

# Frequently Asked Questions About Registering a Business

## **DO I NEED TO REGISTER MY BUSINESS?**

- If you choose to carry on a business under a name other than your own personal name and are engaged in business for trading, manufacturing or mining purposes, you must register with the Corporate Registry within three months of your business start date.
- If a business owner establishes a business in his/her own name, without adding any other words (ie "and sons/daughters" or "and associates"), it is not necessary to register the business.
- Unless the structure of your company is very simple and straightforward, you are advised to employ the services of a lawyer and an accountant.

You can register your business at any Government Agents Office.

You can also register your business online or obtain more information through the OneStop Business Registration Website @ [www.onestopbc.ca/](http://www.onestopbc.ca/)

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## **DO I NEED TO REGISTER FOR A SOCIAL SERVICE TAX ACCOUNT (PST)?**

Many businesses operating in the Province of British Columbia must apply to the Consumer Taxation Branch for registration as a vendor under the Social Service Tax Act before commencing business. You are required to register as a vendor with the Consumer Taxation Branch if you engage in any of the following business activities:

1. Regularly make taxable sale of goods or lease taxable goods as a lessor.
2. Provide legal services in British Columbia.
3. Sell taxable parking within the Vancouver Regional Transit Service Area.

4. Provide taxable services. A taxable service is any service provided to install, assemble, dismantle, repair, adjust, restore, recondition, refinish or maintain tangible property.
5. Sell a telecommunication service.
6. Sell propane.
7. Act as a liquidator, receiver, receiver-manager or trustee and dispose of assets in the course of your business.

Persons who do not make regular taxable sales or leases do not need to register as vendors. These include:

1. Businesses selling only non-taxable goods such as fresh fruit and vegetable stands or services that are not taxable. If the business plans to add any taxable goods to its resale inventory, or provide any taxable services, it must first register as a vendor.
2. Persons who are not in business but who occasionally dispose of personal goods through garage sales, flea markets or fund-raising sales. In such cases however, tax should be collected and remitted to the Consumer Taxation Branch on all sales.
3. Wholesalers who do not make retail sales.
4. Contractors exclusively involved in the construction or improvement of real property.

For more information on PST phone: (250) 356-0636 or [www.rev.gov.bc.ca/ctb](http://www.rev.gov.bc.ca/ctb)

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## **ARE WORKERS COMPENSATION BOARD (WCB) FORMS MANDATORY?**

Virtually all employers in BC are required to register with WCB before commencement of business. However, the Personal Option Protection Application is optional for individuals not automatically covered by WCB (partners of business, proprietor, spouse of proprietor or partner, if there's an employment relationship).

For more information on WCB phone: 1-800-661-2112 or visit the Workers' Compensation Board website at [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com)

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## **DO I NEED TO REGISTER FOR A GOODS AND SERVICES TAX ACCOUNT (GST)?**

You must register and charge for a GST/HST account if:

1. You sell or provide taxable goods or services in your commercial activities in Canada.
2. Your total taxable world-wide revenues (including those of your associates) were more than \$30,000 in the immediately preceding four (4) consecutive calendar quarters or exceed \$30,000 in a single calendar quarter.
3. You are a non-resident who solicits orders in Canada for prescribed goods to be sent by mail or courier and whose world-wide taxable sales are more than \$30,000.
4. You operate a taxi or limousine.
5. You are a non-resident and you charge admission directly to audiences at activities or events in Canada.

Although you do not have to register for GST/HST if your taxable world-wide revenues do not exceed \$30,000, you can register voluntarily.

As a GST/HST registrant, you may be able to claim back the GST/HST you pay or owe on goods and services. Contact Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) for further information on how to apply for a "input tax credit".

For more information on GST phone: 1-800-959-5525 or visit the Government of Canada website @ [www.ccra-adrc.gc.ca](http://www.ccra-adrc.gc.ca)

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## **DO I NEED A PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS ACCOUNT?**

You must apply for a payroll deductions account if:

1. You pay salaries, wages (including advances), bonuses, vacation pay or tips to the people working for you, or
2. You provide benefits such as lodging or room and board to the people who are working for you.

For more information on payroll contact Revenue Canada Taxation  
@ 1-800-663-5062

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### **DO I NEED AN IMPORTING/EXPORTING ACCOUNT?**

If your business will be importing commercial shipments from a foreign country or exporting commercial goods to other countries, you should register for an import/export account.

For more information visit the Government of Canada website  
@ [www.ccra-adrc.gc.ca](http://www.ccra-adrc.gc.ca)

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### **DO I NEED A CORPORATE INCOME TAX ACCOUNT?**

If your business is federally or provincially incorporated, or if you are a non-resident corporation operating in Canada, you have to file a corporate income tax return.

For more information visit the Government of Canada website  
@ [www.ccra-adrc.gc.ca](http://www.ccra-adrc.gc.ca)

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### **DO I NEED A BUSINESS LICENCE?**

- Municipalities normally require the licencing of business premises. Business licences are available from the municipal office. Fees and types of licences are determined by municipal by-laws and vary from one municipality to another. At present, business licences are not required in non-municipal areas of the Province.
- In some isolated cases, you may also be required to contact municipalities in which you conduct business but do not maintain premises. If you are involved in direct sales to the end consumer, you must contact each community in which you are selling to determine whether or not a business licence is required.
- In addition to business licences, municipalities administer the licencing of commercial vehicles.