

Forming a Non-Profit Organization - Step-by-Step

Is a non-profit the best vehicle for you to accomplish your goals? Be sure you understand [NonProfit Basics](#).

In the Commonwealth of Virginia, a non-profit organization can be a non-stock corporation or an LLC. Once a non-profit founder(s) has determined the vision, here are the suggested steps, in order, to creating a non-profit:

1. Incorporate as a [Virginia Non-Stock Corporation](#) or [Limited Liability Company](#) (LLC) through the State Corporation Commission's [Office of the Clerk](#).
2. Apply for a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN or EIN) through the IRS. Apply [online](#) or download, print, and mail the [SS-4](#).
3. File IRS [Form 1023](#) to request [501\(c\)\(3\) non-profit](#) status.
4. Register with the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services as a charitable organization so that you may accept donations. The registration package may be found [here](#). You cannot register get a sales and use tax exemption from the Virginia Department of Taxation until you have registered
5. Apply for Commonwealth of Virginia non-profit status using [VATAX NonProfit Online](#).
6. Check if you will have local business zoning, home occupancy, or license requirements.

Helpful Resources (VDBA has found these sites helpful to some users, but is not responsible for their content):

USA.gov for Non-profits - Official information and services from the U.S. government: <http://www.usa.gov/Business/Nonprofit.shtml>

GuideStar - Connecting people with non-profit information: <http://www2.guidestar.org/>

The Nonprofit FAQ: <http://www.idealists.org/if/idealists/en/FAQ/Nonprofit/Home/default>

The NonProfit Times - Online periodical for nonprofit management: <http://www.nptimes.com/>

Virginia Network of Nonprofit Organizations (VANNO) - <http://www.vanno.org/>

Copyright © 2010, All Rights Reserved
Virginia Department of Business Assistance
1220 Bank Street * Richmond, VA 23219 * (804) 371-8200 * (804) 371-8111 (FAX)