



Secretary of State
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North Carolina Secretary of State

IT

Assumed Business Names

KB Website Manual


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Version 2.0

About the Assumed Business Names Manual

This manual gives an overview of all the pages and features of the Assumed Business Names section of the KB website.

Official website of the State of North Carolina [Here's how you know](#) ▾

 **Secretary of State**
Elaine F. Marshall

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Table of Contents

About the Assumed Business Names Manual	1
Assumed Business Names.....	1
Assumed Business Names.....	3
Frequently Asked Questions.....	6
Search.....	10
Forms	13

Assumed Business Names

This manual gives an overview of the pages and features of the **Assumed Business Names** section of the Secretary of State's new KB website.

Go to the North Carolina Secretary of State's Office website at: <https://sosnc.gov>.

Select **Divisions**.

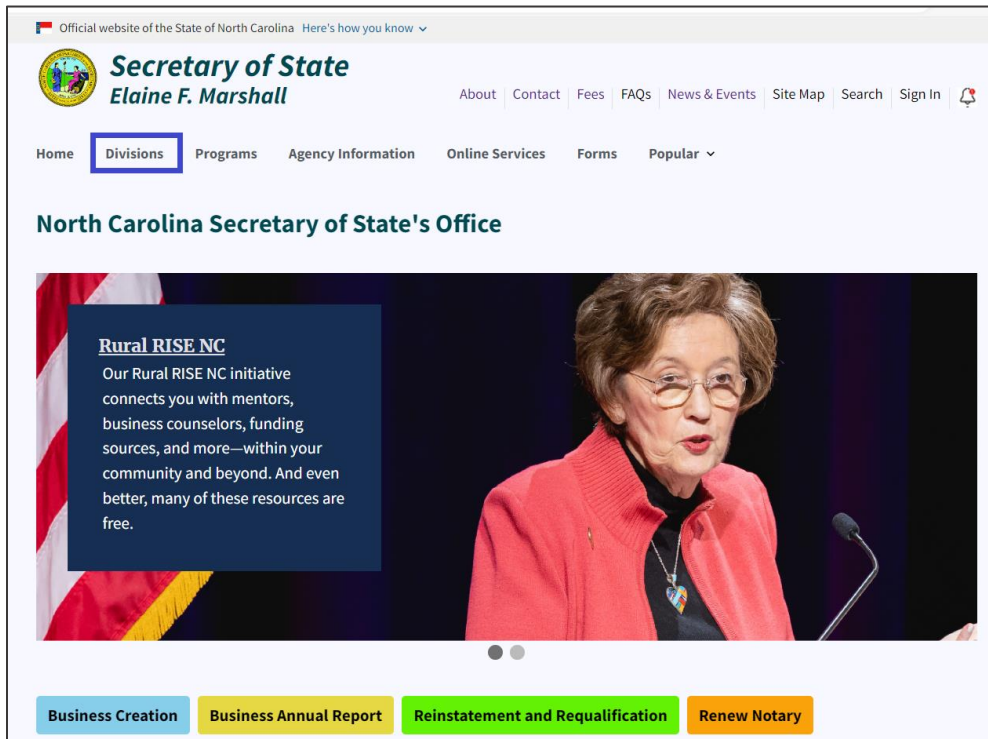


Figure 1. Divisions menu highlighted

On the Divisions page, select the **Business Registration** link.

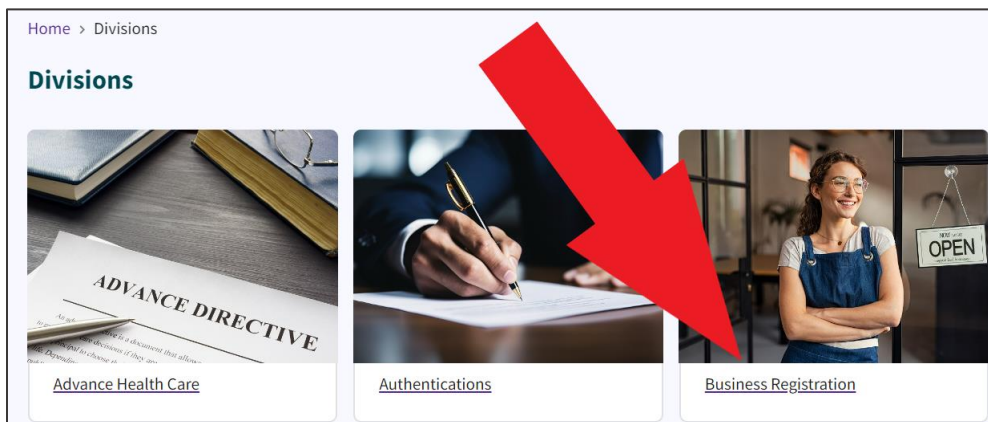


Figure 2. Red arrow pointing to the Business Registration link

This takes you to the **Business Registration** page.

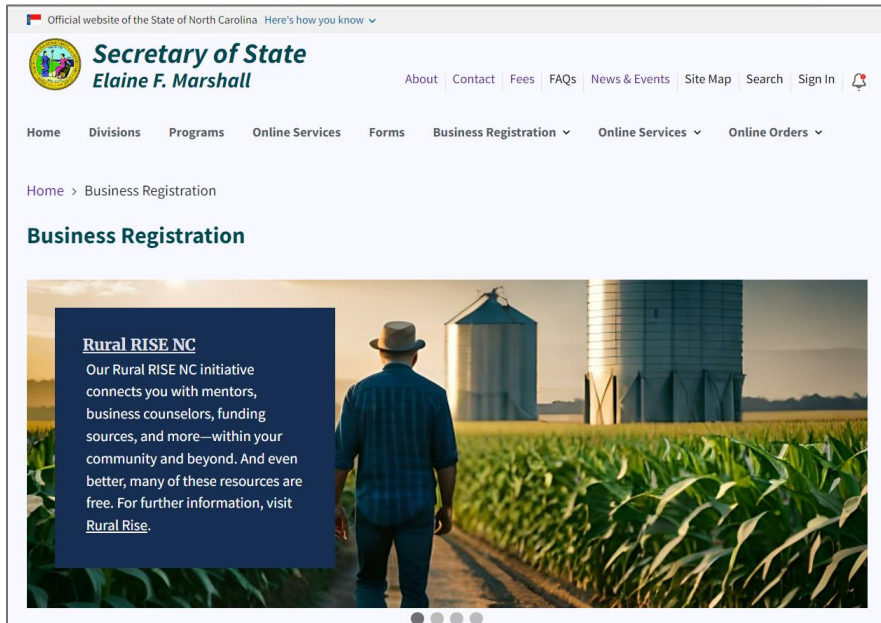


Figure 3. Business Registration page

The **Browse Assumed Names** section has 15 box image links.



Figure 4. Browse Assumed Names

Assumed Business Names

Select **Assumed Business Names**.



Figure 5. A red arrow points to the Assumed Business Names link

The **Assumed Business Names** page has information about using assumed business names in North Carolina.

An assumed business name (ABN) is the same as a DBA (doing business as) name. Both terms refer to a name under which a business operates that is different from its legal name. Businesses using an assumed name should obtain an “assumed name certificate” to comply with state statutes.



Figure 6. Assumed Business Names page

Beginning December 1, 2017, North Carolina has a revised set of laws about assumed business names. New Article 14A, Chapter 66 of the NC General Statutes, effective December 1, keeps the filing of assumed business name information at the registers of deeds' offices across the state and has the following new features:

- Establishes a statewide, online, searchable database at the North Carolina Secretary of State's office containing assumed business name filings made on or after December 1, 2017
- Allows filers to designate multiple counties for conducting business on one filing
- Simplifies completion of certificates by removing the notarization requirement
- Requires that filers update the information contained in their assumed business name filings within 60 days of it changing
- Allows for a 5 year transition period, until December 1, 2022, for all pre-existing assumed business name filers to re-file an assumed business name certificate to preserve the effectiveness of their assumed business name designation. See our FAQs for more information.

There are three box image links at the bottom of the page:

- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Search](#)
- [Forms](#)

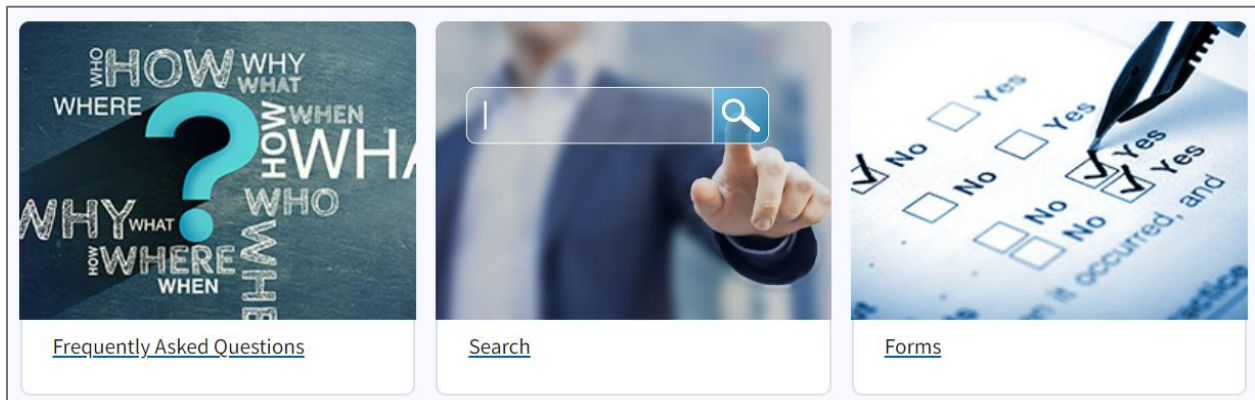


Figure 7. Three box image links

Select **Frequently Asked Questions**.

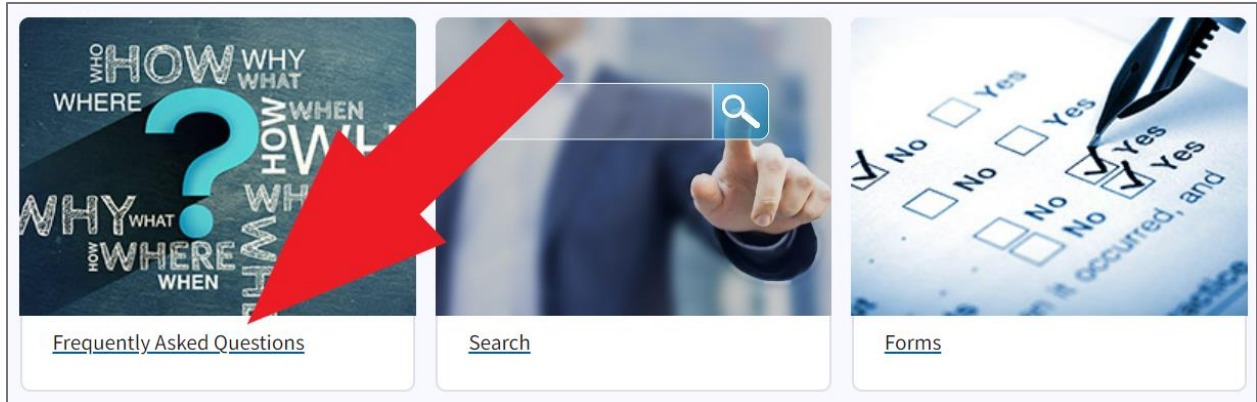


Figure 8. A red arrow points to the Frequently Asked Questions link

Frequently Asked Questions

The **Frequently Asked Questions** page has 15 questions and answers about using assumed names in North Carolina.

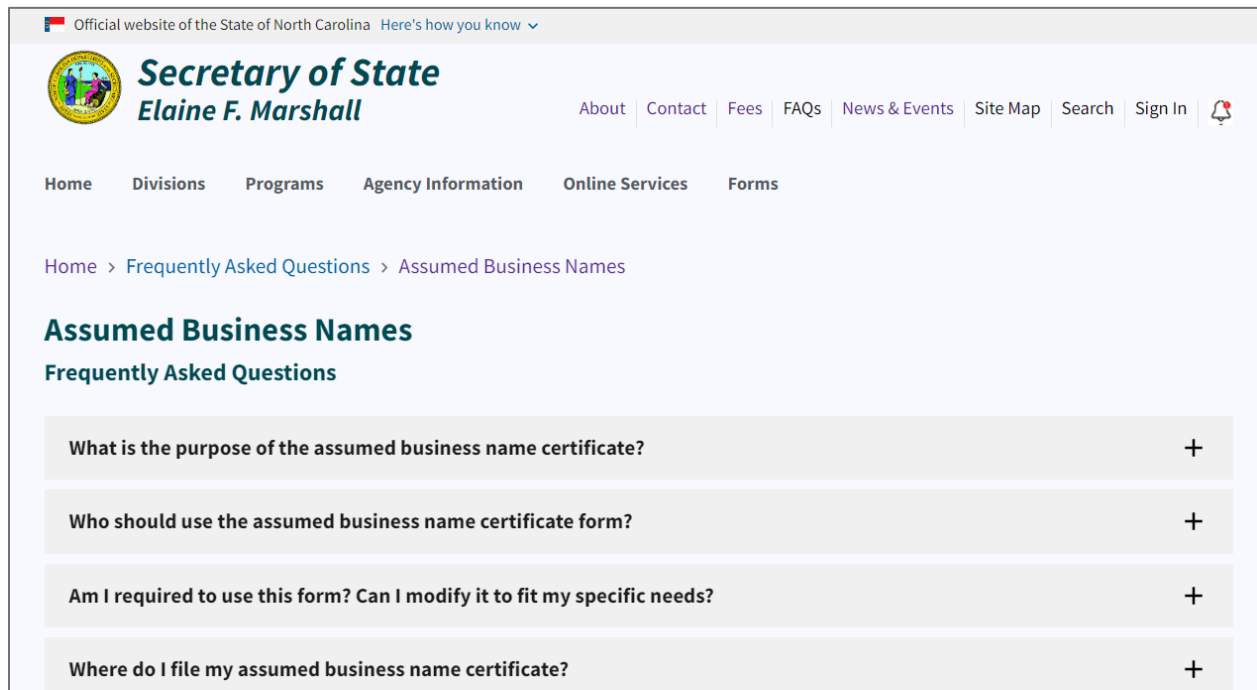


Figure 9. Assumed Business Names Frequently Asked Questions page

The question and answers are as follows:

What is the purpose of the assumed business name certificate?

The assumed business name certificate is intended for the registration of business names other than the legal name of an individual or legal entity. For example, if John Smith, as a sole proprietor, operates a lawn care business under the name “Smith Lawn Maintenance”, he must file an assumed business name certificate to register the name “Smith Lawn Maintenance” as his assumed business name.

Likewise, if John and Jim Smith operate a lawn maintenance business under the name “Smith Brothers Lawn Maintenance” as general partners, then they must register the name “Smith Brothers Lawn Maintenance” as their assumed business name.

Any type of business entity, such as limited liability companies, business corporations, limited partnerships, or non-profit corporations that wishes to conduct business under a name other than the one that they have registered with the NC Secretary of State’s office must file an assumed business name certificate to register their assumed business name.

Who should use the assumed business name form?

This form should be used by anyone, including individuals, businesses, and legal entities, seeking to do business in the State of North Carolina using a name other than their own legal name.

This form should not be used for political committees or referendum committees who must file a statement of organization with either the State Board of Elections or a County Board of Elections per GS 163-278.7 or GS 163-278.9.

Am I required to use this form? Can I modify it to fit my specific needs?

While this form is not mandatory, it has been designed to include all of the information that must be provided by law. You can create your own form, but it must include all of the information that is required by law.

Note: if you create your own form, the register of deeds standards require the first page of any document to have 3" top margin to provide space for their recording information; subsequent pages only require ½" margin at the top. You can find more information on registers of deeds' [filing standards](#).

Where do I file my assumed business name certificate?

You can file an assumed business name certificate in your local register of deeds' office. Your certificate will be recorded and indexed in that county. It will also be uploaded to a statewide database of assumed business name information housed at the NC Secretary of State's office.

Do I have to file an assumed business name in each county that I want to conduct business in?

No, beginning December 1, 2017 your certificate can be effective for multiple counties. When you file, you have the option of selecting all 100 counties, or you may list one or more counties in which you want to do business. New forms that allow you to easily indicate which counties you wish to conduct business are available on the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina's (EDPNC) [Business Forms](#) page.

Do I have to pay multiple filing fees if I choose to conduct business in more than one county?

No, the filing fee is not affected by how many counties in which you choose to operate. You pay the same fee if you name one or 100 counties on your assumed business name certificate. You can find more information about registers of deeds' filing fees at the North Carolina Association of Registers of Deeds' [Recording Fees](#) page.

What if someone else is already using the name I intend to use?

Assumed business names are not required to be unique; therefore it is likely that more than one person or entity could register the same assumed business name. Registering an assumed business name in North Carolina ([Article 14A, Chapter 66 of the NC General Statutes](#)) does not give the filer the exclusive rights to the use of an assumed business name. However, you could be subject to legal action if you choose an assumed business name that is already being used by someone else. We strongly recommend that you consult with an attorney to explore your legal liabilities in use of an assumed business name.

What if I already have an assumed name filed? I heard that the law has changed—Do I have to refile to keep my name registered?

Yes, if you filed any time before December 1, 2017, you must file a new assumed business name certificate after December 1, 2017 and no later than December 1, 2022 in order to keep your assumed business name filing effective.

The NC General Assembly revised the assumed business name laws, which can be found in [Article 14A, Chapter 66](#) of the NC General Statutes. The new law requires that all assumed business name filings filed in the local register of deeds' offices must be compiled into a statewide centralized online searchable database at the NC Secretary of State's office. To ensure that all assumed business name information is contained in the statewide database, the law allows a 5-year transition period to give all businesses using an assumed name adequate time to re-file their assumed business information before the old filings expire on December 1, 2022.

I filed my assumed business name under the old law and some of that information has changed. Can I amend my old filing or should I file a new assumed name certificate on the new form?

Since all certificates filed under the old law will expire on December 1, 2022, you should file an assumed name certificate on the new forms found on the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina's [Business Forms](#) page. You should complete the form using current information. You only need to file in one county and may designate as many NC counties as you would like for the filing to be effective.

I filed an assumed business name certificate after December 1, 2017, but now some of the information on that certificate has changed. What do I do?

Once you have filed an initial certificate after December 1, 2017, then you can amend the information on that form by filing an Amendment of Assumed Name Certificate form, which can be found on the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina's [Business Forms](#) page. You must include the SOSID number that was assigned to your initial filing for your assumed business name certificate, which you can easily find by searching the NC Secretary of State's database found on the [Search Assumed Business Names](#) page.

What if I cease to do business under this assumed name? What should I do?

If you cease doing business under an assumed name, you should file a Withdrawal of Assumed Name Certificate in the same county as your initial filing. You can find this form on the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina's [Business Forms](#) page. You must include the SOSID number that was assigned to your initial filing for your assumed business name certificate, which you can easily find by searching the NC Secretary of State's database found on the [Search Assumed Business Names](#) page.

The new law establishes a new statewide database of assumed business names at the North Carolina Secretary of State's Office.

No, the Secretary of State's statewide database of assumed business names will contain only filings made on or after December 1, 2017. If you need to find filings or information that pre-dates December 1, 2017, you will need to search in the register of deed's office for that information.

Where do I get a certified copy of an assumed business name certificate? Do I go to the register of deeds or North Carolina Secretary of State's Office?

You should get certified copies of assumed business name filings from the register of deeds' office where the information was filed. While the NC Secretary of State's office compiles information from across the state, it is not considered the official source of these records.

Is the effective date of an assumed business name filing the date that it is indexed at the register of deeds or the date that it is entered in the Secretary of State's database?

The effective date of an assumed business name filing is the date that it is filed at the register of deeds' office or the date shown on the face of the filing. The date that the information is sent to the NC Secretary of State does not affect the filings' effective date.

Where can I search for assumed business names?

Starting December 1, 2017, you can search for assumed business names on the [NC Secretary of State's website](#), but you will only find filings that were made on or after that date. To search for filings that pre-date December 1, 2017, you must search in the register of deeds' office.

Search

Select **Search**.

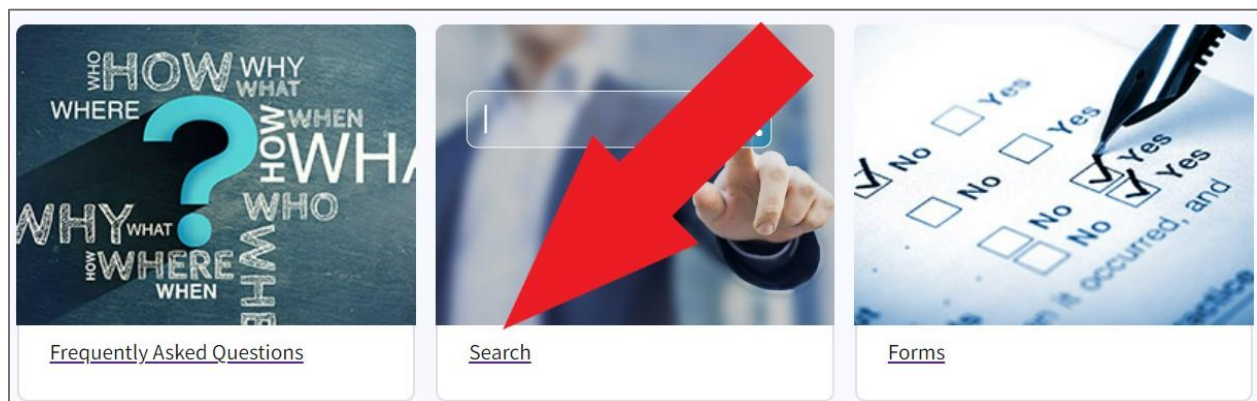


Figure 10. Select Search link

This link takes you to the Assumed Business Names search tool.

The screenshot shows a web page with a breadcrumb trail at the top: 'Home > Assumed Name > Search Assumed Business Names'. Below this is the title 'Search Assumed Business Names'. The main content area is a light gray box containing three search criteria: 'Search for' with a dropdown menu showing 'Company By Assumed Name', 'Words' with a dropdown menu showing 'Starting With', and 'Search text' with an empty text input field. At the bottom of this box are two blue buttons labeled 'Filter' and 'Search'. Below the search tool box is a blue link labeled 'Return to top'.

Figure 11. Search Assumed Business Names search tool

The Search tool has one field for the search text and two dropdowns to narrow the search requirements.

Enter the name of the business in the provided fields.

Click **Search**.

The search results display a list of company names that fit your search requirements.



Home > Assumed Name > Search > Search Results

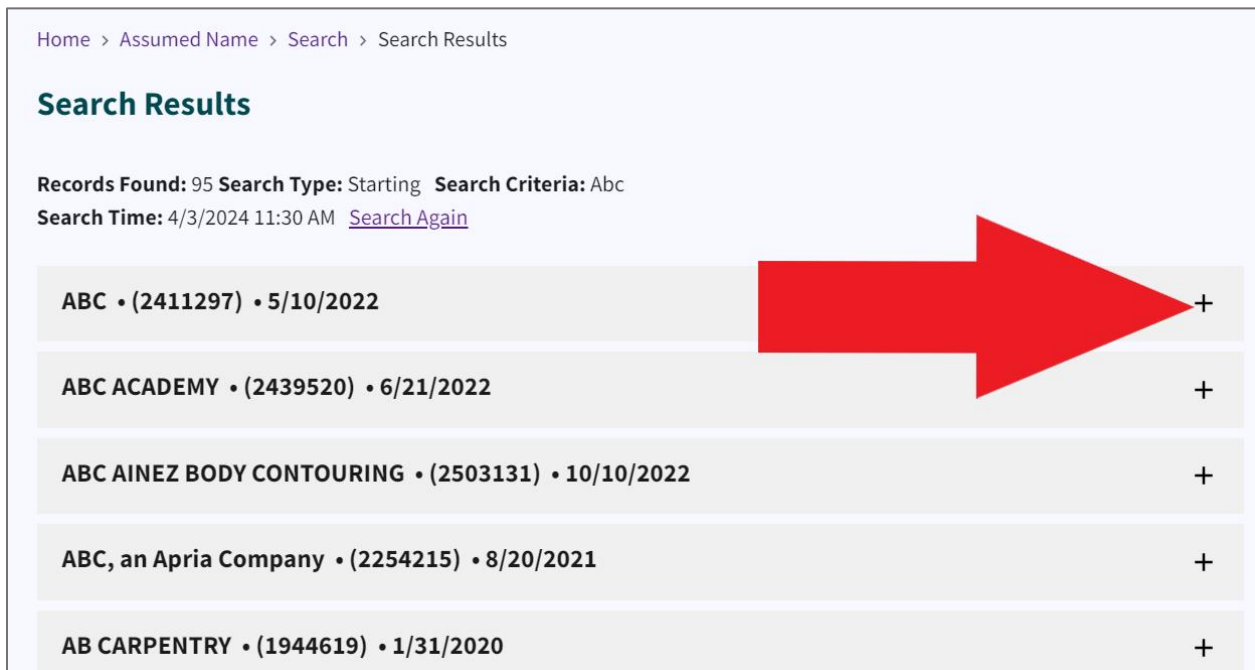
Search Results

Records Found: 95 Search Type: Starting Search Criteria: Abc
Search Time: 4/3/2024 11:30 AM [Search Again](#)

ABC • (2411297) • 5/10/2022	+
ABC ACADEMY • (2439520) • 6/21/2022	+
ABC AINEZ BODY CONTOURING • (2503131) • 10/10/2022	+
ABC, an Apria Company • (2254215) • 8/20/2021	+
AB CARPENTRY • (1944619) • 1/31/2020	+

Figure 12. Search results listing company names

For this example, we selected the first row “ABC.”



Home > Assumed Name > Search > Search Results

Search Results

Records Found: 95 Search Type: Starting Search Criteria: Abc
Search Time: 4/3/2024 11:30 AM [Search Again](#)

ABC • (2411297) • 5/10/2022	+
ABC ACADEMY • (2439520) • 6/21/2022	+
ABC AINEZ BODY CONTOURING • (2503131) • 10/10/2022	+
ABC, an Apria Company • (2254215) • 8/20/2021	+
AB CARPENTRY • (1944619) • 1/31/2020	+

Figure 13. A red arrow points to the plus sign on row “ABC”

Select the **plus (+) sign** beside the company name.

The accordion panel expands to display more information and linkable options.

The screenshot shows a web interface for search results. At the top, there is a breadcrumb trail: Home > Assumed Name > Search > Search Results. Below this is a section titled "Search Results". Underneath the title, it displays "Records Found: 95 Search Type: Starting Search Criteria: Abc" and "Search Time: 4/3/2024 11:30 AM" with a "Search Again" link. An accordion panel is expanded, showing a header "ABC • (2411297) • 5/10/2022" with a minus sign on the right. The expanded content includes a list of items: a "Download Filing(PDF)" link, and several key-value pairs: "Initial Assumed Name: ABC", "Assumed Business Name Number: 2411297", "Entered Date: 5/10/2022 2:35:33 PM", and "Filing County: Pamlico". There are also two expandable sections: "Engaged Counties" with an "All (Add)" option, and "Owners" with "TRACY KING (Add)" and "ANTONIO RONTELL SR KING (Add)" options.

Figure 14. Expanded panel displaying more information and links

Select the **Download Filing (PDF)** to download and print a copy of the Assumed Business Name filing.

Forms

Select **Forms**.

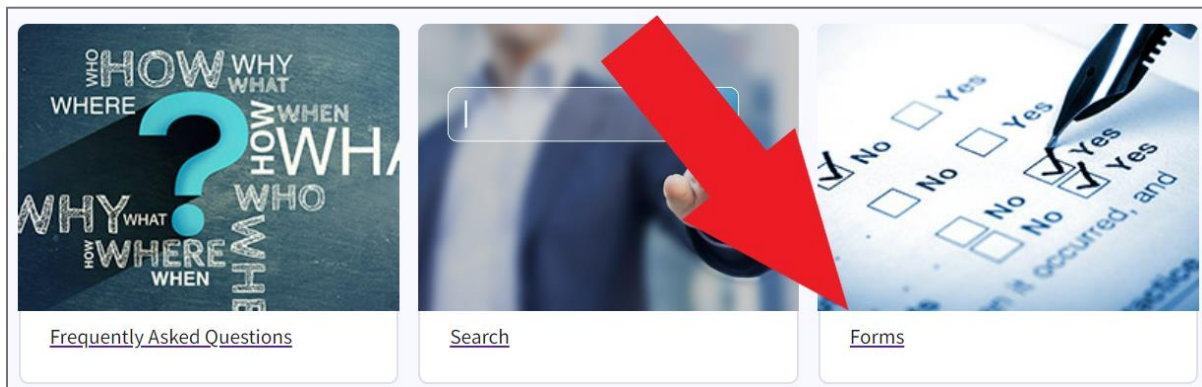


Figure 15. A red arrow points to the Forms link

The Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina’s [Business Forms](#) page has owner and salesperson downloadable applications in PDF format.

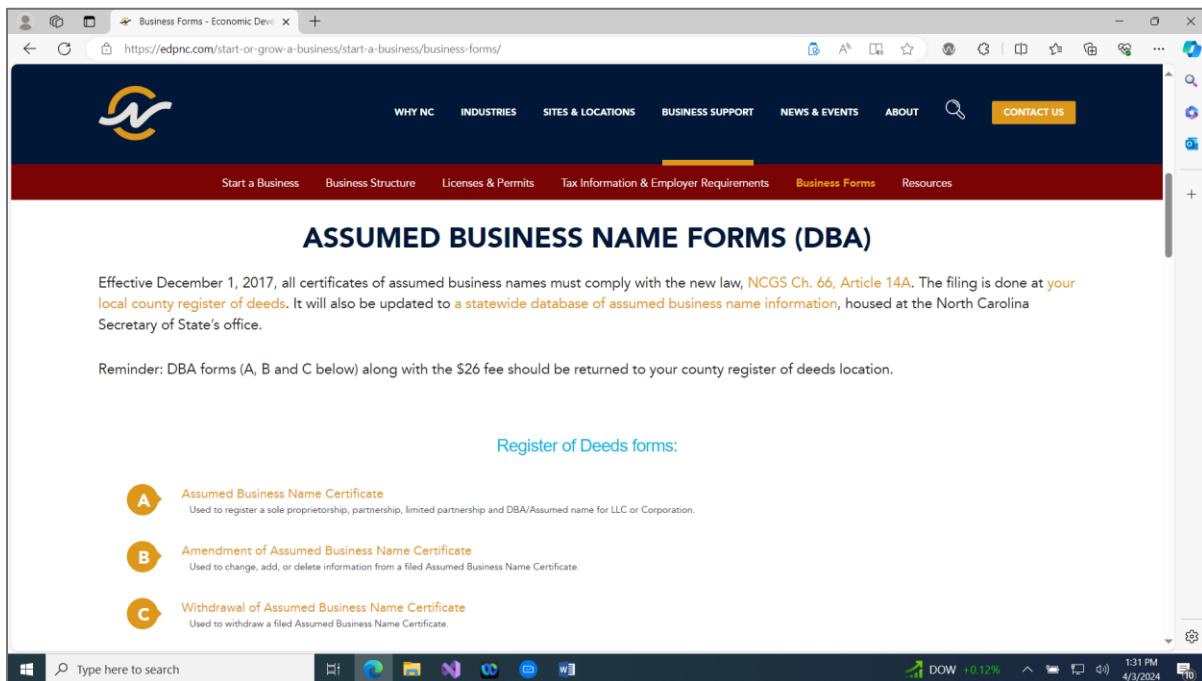


Figure 16. Membership Camping Act Forms page

Scroll down to the Assumed Business Name Forms (DBA) section. See **Figure 16**.

Effective December 1, 2017, all certificates of assumed business names must comply with the new law, [NCGS Ch. 66, Article 14A](#). The filing is done at [your local county register of deeds](#). It will also be updated to [a statewide database of assumed business name information](#), housed at the North Carolina Secretary of State’s office.

Reminder: DBA forms (A, B and C below) along with the \$26 fee should be returned to your county register of deeds location.

The three Assumed Business Name Forms listed are:

- Assumed Business Name Certificate
- Amendment of Assumed Business Name Certificate
- Withdrawal of Assumed Business Name Certificate