

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION FOR CHURCHES

STEP 1 CERTIFICATE OF FORMATION

It is recommended that a church be incorporated in order to protect the members from individual liability in the event of a law suit and to ensure that the church name is unique and official. For example, there are many churches using the name First Baptist Church. Some qualifier will need to be added to make the church name unique. This is usually accomplished by adding the name of the town and state, First Baptist Church of New Braunfels, Texas. Although this would be the official name, advertising could be done as First Baptist Church.

Form 202, Certificate of Formation, Pursuant to Article 3.02, Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act, may be acquired from the Secretary of State, Texas. Form 202 and Instructions may be obtained on line: [click here for form 202.](#) The current cost of Incorporation will be reflected at the top of Form 202. After submission you will receive an official copy of your Certificate of Formation from the Secretary of State. Contact the Bluebonnet Baptist Association for a sample of this request form filled out.

STEP 2 EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN)

After the church receives its Certificate of Formation, an Employer Identification Number (EIN), using the official name of the church (First Baptist Church of New Braunfels, Texas), will need to be obtained. All businesses are required to obtain an EIN for tax purposes.

Form SS-4, Application for Employer Identification Number (EIN), may be obtained from the Internal Revenue Service. Form SS-4 and instructions may be obtained online: [click here for form SS-4.](#) This form may also be filled out and filed online. An EIN may also be obtained over the phone with the paperwork sent in afterward. However, the form will need to be filled out in advance, in order to have all information available. You will receive official notification of your EIN from the IRS. Contact the Bluebonnet Baptist Association for a sample of this request form filled out.

STEP 3 NON-PROFIT TAX EXEMPT STATUS

This section applies only to churches possessing or seeking membership in the Bluebonnet Baptist Association.

A letter should be written to the Executive Director, Bluebonnet Baptist Association, 1424 N. Business I-35, New Braunfels, TX 78130 requesting Tax Exempt status as a member of the Bluebonnet Association.

STEP 4 SBTC CHURCHES

After the church receives its Non-Profit Tax exemption status, submit your application for affiliation with the SBTC. This is accomplished by requesting affiliation and beginning monthly contributions to the SBTC. Your letter and application should be sent to the Executive Committee, Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, PO Box 1988, Grapevine, TX 76099-1988 (817) 552-2500 or toll free (877) 953-7282. Provide a statement that you are a Southern Baptist Church, that you are affiliated with the Bluebonnet Baptist Association, that your doctrinal views are in agreement with the Baptist Faith and Message, the **official name and address** of your church (First Baptist

Church of New Braunfels, Texas), when the church was incorporated, and the pastor's name, address, and phone number.

STEP 4 BGCT CHURCHES

After the church receives its Non-Profit Tax exemption status, submit your application for affiliation with the BGCT. This is accomplished by requesting affiliation and beginning monthly contributions to the BGCT. Your letter and application should be sent to the Executive Committee, Baptist General Convention of Texas, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, TX 75246. Provide a statement that you are a Southern Baptist Church, that you are affiliated with the Bluebonnet Baptist Association, that your doctrinal views are in agreement with the Baptist Faith and Message, the **official name and address** of your church (First Baptist Church of New Braunfels, Texas), when the church was incorporated, and the pastor's name, address, and phone number.

STEP 5 BANK ACCOUNT

After the church receives its EIN and tax-exempt status it is required to open a bank account, in the official name of the church, with non-profit status. A letter from church leaders serves as authorization for check signers and individuals who may access the account. (See **BBA Church Plant Guidelines**)

STEP 6 TEXAS STATE COMPTROLLER REGISTRATION: FORM AP-209-2

After the church receives its EIN and tax-exempt status it must notify the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts of its exemption status. This form may be obtained online: [click here for Form AP-209](#) Include a copy of the letter from the Bluebonnet Baptist Association stating you are under their tax-exempt umbrella.

STEP 7 EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION FORM I-9

After the church receives its Articles of Incorporation, it must begin to maintain Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 for each employer.

Form I-9 may be downloaded from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services: [click here for Form I-9](#). These forms are to be maintained in church files and are subject to inspection by the Immigration Services. Failure to comply can result in significant fines.

STEP 8 TEXAS EMPLOYERS NEW HIRE REPORTING FORM

After the church receives its Articles of Incorporation it must report the hiring of each employee within 20 days of the employee's first day of work.

The Texas Employer New Hire Reporting Form may be obtained online [click here](#).

After establishing an account with the Attorney General of Texas at <https://portal.cs.oag.state.tx.us/wps/portal/AccountRequest>, the form may be completed online.