voluntarily provide your confidential address on any public documents, it will be accessible by anyone.** Federal agencies are not required to accept your substitute address, but you can still ask them to do so.
- You may not use *Safe at Home* to receive packages, invoices, payments or other billing documents. If you will receive documents or packages on a regular basis, you will need to set up a personal post office box for these items. Your *Safe at Home* substitute address can be used to receive business renewal information if you are operating your business out of your home.

### Secretary of State Business Services Office Locations

James C. Kirkpatrick State Information Center  
600 W. Main St.  
Jefferson City, MO 65101  
(866) 223-6535

Kansas City State Office Building  
615 E. 13th St., Room 513  
Kansas City, MO 64106  
(816) 889-2925

Springfield State Office Building  
149 Park Central Sq., Room 624  
Springfield, MO 65806  
(417) 895-6330

U.S. Customs and Old Post Office Building  
815 Olive St., Suite 150  
St. Louis, MO 63101  
(314) 340-7490