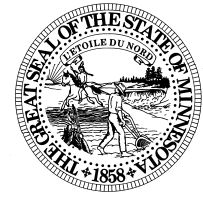


OFFICE OF THE MINNESOTA SECRETARY OF STATE NAME AVAILABILITY GUIDELINES



Check the availability of a business name online at <http://mbportal.sos.state.mn.us/>

When checking name availability consider the following:

- To be accepted for filing, Business Names must be different by at least one letter or numeral from other names already on file.
- If filing an Assumed Business Name, this office does NOT check against other Assumed Names on record as the law allows for the same or similar Assumed Business Name to be filed.
- Foreign Trust Association and Special Information names are not checked for name availability, nor are they taken into consideration when evaluating name availability of names for other business types.
- Trademarks, Service Marks, Collective or Certification Marks cannot be checked for name availability online as this requires a more in depth search by the Office of the Secretary of State to determine whether the name being used by the mark is available.
- A name which contains the word "Insurance" must also include the modifier "Agency", "Broker", "Brokerage" or "Services" or similar modifiers in order to indicate that this business is not engaged in underwriting.

Steps used to standardize a business name:

1. Replace the ampersand character ('&') with the word 'AND'.
2. Remove any character (including spaces), except for 0-9 and A-Z.
3. Names will be evaluated up to 250 characters.

The following examples will distinguish a business name:

1. The Plural Form of a Word

Example: "Fine Line Inc" vs. "Fine Lines Inc."

2. Use of Roman Numerals

Examples: One (or 1) vs. I; Two (or 2) vs. II

3. Use of Numerals vs. Words

Examples: 1 vs. One; 2 vs. Two; 3 vs. Three

4. Use of Contractions

Examples: Ass'n vs. Association; Nat'l vs. National; Dep't vs. Department

5. Obvious Misspellings

Examples: Concep vs. Concept; Kwik vs. Quick

6. Variations of Words

Examples: EZ vs. Easy; Hair vs. Hare; America vs. American; Quest vs. Qquest; USA vs. United States of America; Bur-Tech vs. Burr Technology, Inc.; Nsite, Inc vs. Ensignt, Inc.

7. Abbreviations

Examples: Mr. vs. Mister; St. vs. Saint; Doctor vs. Dr.

8. The elimination of Prepositions and Conjunctions

Examples: "Into the Night Co. vs. "To the Night Co."; "Of Women and Children Inc." vs. "Women and Children Inc."

9. Entity Designations

Examples: Edwards LLC vs. Edwards Inc.; Thelma Company vs. Thelma Ltd.

r/bs/forms/NameAvailabilityGuidelinesRev.9/8/2015