



Provincial Business Registration Starter Guide

A guide to registering a business in Prince Edward
Island

Do I need to register my business?

If you intend to do business in Prince Edward Island it is a legal requirement for most businesses to register with the Provincial Corporate Registry.

There are four common types of business structures in Prince Edward Island: sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation and cooperative. Each of these structures is described [here](#).

In Prince Edward Island, you can operate a sole proprietorship without registering a business name only if it is operated under your own name. If a prefix or suffix of any kind is added to your own name to create the business name, you are required to register under the [Partnership Act](#).

Business registration has legal implications. It is recommended that you seek legal advice before choosing a business structure or registering a business.

Business registration in PEI is governed by various laws including the [Partnership Act](#), [Limited Partnerships Act](#), [Business Corporations Act](#), [Co-operative Associations Act](#), and [Extra-Provincial Corporations Registration Act](#).

CHECKLIST

- Create account
- Choose business structure
- Choose business name
- Reserve business name
- Register business
- Approval
- Annual Return/Renewal

Additional details on each step can be found on the following pages.

Resources

PEI Corporate Registry

ccs@gov.pe.ca

1-902-368-4550 Ext #1

PEI Business Navigator*

businessnavigator@gov.pe.ca

1-833-335-0536

[Online Corporate Business Registry](#)

[OCBR Help and Instructions](#)

[Guide to Corporate and Business Name Rules](#)

[Types of Businesses](#)

[Guide to Share Structure and Restrictions](#)

[Corporate Transparency Requirements](#)

Still unsure? Have more questions? Contact a Business Navigator* at 1-833-335-0536 or email businessnavigator@gov.pe.ca for personalized assistance.

Checklist Details

It is recommended that you seek legal advice before starting the registration process.

1. Create an account

Create a free account in the [Online Corporate and Business Names Registry](#) (OCBR). Please use a desktop or laptop computer to complete this step. It is recommended to use the Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome internet browsers when creating an account.

You can find instructions to help you create your account [here](#).

Please ensure you store your password properly as it will be required again.

Once your account has been successfully verified you can login and proceed to the next step.

2. Choose your business structure

One of your first decisions when creating a new business is deciding your legal structure or entity type. Each type has advantages and disadvantages.

There are four common types of business structures in Prince Edward Island: ***Sole Proprietorship, Partnership, Corporation*** and ***Cooperative***. Each structure is described [here](#). The structure you choose will depend on various factors, including the nature of your business, the level of control you intend to have and who you want to be legally responsible for the actions of your business.

3. Choose your business name

Generally, names must be distinctive, descriptive and use legal elements appropriately. Names cannot be too similar to those already registered or use certain misleading or prohibited words.

The approval of any name is at the discretion of the Director of Corporations. Please review the [guide to corporate and business name rules](#) before selecting a name. If you are unsure about the name registration requirements, it is recommended that you seek legal advice before submitting a name request.

The Corporate and Business Name Registry Office will perform a search to help ensure that proposed names are not too similar to those already registered. A name that is the same or is likely to be confused with the registered name of a corporation or business in PEI will not be registered unless the registered corporate or business name owner consents in writing to the use of the name.

4. Reserve your business name

You must submit a name approval request if you intend to register a business or incorporate a company in Prince Edward Island.

Please follow the below steps to reserve your business name in the Online Corporate Business Registry (OCBR):

1. Login to [OCBR](#)
2. Click "Reserve a name" and complete the application.
3. You can enter your chosen business name or, if incorporating, you could choose a numbered company.
4. Submit the non-refundable payment using VISA, VISA Debit or MasterCard. Search fees are as follows:
 - Atlantic Canada ONLY: \$40
 - Canada-wide: \$50

Federal Incorporation

If you determine that a Federal Incorporation is the best fit for your business, you will be required to register with the Government of Canada. For more information please visit [here](#).

If you choose to register a Federal Incorporation and you carry on business in PEI, you are still required to register as an extra-provincial corporation and you can find instructions [here](#).

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5. Review and submit your name approval request.
6. The Corporate Registry Office will conduct a preliminary review of the requested name prior to submitting the name for a NUANS report. If your requested name is already in use, does not meet provincial government requirements or additional information is required you will be contacted. If you need to select a different name you **will not** be required to pay an additional fee.
7. The Corporate Registry Office will then submit the requested name to the Federal Government's NUANS business name and trademark search tool for a NUANS report. You will be provided with a copy of the NUANS report for review by email. If the NUANS report reveals that your requested name is already in use or is confusingly similar to another business, you will be contacted and will need to select a different name. An additional NUANS search fee may also be required.
8. Once the Corporate Registry office has approved your name you will receive two emails:
 - The first email will contain your receipt.
 - The second email will contain your Company PIN & Key.

If you did not receive your PIN and Company Key, please check your spam or junk folder first and then contact that Corporate Registry Office.

It is recommended to keep your company key in a safe place, as you will need your key to make any future changes to your business information and complete your Renewal/Annual Return.

5. Register your business

Once you have received your business name approval, you must complete the following steps:

1. Login to [OCBR](#)
2. Search your approved business name
3. Click on your approved business name
4. Click "Manage business"
5. Enter Company Key and confirm
6. Create Sole Proprietorship/Partnership/Extra Provincial/Incorporation
7. Click "Start Registration"
8. Enter Company Key and Pin
9. Click "Access my Business"
10. Complete application and payment

Some items to consider before getting started:

- Be sure you have chosen the right business structure.
- Make sure your business name request has been approved.
- Have your Company PIN and key ready.

You can find instruction documents for each business type [here](#).

6. Approval

Once the Corporate Registry office has approved your request to register or incorporate, you will receive an emailed copy of the Certificate of Registration or Certificate & Articles of Incorporation including your CRA business number.

There may be additional Provincial regulations required for the operation of your business. A Business Navigator is always here to help. Contact us today!

Still unsure? Have more questions? Contact a Business Navigator* at 1-833-335-0536 or email businessnavigator@gov.pe.ca for personalized assistance.

7. Annual Return/Renewal

In Prince Edward Island a corporation must file an annual return yearly, while a sole proprietorship, partnership or trade name must be renewed every three years. You can find instructions for Renewals and Returns [here](#).

You have 6 months from the expiry date to complete this process. After that date your status will change to “inactive due to non-payment”.

8. Helpful Links

The following are some helpful links that may assist you in during your registration process:

- [Online Corporate and Business Registry](#)
- [OCBR Help and Instructions](#)
- [Guide to Corporate and Business Name Rules](#)
- [Types of Businesses](#)
- [Guide to Share Structure and Restrictions](#)
- [Corporate Transparency Requirements](#)