

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

A free step-by-step guide from BusinessOwner.com. State information verified from official sources on September 17, 2026.

Quick answer

The cost to file an LLC in Tennessee depends on your membership count. The filing fee is calculated using a formula with a minimum of \$300 and a maximum of \$3,000. You can file the Articles of Organization Limited Liability Company (SS-4270) online with the Tennessee Secretary of State at <https://tncab.tnsos.gov/>.

Step 1: Check that your LLC name is available

Search the Tennessee Secretary of State's business name records before filing to check whether your desired LLC name is available.

Step 2: Choose a registered agent

Tennessee LLCs must keep a registered agent and registered office in Tennessee at all times. The registered agent may be an individual or an organization, and the registered agent/office must be a Tennessee street address. A post office box is not acceptable. You are allowed to serve as your own registered agent if you meet these requirements.

Step 3: File your Articles of Organization Limited Liability Company (SS-4270)

Submit the SS-4270 form to the Tennessee Secretary of State. The filing fee is determined by a formula based on the number of members in existence on the date of the filing. The fee is \$50 per member, with a minimum of \$300 and a maximum of \$3,000.

If your Articles of Organization prohibit the LLC from doing business in Tennessee, the fee is a flat \$300 regardless of the number of members.

Examples:

- 1 to 6 members: \$300
- 10 members: \$500

The fee is never more than \$3,000.

A convenience fee applies when you pay by credit card, debit card, or e-check, online or in person. You can avoid it by mailing the form with a check, cashier's check, or money order.

Step 4: Create an operating agreement

Create an operating agreement to outline the ownership structure, member roles, voting rights, and procedures for what happens if a member leaves the LLC. This document helps define the internal rules of your LLC.

Step 5: Get your EIN from the IRS

Obtain an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS. The EIN is free from the IRS. You can apply at <https://www.irs.gov/ein>.

Step 6: Keep your LLC in good standing

File an Annual Report with the Tennessee Secretary of State. The report is due on or before the first day of the fourth month following the close of the LLC's fiscal year. The annual report fee for LLCs is \$300 minimum up to a maximum of \$3,000, and it increases by \$50 per member for every member over 6. An entity that fails to file its annual report on time may be administratively dissolved.

You must also pay the Franchise Tax (minimum) to the Tennessee Department of Revenue. This tax is 0.25% of net worth with a \$100 minimum. It is payable whether the LLC is active or inactive. The payment is due on the 15th day of the fourth month after the LLC's tax year ends (April 15 for calendar-year filers), along with the franchise and excise tax return. LLCs disregarded for federal income tax are not disregarded for Tennessee franchise and excise tax unless the single member is a corporation. Seventeen types of entities are exempt from this tax, such as family-owned non-corporate entities (FONCE). Most exempt entities must apply for the exemption on form FAE 183 and renew it each year.

Frequently asked questions

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

The filing fee is calculated at \$50 per member, with a minimum of \$300 and a maximum of \$3,000. If the Articles prohibit doing business in Tennessee, the fee is a flat \$300.

What is the deadline for the Annual Report?

The Annual Report is due on or before the first day of the fourth month following the close of the LLC's fiscal year.

Is there a franchise tax in Tennessee?

Yes. LLCs chartered, qualified, or registered in Tennessee must register for and pay franchise and excise taxes unless they are one of the seventeen entity types the Department of Revenue lists as exempt, such as a family-owned non-corporate entity (FONCE). Most exempt entities

must apply for the exemption on form FAE 183 and renew it each year. The franchise tax is 0.25% of net worth with a \$100 minimum, and it is separate from the annual report fee.

Can I serve as my own registered agent?

Yes, you may serve as your own registered agent if you are an individual or organization maintaining a Tennessee street address for the registered office.

How can I avoid the convenience fee?

You can avoid the convenience fee by mailing the SS-4270 form with a check, cashier's check, or money order instead of using a credit card, debit card, or e-check.

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 17, 2026:

- tncab.tnsos.gov
<https://tncab.tnsos.gov/>
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- [All Frequently Asked Questions for Businesses | Tennessee Secretary of State](https://sos.tn.gov/businesses/faqs)
<https://sos.tn.gov/businesses/faqs>
- [IRS: Get an employer identification number](https://www.irs.gov/ein)
<https://www.irs.gov/ein>

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