

The essential documents needed for a startup company include those required for legal formation, protecting intellectual property, defining ownership, and complying with regulatory requirements. Here are the primary documents you should consider:

Articles of Incorporation (for corporations) or Articles of Organization (for LLCs): Officially registers your business with the state and establishes its legal existence.

Bylaws (for corporations) or Operating Agreement (for LLCs): Sets internal rules for management, ownership, and decision-making.

Employer Identification Number (EIN) Registration: A federal tax ID required for banking, hiring, and taxes.

Founders' Agreement: Outlines roles, responsibilities, and equity among co-founders, helping prevent disputes.

Shareholder Agreement (for corporations): Explains shareholders' rights, share transfer rules, and decision-making.

Intellectual Property Assignment and Technology Assignment Agreements: Ensures the company owns any IP created by founders or employees.

Confidentiality and Nondisclosure Agreements (NDAs): Protects sensitive business information from being shared outside the company.

Employee Agreements and Offer Letters: Clearly states employment terms, job roles, and any non-compete or invention assignment clauses.

Business Licenses and Permits: Vary by business type and location; required to legally operate.

Contracts for Vendors and Customers: Essential for clarifying obligations and protecting your interests in business deals.

Statutory Books or Company Register: Official records of shareholders, board meetings, and major company decisions.

Business Plan (internal): Though not a legal document, it's vital for establishing your company's mission, goals, and attracting funding.

Depending on your type of startup, you may also need documents specific to capital raising (like a term sheet or investor agreement), a partnership agreement (if not an LLC/corp), and documentation for specialized regulatory compliance.

Having these documents in place provides a legal foundation, helps avoid disputes, establishes credibility with investors and customers, and ensures regulatory compliance.

Let me know if you need a checklist customized to your specific industry or location.