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## DBA Guide

How to File Your Fictitious Business Name

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MyCorporation®

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# Introduction

Chances are you already know that “DBA” stands for “Doing Business As.” But many of you still have questions about why you need a DBA and what the process entails, so we’ve developed a convenient guide to answer your questions.

Print out this guide and read it at a time that’s convenient. When you’re ready – let our document experts handle the DBA filing requirements so that you can stick to business!



# Advantages

DBA stands for "doing business as" and is an official registration of your business name.

With a DBA you can:

- Open a bank account under the name for business and financial purposes
- Market and advertise to increase visibility of your business
- Create a professional business identity for your customers and vendors

Note:

DBAs are also known as

- Fictitious Names
- Fictitious Business Names
- Assumed Names
- Trade Names

# The Basics

## Requirements

In most states, DBA registration is necessary if your company conducts any business under a name other than your own name.

"Conducting business" can include marketing, advertising, letterhead, business cards, etc., in addition to actual business transactions.

DBAs are not just for sole proprietors. If you are a corporation or LLC and want to do business under a name different than your corporate name, you are also required to file for a DBA.

## Examples

If your name were Jane Brown and the name of your business was Donuts Unlimited, you would register your business as Jane Brown, doing business as Donuts Unlimited.

If you were a corporation named ABC, Inc., and you conducted business under the name Express Cabinets, you would register your business name as ABC, Inc., doing business as Express Cabinets.



Note:

Many banks ask for a certified copy of your DBA before opening a business banking account.

## Restrictions

A DBA can be almost any name under which you are doing business.

You cannot, however, make your DBA a corporate name such as XYZ, Inc. if you do not have a corporate name that is XYZ, Inc.

In other words, when filing a DBA you cannot add "Inc." or "Corp." to your name to create the impression that your business is a corporation when, in fact, it is not.

## Where to File

DBAs are usually filed at the state level and sometimes at the county level as well. You should file your DBA in the state and/or county in which you are conducting business under the name.

In addition, certain jurisdictions require publication of your DBA. If you don't know your jurisdiction's requirements, you've come to the right place by visiting MyCorporation - it's what we do.



Note:

Certain jurisdictions require the publication of your DBA in a local newspaper.

# Additional Questions

## **When should I file a DBA?**

In most jurisdictions, it is best to file your DBA prior to beginning any use of the name. In some cases, a DBA filing is required within a specific period of time once you begin to use the name (usually within 30-60 days).

## **How long does it take to file a DBA?**

Depending on the jurisdiction, most DBA filings take 1-4 weeks with some exceptions.

## **Is filing a DBA the same thing as filing for a Trademark?**

No. Filing a DBA does not grant exclusivity for use of a name. In many jurisdictions, more than one applicant can file the exact same DBA.

The only way to legally ensure exclusive rights to the use of a name is to register a trademark.

## **I have a corporation - should I file a DBA?**

If you have a division or unit that is conducting business under a name other than your corporation or LLC, then you should probably file a DBA.

For example, a bank whose true name is "ABC Bank, Inc." might market their mortgage services on a web site called "abcmortgages.com." In this case they would most likely file a DBA for "abcmortgages.com" in all jurisdictions in which the name is used.



## **Do I need a Federal Tax ID Number (EIN) for a DBA?**

Yes, our order form requires that you submit your EIN.

Legally, you are required to identify your business with one of two numbers: either your Social Security Number or an EIN (Employer Identification Number or Federal Tax ID Number).

If you are a sole proprietor, your Social Security Number can be used on all of your government forms and other official documents, but most small business advisors recommend that you apply for an EIN and use that number instead.

If you are a corporation, LLC or other state-level entity, you must obtain an EIN because your business is an entirely separate legal entity.

# It's fast, easy and affordable. to file a DBA with MyCorporation...

1. Fill out and submit the simple DBA/Fictitious Name Filing order form on our web site.
2. We check your information and complete all the official forms you need, and deliver these to you by express mail.
3. Sign all the documents and return them in the express mail envelope provided.
4. Upon receipt, we file your DBA with the required government agencies, check status and even publish it where required.
5. You'll receive the approval and publication certificate for your records, typically within 1 to 4 weeks of your initial order (providing signatures are received in a timely manner and there are no delays in your state).

That's it! We handle all the paperwork and hassles.

Note: MyCorporation is a Document Filing Service and CANNOT provide you with legal or financial advice. All the information in this brochure is provided for general information purposes only and are not intended to constitute legal, accounting or tax advice or opinions on any specific matters. Consult with your own legal or financial advisor for guidance regarding your specific circumstances.

MyCorporation helps businesses file DBAs in all 50 states.

We know how to file the paperwork, where to file the paperwork, and any special requirements that your jurisdiction may have.

We do your complete DBA filing so that you can focus on your business. The place you want to be...



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