

How to Form an LLC in Iowa Yourself (2026 Costs and Steps)

A free step-by-step guide from BusinessOwner.com. State information verified from official sources on September 15, 2026.

Quick answer

The filing fee is \$50 whether you file online or by mail. File your Certificate of Organization with the Iowa Secretary of State, Business Services Division at [file online](#).

Step 1: Check that your LLC name is available

Search the agency's business name records before filing.

Step 2: Choose a registered agent

Iowa Code requires an LLC to designate and maintain a registered agent in Iowa who has a place of business in Iowa. The certificate must give the agent's street and mailing addresses in Iowa. The statute does not bar an individual member from serving, as a "person" includes an individual.

Step 3: File your Certificate of Organization

File your Certificate of Organization online or by mail. The filing fee is \$50 for both online and paper filings. You may add expedited processing for an additional per-document surcharge if needed:

- Five business days: \$15
- Two business days: \$50
- Same business day: \$125
- One hour service: \$200

These surcharges are in addition to the filing fee and are nonrefundable.

Step 4: Create an operating agreement

Create an operating agreement that covers ownership, roles, voting, and what happens if a member leaves.

Step 5: Get your EIN from the IRS

Get your Employer Identification Number for free from the IRS at <https://www.irs.gov/ein>.

Step 6: Keep your LLC in good standing

No initial report is required. The first biennial report is due between January 1 and April 1 of the first odd-numbered year after the year of formation.

You must file a Biennial Report every 2 years during odd-numbered years. The fee is \$30 if filed online through Fast Track Filing or \$45 by paper. Reports are due between January 1 and April 1 of each odd-numbered year, starting with the first odd-numbered year after the year the LLC was formed.

Frequently asked questions

How much does it cost to file an LLC in Iowa?

The filing fee is \$50 whether you file online or by mail. Expedited services are available for additional fees ranging from \$15 to \$200.

When is the first biennial report due?

The first biennial report is due between January 1 and April 1 of the first odd-numbered year after the year the LLC was formed.

Can I serve as my own registered agent in Iowa?

Yes. Iowa Code allows an individual member to serve as the registered agent, provided they have a place of business in Iowa.

What is the fee for the biennial report?

The Biennial Report costs \$30 if filed online through Fast Track Filing and \$45 if filed by paper.

Are expedited filing fees refundable?

No, the per-document surcharges for expedited services are nonrefundable.

Want us to file it for you? \$249 plus state fees.

Want the whole business set up? Book a call with BusinessOwner.com.

Sources

Official sources, last verified September 15, 2026:

- filings.sos.iowa.gov
<https://filings.sos.iowa.gov>
- [Business Entity Forms and Fees | Iowa Secretary of State - Paul D. Pate](#)

<https://sos.iowa.gov/businesses/business-entity-forms-and-fees>

- [Preclearance and Expedited Services | Iowa Secretary of State - Paul D. Pate](#)

<https://sos.iowa.gov/businesses/preclearance-and-expedited-services>

- [Business FAQ's | Iowa Secretary of State - Paul D. Pate](#)

<https://sos.iowa.gov/businesses/business-faqs>

- [www.legis.iowa.gov: 489.122.pdf](#)

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/489.122.pdf>

- [www.legis.iowa.gov: 489.201.pdf](#)

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/489.201.pdf>

- [www.legis.iowa.gov: 489.212.pdf](#)

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/489.212.pdf>

- [www.legis.iowa.gov: 489.115.pdf](#)

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/489.115.pdf>

- [www.legis.iowa.gov: 489.102.pdf](#)

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/489.102.pdf>

- [IRS: Get an employer identification number](#)

<https://www.irs.gov/ein>

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