

SMALL BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

How to Register Your Uganda Business

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In registering your small business, the four official bodies you will obtain services from are the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB), Uganda Revenue Authority (URA), Kampala City Council Authority (KCCA) and possibly National Social Security Fund (NSSF). Each entity has a user-friendly website listing services offered and related fees.

Obtaining a lawyer for the URSB services is advisable. Remember however, that lawyers are in business to make money and their professional fees vary widely. While Jasper paid shs. 1 million to register his business, Annet paid her cousin just shs.200,000. Make sure you research all the fees involved and bargain with your lawyer. Should you decide to file your paperwork independently places like the Uganda Investment Authority (UIA) and the Uganda Women Entrepreneurs Association Ltd. (UWEAL) have complimentary Help Desks where an officer can provide registration assistance.

Below, a summary of the steps involved and to quote Annet, "You could have your business fully registered and compliant in less than a month." The filing fees for the two URSB steps below, excluding Stamp Duty which varies, should not exceed shs.200,000.

1. Reserve your company name by having URSB conduct a search to verify that your proposed company name does not belong to anyone else. An online name search option will soon be available on the URSB website.
2. Register your company and obtain a Certificate of Incorporation by submitting a Memorandum and Articles of Association (easily prepared by a lawyer and requires a lawyer's signature) as well as the following forms: A1 (Statement of Nominal Capital), A2 (Declaration of Compliance with Companies Act – sworn before a Commissioner of Oaths), A3 (within 60 days of Allotment of Shares), A9 (Location of Registered Office) and & 7 (within 14 days of Appointment of Directors). The forms are available at Uganda Bookshop and at Georgian (formerly Amamu) House where URSB is located. Each form costs under shs.1,000.

Although you could fill in URA registration forms online, you will still need to visit a URA office to complete the tax registration process. At URA you will file an approved Personal Inquiry Form for each of your company directors and a Corporate Preliminary Inquiry Form. A URA Inspector will then inspect your business premises and if all is in order, you will receive a Tax Identification Number (TIN). Should your business annual sales exceed shs.50 million, Value Added Tax (VAT) registration is also required. All these URA services are free of charge.

The free application form for a trading license may either be obtained from your local KCCA office or downloaded from the KCCA website. A KCCA inspector should then inspect your premises and determine your licensing fee at no cost.

In addition to the above, if your business has five or more employees, it must be NSSF registered. The Employer Registration form is available at your local NSSF office and on the NSSF website.

Once your business is registered, be sure to honour all statutory obligations when due.

Useful websites: Uganda Registration Services Bureau - <http://www.ursb.go.ug>

Uganda Revenue Authority - <http://www.ura.go.ug/>
Kampala City Council Authority - <http://www.kcca.go.ug/>
National Social Security Fund – <http://www.nssfug.org>