

# Instructions for Form SS-4

(Rev. January 2010)

## Application for Employer Identification Number



Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service

Section references are to the Internal Revenue Code unless otherwise noted.

## What's New

**Name of responsible party.** The instructions for Line 7a–b have been changed to request the name of the responsible party. See *Lines 7a–b, Name of responsible party* on page 3 for details.

**Election to file Form 944.** Eligible employers may now elect to file Form 944 annually instead of Forms 941 quarterly. See *Line 14. Do you want to file Form 944?* on page 5 for details.

## General Instructions

Use these instructions to complete Form SS-4, Application for Employer Identification Number. Also see *Do I Need an EIN?* on page 2 of Form SS-4.

## Purpose of Form

Use Form SS-4 to apply for an employer identification number (EIN). An EIN is a nine-digit number (for example, 12-3456789) assigned to sole proprietors, corporations, partnerships, estates, trusts, and other entities for tax filing and reporting purposes. The information you provide on this form will establish your business tax account.



*An EIN is for use in connection with your business activities only. Do not use your EIN in place of your social security number (SSN).*

## Reminders

**Apply online.** Generally, you can apply for and receive an EIN online using the Internet. See *How To Apply* later.



*This is a free service offered by the Internal Revenue Service at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). Beware of websites on the Internet that charge for this free service.*

**File only one Form SS-4.** Generally, a sole proprietor should file only one Form SS-4 and needs only one EIN, regardless of the number of businesses operated as a sole proprietorship or trade names under which a business operates. However, if the proprietorship incorporates or enters into a partnership, a new EIN is required. Also, each corporation in an affiliated group must have its own EIN.

**EIN applied for, but not received.** If you do not have an EIN by the time a return is due, write “Applied For” and the date you applied in the space shown for the number. Do not show your SSN as an EIN on returns.

If you do not have an EIN by the time a tax deposit is due, send your payment to the Internal Revenue Service Center for your filing area as shown in the instructions for the form that you are filing. Make your check or money order payable to the “United States Treasury” and show your name (as shown on Form SS-4), address, type of tax, period covered, and date you applied for an EIN.

**Electronic filing and payment.** Now, more than ever before, businesses can enjoy the benefits of filing and

paying their federal taxes electronically. Whether you rely on a tax professional or handle your own taxes, IRS offers you convenient programs to make filing and paying easier. Spend less time and worry on taxes and more time running your business. Use e-file and the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS) to your benefit.

- For e-file, visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) for additional information.
- For EFTPS, visit [www.eftps.gov](http://www.eftps.gov) or call EFTPS Customer Service at 1-800-555-4477, 1-800-733-4829 (TDD), or 1-800-244-4829 (Spanish).

**Federal tax deposits.** New employers that have a federal tax obligation will be pre-enrolled in the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS). EFTPS allows you to make all of your federal tax payments online at [www.eftps.gov](http://www.eftps.gov) or by telephone. Shortly after we have assigned you your EIN, you will receive instructions by mail for activating your EFTPS enrollment. You will also receive an EFTPS Personal Identification Number (PIN) that you will use to make your payments, as well as instructions for obtaining an Internet password you will need to make payments online.

If you are not required to make deposits by EFTPS, you can use Form 8109, Federal Tax Deposit (FTD) Coupon, to make deposits at an authorized depository. If you would like to receive Form 8109, call 1-800-829-4933. Allow 5 to 6 weeks for delivery. For more information on federal tax deposits, see Pub. 15 (Circular E), Employer's Tax Guide.

## How To Apply

You can apply for an EIN online, by telephone, by fax, or by mail depending on how soon you need to use the EIN. Use only one method for each entity so you do not receive more than one EIN for an entity.

**Online.** Taxpayers and authorized third party designees located within the United States and U.S. possessions can receive an EIN online and use it immediately to file a return or make a payment. Go to the IRS website at [www.irs.gov/businesses](http://www.irs.gov/businesses) and click on *Employer ID Numbers*.



*Taxpayers who apply online have an option to view, print, and save their EIN assignment notice at the end of the session. (Authorized third party designees will receive the EIN but the notice will be mailed to the applicant.)*



*Applicants who are not located within the United States or U.S. possessions cannot use the online application to obtain an EIN. Please use one of the other methods to apply.*

**Telephone.** You can receive your EIN by telephone and use it immediately to file a return or make a payment. Call the IRS at 1-800-829-4933. The hours of operation are 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. local time (Pacific time for Alaska and Hawaii). The person making the call must be authorized to sign the form or be an authorized designee. See *Third Party Designee* and *Signature* on page 6. Also see the *TIP* on page 2.

**Note.** International applicants must call 215-516-6999.

If you are applying by telephone, it will be helpful to complete Form SS-4 before contacting the IRS. An IRS representative will use the information from the Form SS-4 to establish your account and assign you an EIN. Write the

number you are given on the upper right corner of the form and sign and date it. Keep this copy for your records.

If requested by an IRS representative, mail or fax the signed Form SS-4 (including any Third Party Designee authorization) within 24 hours to the IRS address provided by the IRS representative.



*Taxpayer representatives can apply for an EIN on behalf of their client and request that the EIN be faxed to their client on the same day. **Note.** By using this procedure, you are authorizing the IRS to fax the EIN without a cover sheet.*

**Fax.** Under the Fax-TIN program, you can receive your EIN by fax within 4 business days. Complete and fax Form SS-4 to the IRS using the appropriate Fax-TIN number listed below. A long-distance charge to callers outside of the local calling area will apply. Fax-TIN numbers can only be used to apply for an EIN. The numbers may change without notice. Fax-TIN is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Be sure to provide your fax number so the IRS can fax the EIN back to you.

**Note.** By using this procedure, you are authorizing the IRS to fax the EIN without a cover sheet.

**Mail.** Complete Form SS-4 at least 4 to 5 weeks before you will need an EIN. Sign and date the application and mail it to the service center address for your state. You will receive your EIN in the mail in approximately 4 weeks. See also *Third Party Designee* on page 6.

Call 1-800-829-4933 to verify a number or to ask about the status of an application by mail.

#### Where to File or Fax

If your principal business, office or agency, or legal residence in the case of an individual, is located in:	File or fax with the "Internal Revenue Service Center" at:
One of the 50 states or the District of Columbia	Attn: EIN Operation Cincinnati, OH 45999  Fax-TIN: 859-669-5760
If you have no legal residence, principal place of business, or principal office or agency in any state:	Attn: EIN Operation Philadelphia, PA 19255  Fax-TIN: 215-516-1040

## How To Get Forms and Publications

**Internet.** You can access the IRS website 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) to download forms, instructions, and publications.

**Phone.** Call 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676) to order forms, instructions, and publications. You should receive your order or notification of its status within 10 workdays.

**DVD for Tax Products.** For small businesses, return preparers, or others who may frequently need tax forms or publications, a DVD containing over 2,000 tax products (including many prior year forms) can be purchased from the National Technical Information Service (NTIS).

To order Pub.1796, IRS Tax Products CD, call 1-877-233-6767 or connect to [www.irs.gov/cdorders](http://www.irs.gov/cdorders).

## Tax Help for Your Business

IRS-sponsored Small Business Workshops provide information about your federal and state tax obligations. For

information about workshops in your area, call 1-800-829-4933.

## Related Forms and Publications

The following forms and instructions may be useful to filers of Form SS-4.

- Form 990-T, Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return.
- Instructions for Form 990-T.
- Schedule C (Form 1040), Profit or Loss From Business.
- Schedule F (Form 1040), Profit or Loss From Farming.
- Instructions for Form 1041 and Schedules A, B, D, G, I, J, and K-1, U.S. Income Tax Return for Estates and Trusts.
- Form 1042, Annual Withholding Tax Return for U.S. Source Income of Foreign Persons.
- Instructions for Form 1065, U.S. Return of Partnership Income.
- Instructions for Form 1066, U.S. Real Estate Mortgage Investment Conduit (REMIC) Income Tax Return.
- Instructions for Forms 1120.
- Form 2553, Election by a Small Business Corporation.
- Form 2848, Power of Attorney and Declaration of Representative.
- Form 8821, Tax Information Authorization.
- Form 8832, Entity Classification Election.

For more information about filing Form SS-4 and related issues, see:

- Pub. 51 (Circular A), Agricultural Employer's Tax Guide;
- Pub. 15 (Circular E), Employer's Tax Guide;
- Pub. 538, Accounting Periods and Methods;
- Pub. 542, Corporations;
- Pub. 557, Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization;
- Pub. 583, Starting a Business and Keeping Records;
- Pub. 966, The Secure Way to Pay Your Federal Taxes for Business and Individual Taxpayers;
- Pub. 1635, Understanding Your EIN;
- Package 1023, Application for Recognition of Exemption Under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; and
- Package 1024, Application for Recognition of Exemption Under Section 501(a).

## Specific Instructions

Print or type all entries on Form SS-4. Follow the instructions for each line to expedite processing and to avoid unnecessary IRS requests for additional information. Enter "N/A" (nonapplicable) on the lines that do not apply.

**Line 1. Legal name of entity (or individual) for whom the EIN is being requested.** Enter the legal name of the entity (or individual) applying for the EIN exactly as it appears on the social security card, charter, or other applicable legal document. An entry is required.

**Individuals.** Enter your first name, middle initial, and last name. If you are a sole proprietor, enter your individual name, not your business name. Enter your business name on line 2. Do not use abbreviations or nicknames on line 1.

**Trusts.** Enter the name of the trust as it appears on the trust instrument.

**Estate of a decedent.** Enter the name of the estate. For an estate that has no legal name, enter the name of the decedent followed by "Estate."

**Partnerships.** Enter the legal name of the partnership as it appears in the partnership agreement.

**Corporations.** Enter the corporate name as it appears in the corporate charter or other legal document creating it.

**Plan administrators.** Enter the name of the plan administrator. A plan administrator who already has an EIN should use that number.

**Line 2. Trade name of business.** Enter the trade name of the business if different from the legal name. The trade name is the “doing business as” (DBA) name.



*Use the full legal name shown on line 1 on all tax returns filed for the entity. (However, if you enter a trade name on line 2 and choose to use the trade name instead of the legal name, enter the trade name on all returns you file.) To prevent processing delays and errors, always use the legal name only (or the trade name only) on all tax returns.*

**Line 3. Executor, administrator, trustee, “care of” name.** Trusts enter the name of the trustee. Estates enter the name of the executor, administrator, or other fiduciary. If the entity applying has a designated person to receive tax information, enter that person’s name as the “care of” person. Enter the individual’s first name, middle initial, and last name.

**Lines 4a–b. Mailing address.** Enter the mailing address for the entity’s correspondence. If the entity’s address is outside the United States or its possessions, you must enter the city, province or state, postal code, and the name of the country. Do not abbreviate the country name. If line 3 is completed, enter the address for the executor, trustee or “care of” person. Generally, this address will be used on all tax returns.

If the entity is filing the Form SS-4 only to obtain an EIN for the Form 8832, use the same address where you would like to have the acceptance or nonacceptance letter sent.



*File Form 8822, Change of Address, to report any subsequent changes to the entity’s mailing address.*

**Lines 5a–b. Street address.** Provide the entity’s physical address only if different from its mailing address shown in lines 4a–b. Do not enter a P.O. box number here. If the entity’s address is outside the United States or its possessions, you must enter the city, province or state, postal code, and the name of the country. Do not abbreviate the country name.

**Line 6. Country and state where principal business is located.** Enter the entity’s primary physical location.

**Lines 7a–b. Name of responsible party.** Enter the full name (first name, middle initial, last name, if applicable) and SSN, ITIN, or EIN of the entity’s responsible party as defined below.

**Responsible party defined.** For entities with shares or interests traded on a public exchange, or which are registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission, “responsible party” is (a) the principal officer, if the business is a corporation, (b) a general partner, if a partnership, (c) the owner of an entity that is disregarded as separate from its owner (disregarded entities owned by a corporation enter the corporation’s name and EIN), or (d) a grantor, owner, or trustor, if a trust.

For all other entities, “responsible party” is the person who has a level of control over, or entitlement to, the funds or assets in the entity that, as a practical matter, enables the individual, directly or indirectly, to control, manage, or direct the entity and the disposition of its funds and assets. The ability to fund the entity or the entitlement to the property of the entity alone, however, without any corresponding authority to control, manage, or direct the entity (such as in the case of a minor child beneficiary), does not cause the individual to be a responsible party.

If the person in question is an alien individual with a previously assigned individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN), enter the ITIN in the space provided and submit a copy of an official identifying document. If necessary, complete Form W-7, Application for IRS Individual Taxpayer Identification Number, to obtain an ITIN.

You must enter an SSN, ITIN, or EIN on line 7b unless the only reason you are applying for an EIN is to make an entity classification election (see Regulations sections 301.7701-1 through 301.7701-3) and you are a nonresident alien or other foreign entity with no effectively connected income from sources within the United States.

**Lines 8a–c. Limited liability company (LLC) information.** An LLC is an entity organized under the laws of a state or foreign country as a limited liability company. For federal tax purposes, an LLC may be treated as a partnership or corporation or be disregarded as an entity separate from its owner.

By default, a domestic LLC with only one member is disregarded as an entity separate from its owner and must include all of its income and expenses on the owner’s tax return (for example, Schedule C (Form 1040)). Also by default, a domestic LLC with two or more members is treated as a partnership. A domestic LLC may file Form 8832 to avoid either default classification and elect to be classified as an association taxable as a corporation. For more information on entity classifications (including the rules for foreign entities), see the instructions for Form 8832.

If the answer to line 8a is “Yes,” enter the number of LLC members. If the LLC is owned solely by a husband and wife in a community property state and the husband and wife choose to treat the entity as a disregarded entity, enter “1” on line 8b.



*Do not file Form 8832 if the LLC accepts the default classifications above. If the LLC is eligible to be treated as a corporation that meets certain tests and it will be electing S corporation status, it must timely file Form 2553. The LLC will be treated as a corporation as of the effective date of the S corporation election and does not need to file Form 8832. See the Instructions for Form 2553.*

**Line 9a. Type of entity.** Check the box that best describes the type of entity applying for the EIN. If you are an alien individual with an ITIN previously assigned to you, enter the ITIN in place of a requested SSN.



*This is not an election for a tax classification of an entity. See Disregarded entities on page 4.*

**Sole proprietor.** Check this box if you file Schedule C, C-EZ, or F (Form 1040) and have a qualified plan, or are required to file excise, employment, alcohol, tobacco, or firearms returns, or are a payer of gambling winnings. Enter your SSN (or ITIN) in the space provided. If you are a nonresident alien with no effectively connected income from sources within the United States, you do not need to enter an SSN or ITIN.

**Corporation.** This box is for any corporation other than a personal service corporation. If you check this box, enter the income tax form number to be filed by the entity in the space provided.



*If you entered “1120S” after the “Corporation” checkbox, the corporation must file Form 2553 no later than the 15th day of the 3rd month of the tax year the election is to take effect. Until Form 2553 has been received and approved, you will be considered a Form 1120 filer. See the Instructions for Form 2553.*

**Personal service corporation.** Check this box if the entity is a personal service corporation. An entity is a personal service corporation for a tax year only if:

- The principal activity of the entity during the testing period (prior tax year) for the tax year is the performance of personal services substantially by employee-owners, and
- The employee-owners own at least 10% of the fair market value of the outstanding stock in the entity on the last day of the testing period.

Personal services include performance of services in such fields as health, law, accounting, or consulting. For more information about personal service corporations, see the Instructions for Form 1120 and Pub. 542.



*If the corporation is recently formed, the testing period begins on the first day of its tax year and ends on the earlier of the last day of its tax year, or the last day of the calendar year in which its tax year begins.*

**Other nonprofit organization.** Check this box if the nonprofit organization is other than a church or church-controlled organization and specify the type of nonprofit organization (for example, an educational organization).



*If the organization also seeks tax-exempt status, you must file either Package 1023 or Package 1024. See Pub. 557 for more information.*

If the organization is covered by a group exemption letter, enter the four-digit group exemption number (GEN) in the last entry. (Do not confuse the GEN with the nine-digit EIN.) If you do not know the GEN, contact the parent organization. Get Pub. 557 for more information about group exemption numbers.

If the organization is a section 527 political organization, check the box for *Other nonprofit organization* and specify "section 527 organization" in the space to the right. To be recognized as exempt from tax, a section 527 political organization must electronically file Form 8871, Political Organization Notice of Section 527 Status, within 24 hours of the date on which the organization was established. The organization may also have to file Form 8872, Political Organization Report of Contributions and Expenditures. See [www.irs.gov/polorgs](http://www.irs.gov/polorgs) for more information.

**Plan administrator.** If the plan administrator is an individual, enter the plan administrator's taxpayer identification number (TIN) in the space provided.

**REMIC.** Check this box if the entity has elected to be treated as a real estate mortgage investment conduit (REMIC). See the Instructions for Form 1066 for more information.

**State/local government.** If you are a government employer and you are not sure of your social security and Medicare coverage options, go to [www.ncsssa.org/ssafames.html](http://www.ncsssa.org/ssafames.html) to obtain the contact information for your state's Social Security Administrator.

**Other.** If not specifically listed, check the "Other" box, enter the type of entity and the type of return, if any, that will be filed (for example, "Common Trust Fund, Form 1065" or "Created a Pension Plan"). Do not enter "N/A." If you are an alien individual applying for an EIN, see the *Lines 7a–b* instructions on page 3.

• **Household employer.** If you are an individual that will employ someone to provide services in your household, check the "Other" box and enter "Household Employer" and your SSN. If you are a trust that qualifies as a household employer, you do not need a separate EIN for reporting tax information relating to household employees; use the EIN of the trust.

• **Household employer agent.** If you are an agent of a household employer that is a disabled individual or other welfare recipient receiving home care services through a state or local program, check the "Other" box and enter "Household Employer Agent." (See Rev. Proc. 80-4, 1980-1 C.B. 581 and Notice 2003-70, 2003-43 I.R.B. 916.) If you are a state or local government also check the box for state/local government.

• **QSub.** For a qualified subchapter S subsidiary (QSub) check the "Other" box and specify "QSub."

• **Withholding agent.** If you are a withholding agent required to file Form 1042, check the "Other" box and enter "Withholding Agent."

**Disregarded entities.** A disregarded entity is an eligible entity that is disregarded as separate from its owner for federal income tax purposes. Disregarded entities include single-member limited liability companies (LLCs) that are disregarded as separate from their owners, qualified subchapter S subsidiaries (qualified subsidiaries of an S corporation), and certain qualified foreign entities. See the instructions for Form 8832 and Regulations section 301.7701-3 for more information on domestic and foreign disregarded entities.

A disregarded entity must have an EIN if it is subject to employment taxes or certain excise taxes. For wages paid during 2008 and in prior years, the reporting and payment of employment taxes for employees could be made using the name and EIN of either the owner or the disregarded entity (as explained in Notice 99-6, 1999-3 I.R.B. 12).

For wages paid on or after January 1, 2009, the disregarded entity is required to use its name and EIN for reporting and payment of employment taxes. A disregarded entity is also required to use its name and EIN to register for excise tax activities on Form 637, pay and report excise taxes reported on Forms 720, 730, 2290, and 11-C, and claim any refunds, credits, and payments on Form 8849. This requirement for reporting and paying excise taxes became effective after December 31, 2007. See the instructions for the employment and excise tax returns for more information.

Complete Form SS-4 for disregarded entities as follows.

- If a disregarded entity is filing Form SS-4 to obtain an EIN because it is required to report and pay employment and excise taxes (see above) or for non-federal purposes such as a state requirement, check the "Other" box for line 9a and write "disregarded entity" (or "disregarded entity-sole proprietorship" if the owner of the disregarded entity is an individual).
- If the disregarded entity is requesting an EIN for purposes of filing Form 8832 to elect classification as an association taxable as a corporation, or Form 2553 to elect S corporation status, check the "Corporation" box for line 9a and write "single-member" and the form number of the return that will be filed (Form 1120 or 1120S).
- If the disregarded entity is requesting an EIN because it has acquired one or more additional owners and its classification has changed to partnership under the default rules of Regulations section 301.7701-3(f), check the "Partnership" box for line 9a.

**Line 10. Reason for applying.** Check only one box. Do not enter "N/A." A selection is required.

**Started new business.** Check this box if you are starting a new business that requires an EIN. If you check this box, enter the type of business being started. Do not apply if you already have an EIN and are only adding another place of business.

**Hired employees.** Check this box if the existing business is requesting an EIN because it has hired or is hiring employees and is therefore required to file employment tax returns. Do not apply if you already have an EIN and are only hiring employees. For information on employment taxes (for example, for family members), see Pub. 15 (Circular E).



*You may have to make electronic deposits of all depository taxes (such as employment tax, excise tax, and corporate income tax) using the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS). See Federal tax deposits on page 1; section 11, Depositing Taxes, of Pub. 15 (Circular E); and Pub. 966.*

**Banking purpose.** Check this box if you are requesting an EIN for banking purposes only, and enter the banking purpose (for example, a bowling league for depositing dues or an investment club for dividend and interest reporting).

**Changed type of organization.** Check this box if the business is changing its type of organization. For example, the business was a sole proprietorship and has been incorporated or has become a partnership. If you check this box, specify in the space provided (including available space immediately below) the type of change made. For example, "From Sole Proprietorship to Partnership."

**Purchased going business.** Check this box if you purchased an existing business. Do not use the former owner's EIN unless you became the "owner" of a corporation by acquiring its stock.

**Created a trust.** Check this box if you created a trust, and enter the type of trust created. For example, indicate if the trust is a nonexempt charitable trust or a split-interest trust.

**Exception.** Do not file this form for certain grantor-type trusts. The trustee does not need an EIN for the trust if the trustee furnishes the name and TIN of the grantor/owner and the address of the trust to all payers. However, grantor trusts that do not file using Optional Method 1 and IRA trusts that are required to file Form 990-T, Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return, must have an EIN. For more information on grantor trusts, see the Instructions for Form 1041.

**TIP** Do not check this box if you are applying for a trust EIN when a new pension plan is established. Check "Created a pension plan."

**Created a pension plan.** Check this box if you have created a pension plan and need an EIN for reporting purposes. Also, enter the type of plan in the space provided.

**TIP** Check this box if you are applying for a trust EIN when a new pension plan is established. In addition, check the "Other" box on line 9a and write "Created a Pension Plan" in the space provided.

**Other.** Check this box if you are requesting an EIN for any other reason; and enter the reason. For example, a newly-formed state government entity should enter "Newly-Formed State Government Entity" in the space provided.

**Line 11. Date business started or acquired.** If you are starting a new business, enter the starting date of the business. If the business you acquired is already operating, enter the date you acquired the business. If you are changing the form of ownership of your business, enter the date the new ownership entity began. Trusts should enter the date the trust was funded. Estates should enter the date of death of the decedent whose name appears on line 1 or the date when the estate was legally funded.

**Line 12. Closing month of accounting year.** Enter the last month of your accounting year or tax year. An accounting or tax year is usually 12 consecutive months, either a calendar year or a fiscal year (including a period of 52 or 53 weeks). A calendar year is 12 consecutive months ending on December 31. A fiscal year is either 12 consecutive months ending on the last day of any month other than December or a 52-53 week year. For more information on accounting periods, see Pub. 538.

**Individuals.** Your tax year generally will be a calendar year.

**Partnerships.** Partnerships must adopt one of the following tax years.

- The tax year of the majority of its partners.
- The tax year common to all of its principal partners.

- The tax year that results in the least aggregate deferral of income.
- In certain cases, some other tax year.

See the Instructions for Form 1065 for more information.

**REMICs.** REMICs must have a calendar year as their tax year.

**Personal service corporations.** A personal service corporation generally must adopt a calendar year unless it meets one of the following requirements.

- It can establish a business purpose for having a different tax year.
- It elects under section 444 to have a tax year other than a calendar year.

**Trusts.** Generally, a trust must adopt a calendar year except for the following trusts.

- Tax-exempt trusts.
- Charitable trusts.
- Grantor-owned trusts.

**Line 13. Highest number of employees expected in the next 12 months.** Complete each box by entering the number (including zero ("-0-")) of "Agricultural," "Household," or "Other" employees expected by the applicant in the next 12 months.

If no employees are expected, skip line 14.

**Line 14. Do you want to file Form 944?** If you expect your employment tax liability to be \$1,000 or less in a full calendar year, you are eligible to file Form 944 annually (once each year) instead of filing Form 941 quarterly (every three months). Your employment tax liability generally will be \$1,000 or less if you expect to pay \$4,000 or less in total wages subject to social security and Medicare taxes and federal income tax withholding. If you qualify and want to file Form 944 instead of Forms 941, check the box on line 14. If you do not check the box, then you must file Form 941 for every quarter.

**TIP** For employers in the U.S. possessions, generally, if you pay \$6,536 or less in wages subject to social security and Medicare taxes, you are likely to pay \$1,000 or less in employment taxes.

For more information on employment taxes, see Pub. 15 (Circular E); or Pub. 51 (Circular A) if you have agricultural employees (farmworkers).

**Line 15. First date wages or annuities were paid.** If the business has employees, enter the date on which the business began to pay wages. If the business does not plan to have employees, enter "N/A."

**Withholding agent.** Enter the date you began or will begin to pay income (including annuities) to a nonresident alien. This also applies to individuals who are required to file Form 1042 to report alimony paid to a nonresident alien.

**Line 16.** Check the one box on line 16 that best describes the principal activity of the applicant's business. Check the "Other" box (and specify the applicant's principal activity) if none of the listed boxes applies. You must check a box.

**Construction.** Check this box if the applicant is engaged in erecting buildings or engineering projects (for example, streets, highways, bridges, tunnels). The term "Construction" also includes special trade contractors (for example, plumbing, HVAC, electrical, carpentry, concrete, excavation, etc. contractors).

**Real estate.** Check this box if the applicant is engaged in renting or leasing real estate to others; managing, selling, buying, or renting real estate for others; or providing related real estate services (for example, appraisal services). Also check this box for mortgage real estate investment trusts (REITs). Mortgage REITs are engaged in issuing shares of funds consisting primarily of portfolios of real estate

mortgage assets with gross income of the trust solely derived from interest earned.

**Rental and leasing.** Check this box if the applicant is engaged in providing tangible goods such as autos, computers, consumer goods, or industrial machinery and equipment to customers in return for a periodic rental or lease payment. Also check this box for equity real estate investment trusts (REITS). Equity REITS are engaged in issuing shares of funds consisting primarily of portfolios of real estate assets with gross income of the trust derived from renting real property.

**Manufacturing.** Check this box if the applicant is engaged in the mechanical, physical, or chemical transformation of materials, substances, or components into new products. The assembling of component parts of manufactured products is also considered to be manufacturing.

**Transportation & warehousing.** Check this box if the applicant provides transportation of passengers or cargo; warehousing or storage of goods; scenic or sight-seeing transportation; or support activities related to transportation.

**Finance & insurance.** Check this box if the applicant is engaged in transactions involving the creation, liquidation, or change of ownership of financial assets and/or facilitating such financial transactions; underwriting annuities/insurance policies; facilitating such underwriting by selling insurance policies; or by providing other insurance or employee-benefit related services.

**Health care & social assistance.** Check this box if the applicant is engaged in providing physical, medical, or psychiatric care or providing social assistance activities such as youth centers, adoption agencies, individual/family services, temporary shelters, daycare, etc.

**Accommodation & food services.** Check this box if the applicant is engaged in providing customers with lodging, meal preparation, snacks, or beverages for immediate consumption.

**Wholesale-agent/broker.** Check this box if the applicant is engaged in arranging for the purchase or sale of goods owned by others or purchasing goods on a commission basis for goods traded in the wholesale market, usually between businesses.

**Wholesale-other.** Check this box if the applicant is engaged in selling goods in the wholesale market generally to other businesses for resale on their own account, goods used in production, or capital or durable nonconsumer goods.

**Retail.** Check this box if the applicant is engaged in selling merchandise to the general public from a fixed store; by direct, mail-order, or electronic sales; or by using vending machines.

**Other.** Check this box if the applicant is engaged in an activity not described above. Describe the applicant's principal business activity in the space provided.

**Line 17.** Use line 17 to describe the applicant's principal line of business in more detail. For example, if you checked the "Construction" box on line 16, enter additional detail such as "General contractor for residential buildings" on line 17. An entry is required. For mortgage REITS indicate mortgage REIT and for equity REITS indicate what type of real property is the principal type (residential REIT, nonresidential REIT, miniwarehouse REIT).

**Line 18.** Check the applicable box to indicate whether or not the applicant entity applying for an EIN was issued one previously.

**Third Party Designee.** Complete this section only if you want to authorize the named individual to receive the entity's EIN and answer questions about the completion of Form

SS-4. The designee's authority terminates at the time the EIN is assigned and released to the designee. You must complete the signature area for the authorization to be valid.

**Signature.** When required, the application must be signed by (a) the individual, if the applicant is an individual, (b) the president, vice president, or other principal officer, if the applicant is a corporation, (c) a responsible and duly authorized member or officer having knowledge of its affairs, if the applicant is a partnership, government entity, or other unincorporated organization, or (d) the fiduciary, if the applicant is a trust or an estate. Foreign applicants may have any duly-authorized person (for example, division manager) sign Form SS-4.

**Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Act Notice.** We ask for the information on this form to carry out the Internal Revenue laws of the United States. We need it to comply with section 6109 and the regulations thereunder, which generally require the inclusion of an employer identification number (EIN) on certain returns, statements, or other documents filed with the Internal Revenue Service. If your entity is required to obtain an EIN, you are required to provide all of the information requested on this form. Information on this form may be used to determine which federal tax returns you are required to file and to provide you with related forms and publications.

We disclose this form to the Social Security Administration (SSA) for their use in determining compliance with applicable laws. We may give this information to the Department of Justice for use in civil and/or criminal litigation, and to cities, states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. commonwealths and possessions for use in administering their tax laws. We may also disclose this information to other countries under a tax treaty, to federal and state agencies to enforce federal nontax criminal laws, and to federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies to combat terrorism.

We will be unable to issue an EIN to you unless you provide all of the requested information that applies to your entity. Providing false information could subject you to penalties.

You are not required to provide the information requested on a form that is subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act unless the form displays a valid OMB control number. Books or records relating to a form or its instructions must be retained as long as their contents may become material in the administration of any Internal Revenue law. Generally, tax returns and return information are confidential, as required by section 6103. Section 6109 requires paid preparers to provide their identifying number.

The time needed to complete and file this form will vary depending on individual circumstances. The estimated average time is:

<b>Recordkeeping</b> . . . . .	8 hrs., 36 min.
<b>Learning about the law or the form</b> . . . . .	42 min.
<b>Preparing, copying, assembling, and sending the form to the IRS</b> . . . . .	52 min.

If you have comments concerning the accuracy of these time estimates or suggestions for making this form simpler, we would be happy to hear from you. You can write to Internal Revenue Service, Tax Products Coordinating Committee, SE:W:CAR:MP:T:T:SP, IR-6526, 1111 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20224. Do not send the form to this address. Instead, see *Where to File or Fax* on page 2.