How to File a BOI Report: A Step-by-Step Guide

By SDO CPA

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Navigating the complexities of regulatory compliance is a critical aspect of managing a business. For small business owners, particularly those overseeing multiple entities, understanding and fulfilling the Beneficial Ownership Information (BOI) reporting requirements under the Corporate Transparency Act (CTA) is essential. This comprehensive guide aims to demystify the BOI reporting process and elucidate the benefits of obtaining a FinCEN Identifier (FinCEN ID), streamlining compliance efforts.

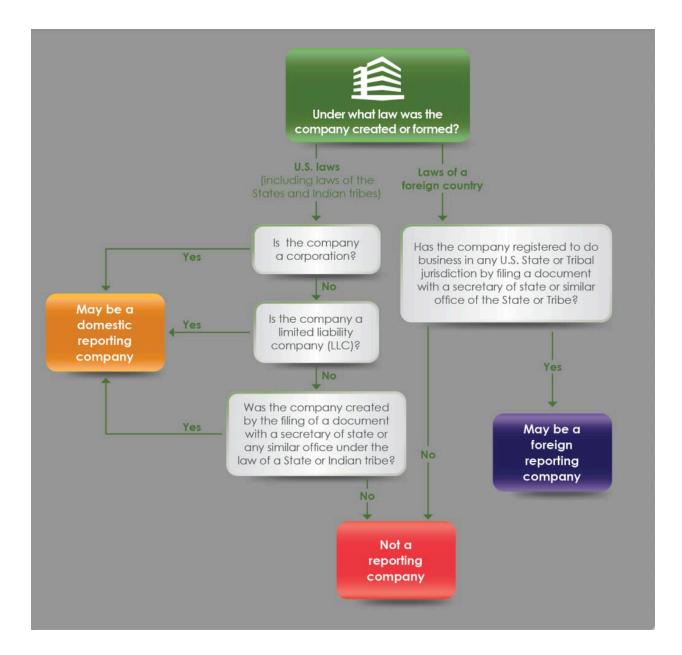
Understanding BOI Reporting and Its Significance

The Corporate Transparency Act, enacted to combat illicit financial activities such as money laundering and terrorism financing, mandates that certain entities disclose information about their beneficial owners to the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN). Beneficial owners are individuals who, directly or indirectly, own or control a company.

Entities Required to File BOI Reports:

The CTA specifies that the following entities must file Beneficial Ownership Information (BOI) reports:

- Corporations
- Limited Liability Companies (LLCs)
- Other similar entities include any entity created by filing a document with a secretary of state or similar office under the law of a state or Indian tribe.



Exemptions:

While many entities are required to file BOI reports, the CTA outlines specific exemptions. Notably, the "large operating company" exemption applies to entities that meet all the following criteria:

- 1. **Employment Threshold**: The company employs more than **20 full-time employees** in the United States.
- 2. **Physical Presence**: The company has an operating presence at a physical office within the United States.
- 3. **Revenue Threshold**: The company filed a federal income tax or information return the previous year demonstrating more than \$5 million in gross receipts or sales, excluding gross receipts or sales from sources outside the United States.

Entities meeting all three criteria are exempt from the BOI reporting requirements.

Additional Exemptions:

Beyond the sizeable operating company exemption, the CTA identifies 23 categories of entities exempt from BOI reporting, including:

- Publicly Traded Companies: Entities with securities registered under Section 12 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or required to file supplementary and periodic information under Section 15(d) of the same Act.
- Certain Regulated Entities: This includes banks, credit unions, broker-dealers, investment companies, and insurance companies, among others, which are already subject to federal or state regulation and reporting requirements.
- **Inactive Entities**: Entities that have existed for over a year, are not engaged in active business and meet specific criteria regarding assets and ownership.

The following table summarizes the 23 exemptions from BOI Reporting:

Exemption No.	Exemption Short Title
1	Securities reporting issuer
2	Governmental authority
3	Bank
4	Credit union
5	Depository institution holding company
6	Money services business
7	Broker or dealer in securities
8	Securities exchange or clearing agency
9	Other Exchange Act registered entity
10	Investment company or investment adviser
11	Venture capital fund adviser
12	Insurance company
13	State-licensed insurance producer
14	Commodity Exchange Act registered entity
15	Accounting firm
16	Public utility

17	Financial market utility
18	Pooled investment vehicle
19	Tax-exempt entity
20	Entity assisting a tax-exempt entity
21	Large operating company
22	Subsidiary of certain exempt entities
23	Inactive entity

Refer to FinCEN's Ownership Information Reporting Rule Fact Sheet for a comprehensive list of exemptions and detailed criteria.

Key Considerations:

- Multiple Entities: If you own or control numerous entities, each must be evaluated individually to determine BOI reporting obligations.
- Changes in Status: An entity that initially qualifies for an exemption but later fails to meet the criteria must file a BOI report within 30 days of the change.
- **Penalties for Non-Compliance**: Failure to comply with BOI reporting requirements can result in civil and criminal penalties, including fines and imprisonment.

Business owners must assess their entities against the CTA's criteria to determine their BOI reporting obligations accurately. Consulting with legal professionals or compliance experts is advisable to ensure adherence to these requirements.

Critical Deadlines for BOI Reporting

Compliance with BOI reporting is time-sensitive:

- Existing Entities (formed before January 1, 2024): Must file their initial BOI reports by January 1, 2025.
- New Entities (formed on or after January 1, 2024): Required to file within 90 days of formation.

Adhering to these deadlines is imperative to avoid potential penalties.

The FinCEN Identifier: A Tool for Simplified Compliance

A FinCEN Identifier (FinCEN ID) is a unique identifier assigned to individuals or entities upon request. For beneficial owners involved in multiple entities, obtaining a FinCEN ID offers several advantages:

- Streamlined Reporting: Instead of submitting personal information for each entity, the FinCEN ID can be used, reducing redundancy.
- **Enhanced Privacy:** Limits the amount of personal information shared across multiple filings.
- Efficient Updates: Simplifies the process of updating information across entities.

Steps to Obtain a FinCEN ID

- 1. Access the FinCEN ID Application Portal:
 - Visit the **BOI E-Filing System**.
- 2. Create or Log into Your Account:
 - Utilize your existing login.gov credentials or create a new account.
- 3. Submit Required Information:
 - o Provide personal details, including:
 - Full legal name
 - Date of birth
 - Residential address
 - Identification document (e.g., image of drivers license or passport)
- 4. Certification:
 - Certify the accuracy of the information provided.
- 5. Receive Your FinCEN ID:
 - Upon approval, your FinCEN ID will be issued for BOI filings.

For detailed instructions, refer to FinCEN's E-File Online Step-by-Step Instructions.

Filing Your BOI Report: A Step-by-Step Guide

Each step in filing your BOI report is designed to ensure your entity's compliance with the Corporate Transparency Act. Follow these steps carefully, keeping all details accurate to maintain compliance and avoid potential penalties.

1. Preparation

Before starting, collect all necessary information about each beneficial owner and company applicant. This ensures you can complete the filing process without delays or disruptions. Tip: Have all information ready since the form must be completed in one sitting.

• Gather Information:

- For each beneficial owner and company applicant, collect:
 - Full legal name
 - Date of birth
 - Residential address
 - Unique identifying number from an acceptable identification document
 - Image of the identification document

• Ensure Document Readiness:

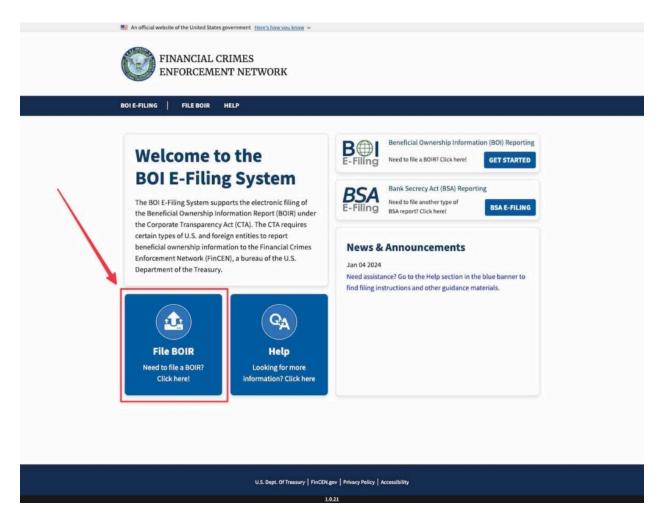
 Identification document images should be clear and meet file size requirements (acceptable formats include JPG, PNG, PDF; maximum size is 4 MB).

2. Access the BOI E-Filing System

Start your filing process by visiting the BOI E-Filing System. This portal allows you to either upload a completed PDF or fill out the form directly online.

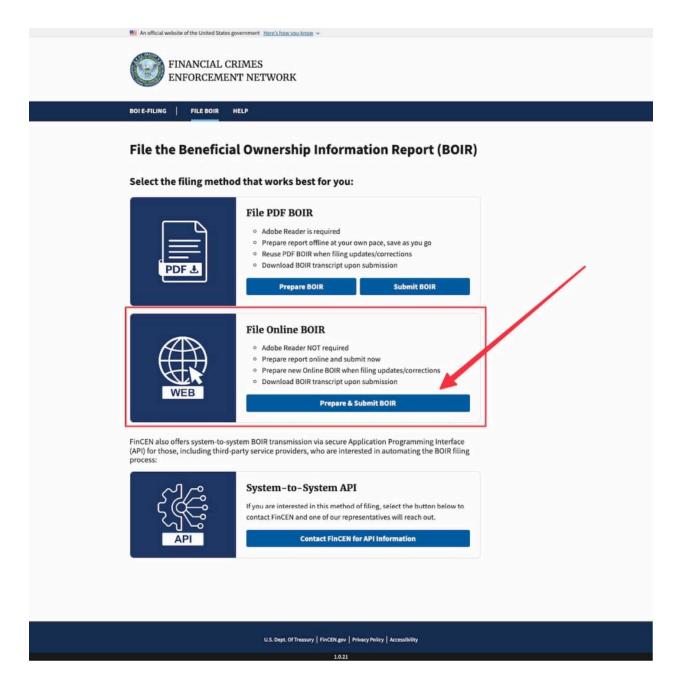
Navigate to the BOI E-Filing System:

Visit <u>BOI E-Filing System</u> and click on File BOIR



Choose Your Filing Method:

- Online Entry: Directly input information into the online form. This is how we'll guide you on how to file in this article. Click File Online BOIR
- o **PDF Upload:** Download, complete, and upload the BOI report PDF.



3. Complete the Filing Information Section

In this section, you'll specify the type of filing you're submitting, whether an initial report, a correction, or an update. This ensures your report is processed correctly based on its purpose.

• Select the Type of Filing:

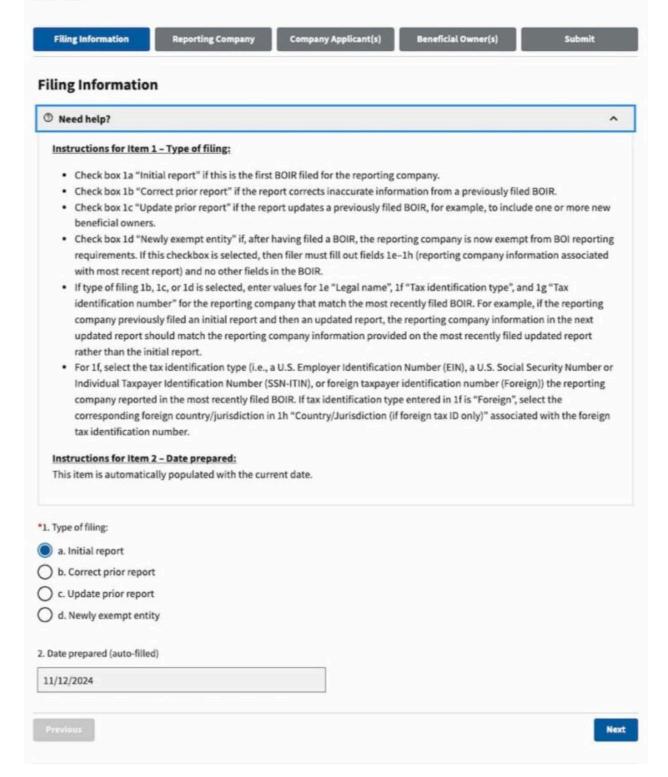
- **Initial Report:** This is the first time filing for the entity.
- Correct Prior Report: Amend inaccuracies in a previous submission.
- Update Prior Report: Reflect changes in previously reported information.
- Newly Exempt Entity: An updated BOI report for a newly exempt entity will only require that the entity (1) identify itself and (2) check a box noting its newly exempt status.

After selecting your Type of Filing, click Next.

Beneficial Ownership Information Report (BOIR)

OMB No. 1506-0076

Complete the report in its entirety with all required information. Fields marked with an asterisk (*) symbol are the fields that, at a minimum, must be completed by all companies to file the report. Reporting companies, however, must include all information 31 CFR 1010.380(b) requires them to provide, regardless of whether a field is marked with an asterisk (*) symbol. These information requirements are summarized above under HELP.



4. Provide Reporting Company Information

Enter key details about your company, such as legal name, any alternate names, tax ID, and formation jurisdiction. Accurate company information is critical for identification and future filings.

• Enter Details:

- The legal name of the entity.
- o Any trade or "doing business as" (DBA) names.
- o Tax identification number (EIN, SSN/ITIN, or foreign TIN).
- Jurisdiction of formation or registration.

• Request a FinCEN ID (Optional):

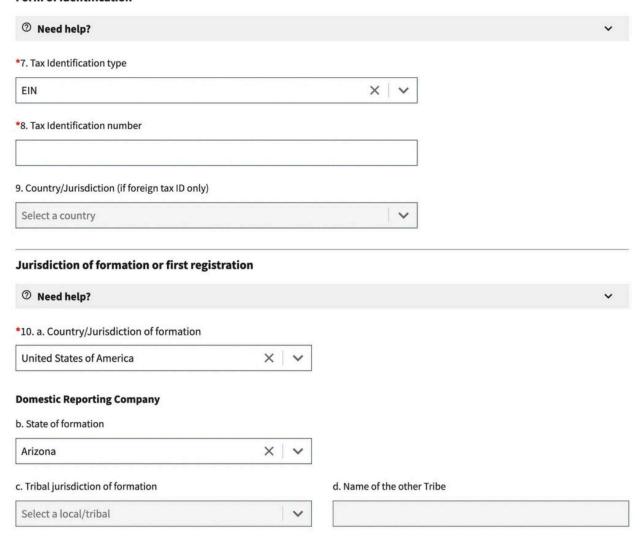
o Opt to receive a FinCEN ID for the reporting company if desired.

Part I. Reporting Company Information Need help? Reporting company information is entered in fields 3 through 16 of the BOIR. Instructions for Item 3 - Request to receive FinCEN Identifier (FinCEN ID): Check this box to receive a unique FinCEN Identifier for the reporting company. The FinCEN Identifier will be provided in the submission confirmation details provided to the filer after the BOIR is accepted. Instructions for Item 4 - Foreign pooled investment vehicle: Check this box if the reporting company is a foreign pooled investment vehicle required to report information pursuant to 31 CFR 1010.380(b)(2)(iii). . If the reporting company is a foreign pooled investment vehicle, the company need only report one beneficial owner who exercises substantial control over the entity. If more than one individual exercise substantial control over the entity, the entity shall report information with respect to the individual who has the greatest authority over the strategic management of the entity. The report should not include any information about company applicants. 3. Request to receive FinCEN ID 4. Foreign pooled investment vehicle Legal name and alternate name(s) Need help? Instructions for Item 5 - Reporting company legal name: Enter the reporting company's full legal name as recorded on the articles of incorporation or other documents creating or registering the entity. Instructions for Item 6 - Alternate name: Enter any of the reporting company's trade names, "doing business as" or DBA names, or "trading as" or T/A names. If the reporting company has multiple alternate names, use the "+" or "-" buttons in the BOIR to add additional alternate name fields (one field for each alternate name). Do not include the acronyms DBA or AKA with the alternate name. *5. Reporting Company legal name 6. Alternate name (e.g. trade name, DBA) **Add Alternate Name**

- Provide these details below and click Next
 - Tax Identification Type
 - Tax Identification Number
 - Country/Jurisdiction (if foreign tax ID only)

Jurisdiction of formation or first registration

Form of identification

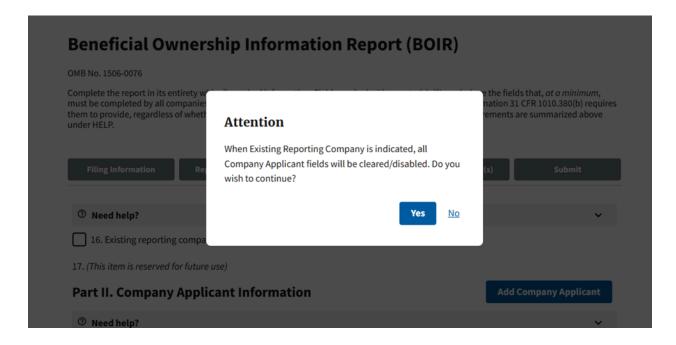


5. Provide Company Applicant Information

This section, required only for new entities, records information about the individual(s) who filed the company's formation documents. Skip this step if your company was formed before January 1, 2024, by checking the Existing reporting company (check if existing reporting company as of January 1, 2024) box.



Message if the box is checked:



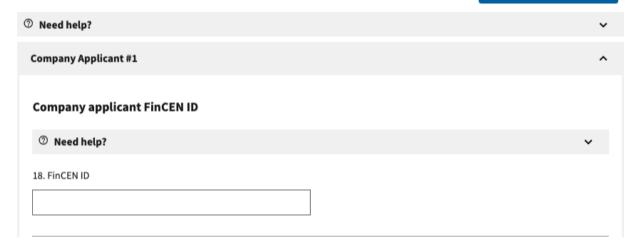
If your company was formed after January 1, 2024

• Enter Details for Each Applicant:

- You can skip the questions below if you enter the company applicant FinCEN ID.
- Full legal name.
- Date of birth.
- Residential address.
- The unique identifying number from an acceptable identification document.
- Image of the identification document.
- You can add additional Company Applicants by clicking the Add Company Applicant button.
- o Click on Next when done.

Part II. Company Applicant Information

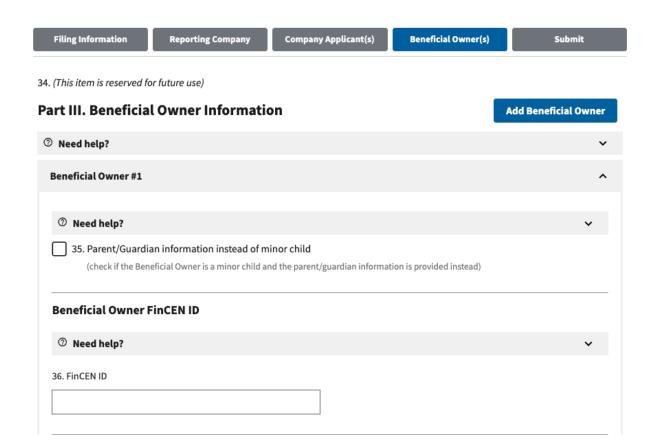




6. Provide Beneficial Owner Information

Input details for each beneficial owner, including their name, address, and identification. If a beneficial owner has a FinCEN ID, it can be used in place of these details. This simplifies the process, especially for individuals associated with multiple entities.

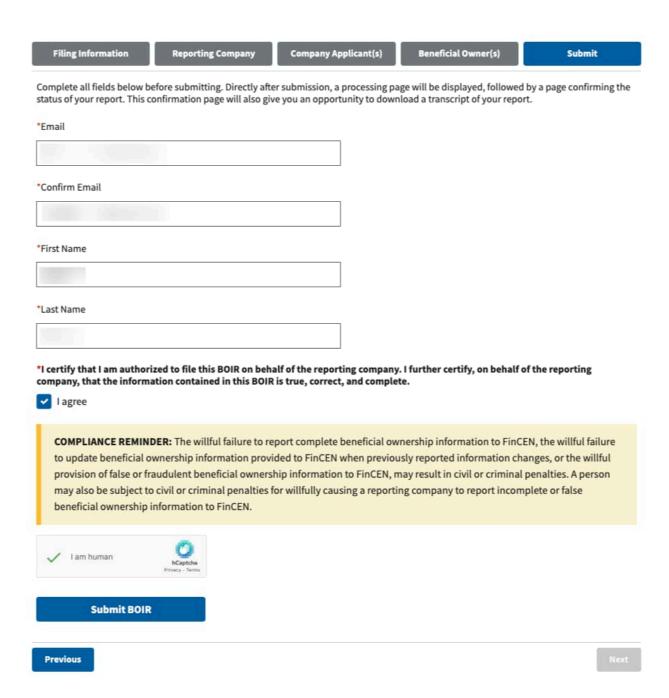
- Full Legal Name: Ensure the name matches the identification document exactly.
- Date of Birth: Use the format MM/DD/YYYY.
- Residential Address: Provide the current residential address.
- Identification Details:
 - Type of Document: Select from acceptable forms such as a driver's license or passport.
 - o **Document Number**: Enter the unique number from the identification document.
 - Issuing Jurisdiction: Specify the state or country that issued the document.
- **Document Image**: Upload a clear image of the identification document.
- Click Add Beneficial Owner and repeat the steps above if there is more than one owner.
- Click Next when done.



7. Review and Certify

Review all information carefully to ensure accuracy before certifying the report. Certifying confirms that all information is true and correct and meets legal compliance.

- Review Entries: Carefully check all information for accuracy.
- Enter information: Email, confirm email, first name, and last name.
- Certification: Confirm that the information provided is true and correct to the best of your knowledge.



8. Submit the Report

After reviewing and certifying, submit your BOI report online. You'll receive a confirmation with a tracking number, which serves as proof of your filing. Tip: click the Download Transcript for future reference.

- **Submission**: Once all sections are complete and reviewed, submit the BOI report through the e-filing system.
- **Confirmation**: After submission, you'll receive a confirmation receipt. It's advisable to save or print this for your records.

Submission Status Confirmation

Don't Forget Download your t	zanscript before closing the page!
SUBMISSION INFORMATION	
Status	FILING SUCCESSFUL. You may download the transcript above.
BOIRID	
Submission Tracking ID	
Received Timestamp (UTC)	2024
Reporting Company FinCEN ID	
SUBMITTER INFORMATION	
First name	
Last name	
E-mail address	

Please be advised that shortly following this submission, BOI E-Filing will send (to the submitter email address) a confirmation email with the status of your BOIR (as noted above). The confirmation email will NOT include the BOIR ID; therefore, it is important that you download your transcript (above) before closing this page.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on BOI Filing and FinCEN ID

1. Who Can Access BOI Information?

Access to BOI information is restricted to:

- Federal Agencies: For national security, intelligence, or law enforcement purposes.
- State, Local, and Tribal Law Enforcement: With court authorization.
- **Financial Institutions:** To facilitate compliance with customer due diligence requirements, with the reporting company's consent.

FinCEN implements stringent measures to protect the confidentiality of the information.

2. Is There a Cost for Filing?

No fee is associated with filing a BOI report directly with FinCEN. Be cautious of any correspondence requesting payment for BOI filing, as FinCEN does not send such requests.

3. What If Information Changes After Filing?

If there are changes to the reported information (e.g., a new beneficial owner or change in address), you must file an updated report within 30 days of the change. Timely updates ensure compliance and accuracy of records. BSA E-Filing

4. What Entities Are Exempt from Filing?

Certain entities are exempt from BOI reporting, including:

- Publicly Traded Companies: Subject to SEC reporting requirements.
- Banks and Credit Unions: Regulated under federal or state laws.
- Tax-Exempt Entities: Nonprofits described in section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.

A comprehensive list of exemptions is available in FinCEN's guidance.

5. What Are the Penalties for Non-Compliance?

Failure to comply with BOI reporting requirements can result in:

- Civil Penalties: Up to \$500 per day for each day the violation continues.
- **Criminal Penalties**: Fines up to \$10,000 and/or imprisonment for up to two years for willful violations.

It's vital to adhere to reporting obligations to avoid these penalties.

6. Who is the Company Applicant?

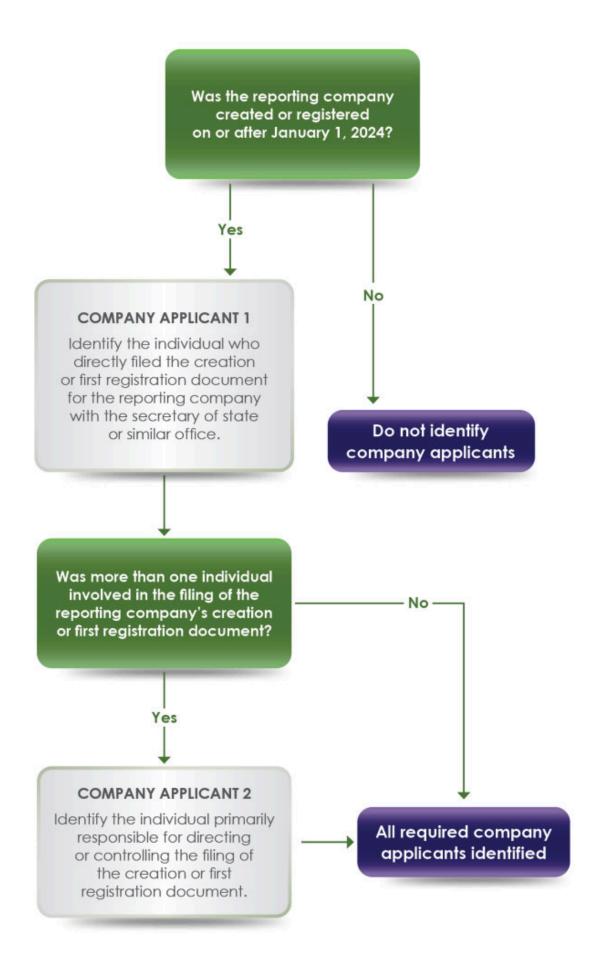
Understanding the requirements for reporting company applicant information is crucial for compliance with the Corporate Transparency Act (CTA). Below are detailed answers to common questions regarding company applicant information based on FinCEN's guidelines.

a. What is a Company Applicant?

A company applicant refers to:

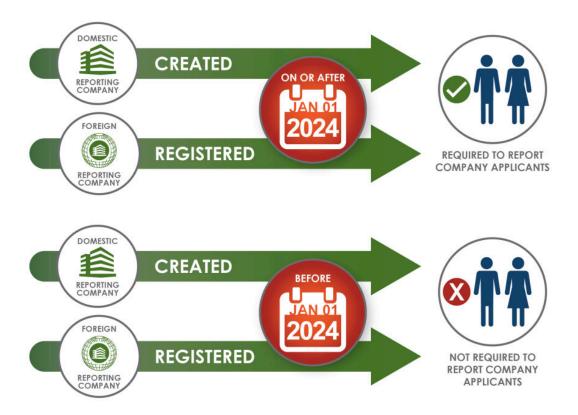
- The individual who directly files the document that creates or registers a reporting company.
- The individual primarily responsible for directing or controlling the filing of the relevant document by another person.

This definition ensures that both the person submitting the formation documents and the person overseeing the process are identified.



b. Who Needs to Report Company Applicant Information?

Reporting companies formed or registered on or after January 1, 2024, are required to provide company applicant information. Entities created before this date are exempt from reporting company applicant details.



c. What Information Must Be Provided About Company Applicants?

For each company applicant, the following information is required:

- Full legal name.
- · Date of birth.
- Residential street address.
- Unique identifying number from an acceptable identification document (e.g., passport, driver's license).
- An image of the identification document.

This information ensures accurate identification of individuals involved in the company's formation.

d. Are There Any Exemptions for Reporting Company Applicant Information?

Yes, entities formed or registered before January 1, 2024, are not required to report company applicant information. This exemption acknowledges that obtaining such information retrospectively may be challenging.

e. How Should a Reporting Company Determine Who the Company Applicant Is?

The reporting company should identify:

- The individual who directly filed the formation or registration document.
- The individual who directed or controlled the filing process.

In some cases, these roles may be fulfilled by the same person; in others, they may involve different individuals.

f. What If the Company Applicant Is No Longer Associated with the Company?

Even if the company applicant is no longer associated with the company, their information must still be reported if the entity was formed or registered on or after January 1, 2024. This requirement ensures transparency in the company's formation history.

g. Is There a Deadline for Reporting Company Applicant Information?

Yes, for entities formed or registered on or after January 1, 2024, company applicant information must be reported within 30 calendar days of the formation or registration date. Timely reporting is essential to comply with FinCEN's regulations.

h. Can a Company Applicant Use a FinCEN Identifier Instead of Providing Personal Information?

A company applicant can obtain a FinCEN Identifier (FinCEN ID) by submitting the required personal information directly to FinCEN. Once issued, the FinCEN ID can be used in BOI reports instead of personal details, streamlining the reporting process.

i. How Is the Privacy of Company Applicant Information Protected?

FinCEN implements stringent measures to protect the confidentiality of reported information. Under specific conditions, access is limited to authorized users, including certain government agencies and financial institutions. Unauthorized disclosure or use of this information is subject to penalties.

j. What Are the Penalties for Failing to Report Company Applicant Information?

Non-compliance with reporting requirements can result in civil penalties of up to \$500 per day until the violation is corrected. Willful violations may lead to criminal penalties, including fines of up to \$10,000 and imprisonment for up to two years. Adhering to all reporting obligations is crucial to avoid these consequences.

For more detailed information, refer to FinCEN's <u>Beneficial Ownership Information Reporting</u> Rule Fact Sheet.

Conclusion

Many business entities must comply with BOI reporting under the Corporate Transparency Act. Obtaining a FinCEN ID can significantly streamline the reporting process, especially for beneficial owners involved with multiple entities. By following the steps outlined in this guide, you can ensure timely and accurate filings, thereby maintaining compliance and contributing to the financial system's integrity.

For further assistance, refer to FinCEN's <u>BOI Reporting FAQs</u> or consult with a legal professional experienced in corporate compliance.

If you need help filing, our partner will assist you with the BOIR filing requirement. <u>Click here to get started.</u>