

Business Launch Checklist

Business Planning:

- Clarify unique value proposition and initial sales channels
- Conduct competitor analysis
 - Identify potential competitors and explore their offerings, marketing techniques, and branding
- Identify target customer and conduct initial customer testing
- Develop initial financial projections

Entity Formation

- Choose business name
- Consider forming a legal entity for liability protection
 - Join us for one of our free legal clinics to speak with a corporate attorney
- OR Choose not to form entity and remain as a Sole Proprietor or General Partnership
 - Operating as a sole proprietor or general partnership will mean your personal assets will be at risk for business liability.
- Apply for an EIN with the IRS
 - <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online>

License and Permits:

- Identify and acquire licenses and permits required for your business

Marketing + Branding:

- Develop initial visual branding, including logo, fonts, and colors.
- Create an initial website.
 - Before you're officially open, create a "coming soon" page with your branding, contact information, and a way to sign up for your mailing list.
- Secure social media platforms and introduce your business concept through initial posts.
- Create concept deck for partners and investors
 - Share your business' unique value proposition, mission, team, basic business plan, and contact information

If you decided to form an entity, note the **Corporate Transparency Act** (more detail [here](#))

Risk Mitigation as a **Sole Proprietor**

- Speak with a broker and get appropriate insurance policy
- Develop form and template contracts for your business
- Set your business up for success with clear easy to use bookkeeping
- Use an EIN instead of your Social Security Number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number to protect your privacy (you can only get one EIN per person)

Business Insurance:

Talk to an insurance broker about the best ways to protect your business:

- General Liability Insurance
- Cyber Liability Insurance (if your business collects personal information online)
- Product Liability Insurance
- Professional Insurance for professional services
- Auto Insurance
- Commercial Insurance

Financial:

Conduct an initial financial analysis for your business

- Lay out potential expenses and revenue for sample months of business operations.
- Map out your pro-forma until your break even point (when business revenue equals business expenses)
- Determine how much start-up capital you will need to launch, and fund the business until break even.

- Acquire start-up capital
- Open a business bank account

Lease:

- Make sure space is zoned for your business operations (permitted use)
- Make sure you have a written lease
- Join us for one of our free legal clinics to speak with a real estate attorney about your real estate needs.

Intellectual Property

- Run a trademark search through USPTO to make sure you are not in violation of someone else's trademark.
- Join us for one of our free legal clinics to speak with an intellectual property attorney about your IP needs.

Explore Funding Options from **Non-profit Lenders:**

- Ascendus
- Boston Impact Initiative
- LEAF
- Community Development Corporations

Sign up for our free legal clinics:

www.bit.ly/bplclinic

Find out about our upcoming workshops or get legal representation:

www.linktree.com/bizgrow

Get in touch:

bizgrow@lawyersforcivilrights.org