

# TRADE NAME CERTIFICATE

&

# INSTRUCTIONS



# THINGS TO KNOW

## **To Register Your Fictitious or "Doing Business As" (DBA) Name**

A fictitious name or "Doing Business As" (DBA) name is a business name that is different from your personal name, the names of your partners or the officially registered name of your LLC or corporation. DBA names can also be called trade names or assumed names.

For example: John Smith sets up a painting business and chooses to name it "John Smith Painting." Because "John Smith Painting" is considered a DBA (assumed) name, John will need to register it as a fictitious business name with a government agency.

This process is known as registering your "Doing Business As" (DBA) name.

A DBA is needed in the following scenarios:

1. **Sole Proprietors or Partnerships** – If you wish to start a business under any name other than your real one, you'll need to register a DBA name so that you can do business under the DBA name.
2. **Existing Corporations or LLCs** – If your business is already incorporated and you want to do business under a different name, you will need to register a DBA.

## **How to Register your "Doing Business As" Name**

Depending on where your business is located, you'll need to register your DBA name through either your Town Clerk's Office and/or your state government.

## **In Connecticut...**

Any person doing business in Connecticut under any name other than their own *must register a trade name in the town where their business is conducted*. They can also register their trade name with the Connecticut Secretary of State as a corporation.

It is important that new business owners put thought into choosing a business name. Most importantly, the name a business owner chooses should be unique; no other business should have the same name. If a name is already in use and is legally protected, for example through a trade mark or service mark, the new business owner is not legally able to use the name. Be sure to verify name availability.

- Trade Name Certificates are not licenses or permits to open a business. You are registering the name of your business.

- If you have any questions about opening a new business and licenses required for your business, please contact the Connecticut Secretary of State at (860) 509-6003 or visit their website at: <http://www.sots.ct.gov>

## **Suggested Resources:**

### Connecticut Secretary of the State

Go to the Concord data base online to verify if a business name is already in use in the state or call 860-509-6002. Keep in mind that only corporations, limited liability companies, limited liability partnerships and limited liability companies register with the Secretary of the State. Sole proprietors and general partnerships register with the Town Clerk in the town in which the business is based and are excluded from registering with the Secretary of the State. All entities that register with the Secretary of the State must have a unique name in that more than one business cannot share or have a similar name.

The Secretary of the State also registers and administers state level trade and service marks. For a fee, the agency accepts search requests. Information and links to forms can be found online on the Concord ([www.concord-sots.ct.gov](http://www.concord-sots.ct.gov)) data base.

Contact the agency: (860) 509-6006 or [crd@ct.gov](mailto:crd@ct.gov) Agency website: [www.sots.ct.gov](http://www.sots.ct.gov)

### U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

Verify that the name has not been protected on the federal level through the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

Contact the office at 800-786-9199 Agency website: [www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov).

### Additional Resources:

- Search AT&T's directory assistance database or other online searches
- Ask the librarian of a local library for business databases such as Dun & Bradstreet
- Check in the Town Clerk's Office for business registrations.
- To research whether your product or service is subject to sales tax or other taxes, contact the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services by calling 1-800-382-9463 (Connecticut only),

# WHAT TO DO?

## 1. Research

- Check the Trade Name books in the vault to be sure your name is not already in use in the City.
- Your research can be as extensive as you like by searching through as many Trade Name books you deem necessary.

## 2. Trade Name Certificate

- Fill out three (3) Trade Name Certificates. All 3 originals must be returned with original signatures and notarized. ***NO COPIES***
- Owner's Name, Current Home Address and Signature must be filled by the Owner(s) of the Business. A P.O. BOX is not an acceptable address for the business or owner.
- After the forms are filled out and notarized, bring back to the Town Clerk's Office for signature and stamp.
- A **\$6.50** fee is payable by cash, money order or check (Payable to: Bridgeport Town Clerk's Office) at the time of registration.
- Be sure to keep your Trade Name Certificate in a safe place. If you lose or misplace your certificates, feel free to stop by the Town Clerk's office to obtain a copy. A **\$1.00** fee will be charged for each copy requested and an additional **\$2.00** per certification requested.

## 3. Tax Assessor's Office

- Once your Trade Name Certificate has been completed and stamped by the Town Clerk's Office, it is recommended you bring your forms to the Tax Assessor's Office, Room 105 in City Hall, 45 Lyon Terrace, Bridgeport, CT 06604, to inform them of your new business.