

# FOUNDATIONS OF BUSINESS STRUCTURE

*Setting the Bones of Your Professional Mission*

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## 1. LEGAL FORTIFICATION: LLC VS. SOLE PROPRIETORSHIP

### The Corporate Veil

Establishing an **LLC (Limited Liability Company)** creates a legal boundary between your personal life and your business. This is known as the "corporate veil."

- **Asset Protection:** If the business faces a lawsuit or debt, your personal assets (home, car, savings) are generally protected.
- **Professionalism:** An LLC signals to clients and partners that you have moved beyond a hobby and into a formalized entity.
- **Tax Flexibility:** LLCs offer "pass-through" taxation, meaning profits are reported on your personal return, but you can deduct business expenses to lower your taxable income.

A **Sole Proprietorship** is easier to start but offers zero legal protection. In this model, you and the business are the same—putting your personal stability at risk if the business encounters turbulence.

## 2. TACTICAL REGISTRATION CHECKLIST

### IRS & State Compliance

Once your structure is decided, you must activate your "Professional Intel" through proper registration.

- Acquire your EIN:** The Employer Identification Number is like a SSN for your business. It is free via IRS.gov and necessary for opening a business bank account.
- Maryland (Home Base):** Register via the Maryland Business Express (MBE). Maryland requires an Annual Report (Personal Property Tax Return) every April 15th.
- Georgia:** Register through the Georgia Secretary of State. Georgia is a "hub" for home health and caregiving licenses.
- Florida & Alabama:** Register with their respective Departments of State (e.g., Florida's Sunbiz) and check for specific county-level occupational licenses.

## 3. THE LEAN BUSINESS PLAN: THE ONE-PAGE BRIEF

Do not get bogged down in 40-page documents. A "Lean Brief" keeps your mission focused and your operations agile.

### Core Mission Components:

- **Value Proposition:** What specific problem do you solve? (e.g., "Providing specialized caregiver transitions for veteran families.")
- **Target Audience:** Who is your high-priority client?
- **Revenue Streams:** How exactly does money enter the business? (Private pay, government contracts, or consultation fees).

**Business Owner Mindset:** Your plan should be a living document. Review it every 90 days to ensure your "Revenue Streams" are matching your "Mission Effort."