

Definition Of A DBA

Sometimes it makes sense for a company to do business under a different name. To do this, the company has to file what's known as a DBA, meaning "doing business as." A DBA is also known as a "fictitious business name," "trade name," or "assumed name."

Once your DBA registration is complete, the company can use the secondary name to open bank accounts, write checks, and enter contracts. If you don't file a DBA and just start doing business under a different name you could face penalties and fines, not to mention the possibility of lawsuits.

Sole proprietorships commonly use DBAs because a sole proprietorship's official, legal name is simply the name of the owner. A DBA lets them use a real business name.

All types of businesses can use a DBA, not just sole proprietorships. LLCs, corporations, and partnerships can all file to get a DBA.

Where is my DBA filed?

Filing a DBA is usually done in person, at the county clerk's office or the state department, depending on the state and where you plan to do business.