Georgia Startup Checklist

Five steps to start, register, and license your business. Check each box as you finish it.

Business name	Owner	Started (date)

1. Register your business with the Georgia Secretary of State

- [ ] Choose a structure: sole proprietor, LLC, corporation, or partnership. Ask an advisor if you are unsure.
  Sole proprietors and general partnerships do not file with the state, but may still register a trade name in the county.
- [ ] Search that your business name is available (Georgia Corporations Division business search).
- [ ] Pick a registered agent with a Georgia street address.
- [ ] File your Articles of Organization (LLC) or Articles of Incorporation (corporation) online at sos.ga.gov.
- [ ] Calendar your Annual Registration, due every year.

2. Get your federal tax ID

- [ ] Apply for a free EIN at irs.gov/ein (never pay a third party for this).
  Needed to open a business bank account, hire, and file taxes for most structures.
- [ ] Save the EIN confirmation letter in your records.

3. Get your local business license

- [ ] Contact the City of Carrollton (or the city or county where you operate) about a business license or occupation tax certificate.
- [ ] Check zoning, especially for a home-based business or a storefront.
- [ ] Ask whether your type of business needs a local permit, inspection, or sign permit.

4. Register for state taxes and employer accounts

- [ ] Create your account in the Georgia Tax Center (gtc.dor.ga.gov).
- [ ] Register for sales and use tax if you sell taxable goods or services.
- [ ] Register for withholding tax if you will have employees.
- [ ] If you hire: set up your Georgia Department of Labor employer account (unemployment insurance).
- [ ] Ask whether workers' compensation insurance is required for your team size.

Georgia Startup Checklist (continued)

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5. Licenses, insurance, money, and records

- [ ] Check whether your trade needs a state professional license (Georgia Secretary of State professional licensing).
- [ ] Food, beauty, child care, and health businesses: ask about health, safety, or inspection permits.
- [ ] Get business insurance that fits your risks (general liability at minimum; ask an agent).
- [ ] Open a separate business bank account.
- [ ] Set up your bookkeeping: use the Income and Expense Log or the bookkeeping workbook.
- [ ] Write your plan and your launch budget with the Business Plan Builder and Startup Cost Calculator.

Where to get help (free)

Georgia Secretary of State: sos.ga.gov | IRS EIN: irs.gov/ein | Georgia Tax Center: gtc.dor.ga.gov

Georgia Department of Labor: dol.georgia.gov | Small Business Administration: sba.gov | Georgia SBDC: georgiasbdc.org

Book a free 20-minute consult with CWOW Business Solutions: cwowcarrollton.org/business.html

Fees, forms, and rules change. Confirm each step on the official website before you file. This checklist is general information, not legal, tax, or financial advice.