



# Trade Name Registration

## What is a trade name?

A trade name is any name used in the course of business that does not include the full legal name of **all** the owners of the business.

In the case of a limited partnership or a corporation, it is any name that differs in **any** respect from the name registered with the Secretary of State (see example on the reverse side).

If you are using your personal name in your business name, please see the examples on the reverse side to determine if you need to register.

## What is the purpose of trade name registration?

The trade name registration provides a record of all owners of a business. This information is provided to the public if requested. Registering your trade name does not protect the name from use by others.

Information on trade names can be found in RCW 19.80.010.

## Why should I register my trade name?

Registration is required per RCW 19.80.10.

## How do I register my trade name?

Trade names are registered using the Business License Application. Simply list each name you want to register in the Fees section on page one. There is a \$5 fee for each name you register.

## How do I determine if a business name is available?

Search the Department of Revenue for firm names and trade names:

- Online with the Business Licensing Service at: <http://bls.dor.wa.gov/LicenseSearch/>
- By mail- Send us a letter with your return address and a list of the names you want to research.

Send your letter to:

State of Washington  
Business Licensing Service  
PO Box 9034  
Olympia, WA 98507-9034

- By phone at 1-800-451-7985

**Note:** If the search result is "No matches were found for your search," it doesn't guarantee that the name is not being used, only that it has not been registered.

Search the Office of the Secretary of State's Trademark Division for corporation names, trademarks and servicemarks that are registered in this state. Contact their office at (360) 725-0377.

Search the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office for federally reserved names at 1-800-786-9199 or at: [www.uspto.gov/](http://www.uspto.gov/)

Search the Washington Department of Revenue for business records at: [www.dor.wa.gov](http://www.dor.wa.gov)

Search the Washington Labor and Industries for Building Contractor names at: [www.lni.wa.gov](http://www.lni.wa.gov)

## What do I do if I'm no longer using a trade name?

You can cancel a trade name by sending a letter requesting the cancellation to the address or fax number below.

There is no charge for canceling a trade name.

State of Washington  
Business Licensing Service  
PO Box 47475  
Olympia WA 98504-7475  
Fax (360) 705-6699

## Trade Name Examples

### Corporations/limited liability companies/limited partnerships

Name registered with Sec. of State	Possible business names	
	Do not need to register	Do need to register
Ginger's Sweets Emporium, Inc.	Ginger's Sweets Emporium, Inc.	Ginger's Sweets Emporium Ginger's Sweets Ginger's Emporium Ginger's Sweets Emporium

### Sole proprietor using personal name

Full legal name	Possible business names	
	Do not need to register	Do need to register
John J. Jones	John J. Jones John J. Jones CPA John J. Jones Construction John J. Jones Enterprises	John Jones                  Johnny's Johnny Jones              J.J.'s J.J. Jones                  Johnny Jones & Company Jones                          John J. Jones & Associates John's
Johnny Jones	Johnny Jones Johnny Jones CPA Johnny Jones Construction Johnny Jones Enterprises	John Jones                  Johnny's John J. Jones              J.J.'s J.J. Jones                  Johnny Jones & Company Jones'                        Johnny Jones & Associates John's
J.J. Jones	J. J. Jones J. J. Jones, CPA J. J. Jones Construction J. J. Jones Enterprises	John Jones                  Johnny's John J. Jones              J.J.'s Johnny Jones              J.J. Jones & Company Jones'                        J.J. Jones & Associates John's

### Partners using personal names

Full legal name	Possible business names	
	Do not need to register	Do need to register
Michael Smith & John Jones	Michael Smith & John Jones Michael Smith & John Jones, CPAs Michael Smith & John Jones Construction Michael Smith & John Jones Enterprises	Mike Smith & John Jones M. Smith & J. Jones Smith & Jones Michael & John M & J S & J Michael Smith , John Jones & Company Michael Smith, John Jones & Associates