

DO YOU KNOW WHAT A (DBA) NAME IS?

You may need to register for a DBA – also known as a trade name, fictitious name, or assumed name – with the state, county, or city your business is located in. Registering your DBA name does not provide legal protection by itself, but most states require you to register your DBA if you use one. Some business structures require you to use a DBA.

Even if you are not required to register a DBA, you might want to anyway. A DBA lets you conduct business under a different identity from your own personal name or your formal business entity name. As an added bonus, getting a DBA and federal tax ID number (EIN) allows you to open a business bank account.

Multiple businesses can go by the same DBA in one state, so you're less restricted in what you can choose. There's also more leeway in the clarity of business function. For example, a small business owner could use Springfield Electronic Accessories for their entity name but use TechBuddy for their DBA. Just remember that trademark infringement laws will still apply.

Determine your DBA requirements based on your specific location. Requirements vary by business structure as well as by state, county, and municipality, so check with local government offices and websites.