

# HOW TO START A LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## FIVE STEPS to begin the process of organizing a 501 (C)(6) Non-Profit Organization (Chamber of Commerce)

1

- Choose a name for the chamber,
- Define the organizational structure (including the Board of Directors), &
- Develop Bylaws for the chamber.

To name a "Chamber of Commerce" the organization must have a distinctive identifying component in the chamber's corporate name to meet the Illinois Secretary of State's name distinguishing guidelines.

2

File the Not-for-Profit Articles of Incorporation with the Illinois Secretary of State  
[www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/business\\_services/incorporation/nfp\\_instructions.html](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/business_services/incorporation/nfp_instructions.html)

3

Obtain an FEIN (Federal Employer Identification Number)  
[www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/employer-identification-number](http://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/employer-identification-number)  
File with the IRS as a 501 (C)(6) Exempt Organization in order to get an IRS Determination Letter.  
[www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/exempt-organization-exemption-application](http://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/exempt-organization-exemption-application)

4

Obtain an Illinois Department of Revenue Account ID  
[www.revenue.state.il.us/taxforms/Reg/REG-1.pdf](http://www.revenue.state.il.us/taxforms/Reg/REG-1.pdf)

5

Register with the Illinois Attorney General Charitable Trust Bureau  
[www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/charities/](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/charities/)

**To maintain non-profit status the organization must file annually on a timely basis:**

- 1) Corporation Annual Report with the Illinois Secretary of State;
- 2) Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax Form 990 with the Internal Revenue Service; and
- 3) Illinois Charitable Organization Annual Report with the Illinois Attorney General.

**Resources:**

U.S. Chamber of Commerce | A Guide to Starting and Growing a Chamber of Commerce  
[www.uschamber.com/sites/default/files/legacy/chambers/files/printablefinal.pdf](http://www.uschamber.com/sites/default/files/legacy/chambers/files/printablefinal.pdf)

U.S. Chamber of Commerce | Best Practices  
[www.uschamber.com/members/chambers/accreditation/best-practices](http://www.uschamber.com/members/chambers/accreditation/best-practices)

Illinois Secretary of State | A Guide For Organizing Not-for-Profit Corporations  
[www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf\\_publications/c165.pdf](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf_publications/c165.pdf)

Illinois Attorney General | Checklist for Illinois Charitable Organizations  
[www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/charities/Charitable\\_Organization\\_Checklists.pdf](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/charities/Charitable_Organization_Checklists.pdf)