***Federal Workplan***

Designed for steering committees and boards of co-operatives pursuing federal incorporation, this plan can help coordinate tasks and distribute resources. The Notes/Timeline section has many links to other [Co-op Creator](https://coopcreator.ca/) resources to help. Use the “Roles” column to assign tasks to people in your committee or to note deadlines and other details as needed.

**Short-term goals (1-6 months)**

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| **Task** | **Roles** | **Notes/Timeline** |
| Plan a meeting. |  | See tool on [planning a meeting](https://coopcreator.ca/resource/hosting-a-meeting/). |
| Appoint a steering committee. |  | The committee should include 3-9 people. |
| Determine preliminary features and budget for the of the co-op. |  | Check out our tools on  [budgets](https://coopcreator.ca/resource/budgeting-and-co-operatives/), [important questions](https://coopcreator.ca/resource/incorporation-checklist/), and our [video on debt and equity](https://coopcreator.ca/resource/debt-vrs-equity-video/). |
| Reserve a legal name for the co-op by getting a [NUANS report](https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/075.nsf/eng/home). |  | Check out our [video](https://coopcreator.ca/resource/choosing-a-name/) and our [blog post](https://cooperativesfirst.com/blog/2018/04/10/8-to-dos-when-naming-a-co-operative/) on how to name your co-op. Reserve your name [here](https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/075.nsf/eng/home)! |
| Incorporate your co-op: file the Articles of Iincorporation with Corporations Canada. | Co-operatives First can help with this step. | Access the articles [here](https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cd-dgc.nsf/eng/cs03954.html)! Once you’ve filed these, the government usually processes them in 2 to 6 weeks. [Here](https://coopcreator.ca/resource/incorporation-checklist/) are some more details about incorporation. |
| Open a bank account. |  | Once you receive the certificate of incorporation most banks will allow the co-op to open an account. |
| Conduct a feasibility study. |  | Consider working with a third-party expert. Check out the [business development centres](https://coopcreator.ca/resource/provincial-business-development-centres/) for more information. |

**Mid-term goals (6-12 months)**

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| Draft the co-op’s mission, vision, and values. |  | Check out [our tool](https://coopcreator.ca/resource/shaping-your-co-operatives-identity/). |
| Begin drafting the co-op’s bylaws. | Co-operatives First can help with this step. | Check out [our resources](https://coopcreator.ca/resource/guide-to-federal-bylaws/)!  These must be submitted after incorporation. |
| Draft a membership agreement and develop a system that tracks the sale of shares. |  | Member equity needs to be tracked separately from other sources of revenue.  Check out [our template](https://coopcreator.ca/resource/sample-membership-agreement/) membership agreement. |
| Host a membership drive to approve the bylaws, mission, and visions statements. |  | This should be done within a few months of incorporating. |
| Submit the approved bylaws to Corporations Canada |  |  |
| Begin business planning. |  | Consider using our [Biz Plan Creator](https://bizplan.coopcreator.ca/)! |

**Long-term goals (12-24 months)**

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| Strike the following committees to prepare for the first AGM:   * Nominations * Finance and audit * Governance | Nominations:  Finances and audit:  Governance: | *Nominations*: develop a process for accepting board nominees.  *Finance and audit*: prepare a financial report and suggest an auditor.  *Governance*: finalize the bylaws and any resolutions. |
| Plan for the AGM. |  | Check out our [AGM planning guide](https://coopcreator.ca/resource/annual-meetings-and-co-operatives/)!  The AGM must be held within **18 months** of incorporation |
| Prepare any resolutions and select an auditor. |  |  |
| Finalize preparations for the board election. |  |  |
| Hold first AGM. |  | This meeting will include [electing the board](https://coopcreator.ca/resource/guidelines-for-elections-at-a-co-operatives-elections/). |
| Submit the first annual return |  | This should be mailed to the co-op’s registered address. |