FREE CHECKLIST

# Restoration Company Startup Checklist

One-page plan, licenses, certifications, starter kit, job paperwork and your first 90 days.

## 1. Your one-page plan

**Services, year one (water only, or water plus one more):**

**Service area (towns you can reach in about an hour at 2 a.m.):**

**First referral partners (5 plumbers, 3 property managers, 2 insurance agents):**

**Gear budget (lean kit or two-job kit):**

**Cash to live on (months with no salary):**

**Cash to float jobs (wages, fuel, supplies while insurers pay):**

**Goal for month six (jobs per month):**

**First hire (what has to be true first):**

## 2. Legal setup

- ☐ Pick an entity with an accountant (LLC is common)
- ☐ Get an EIN from IRS.gov (free: never pay a site for it)
- ☐ Open a business bank account
- ☐ Check your state contractor board (example: California CSLB, $1,000 / permit / employees)
- ☐ Check your state mold rules (examples: TX 25 contiguous sq ft, NY and FL over 10 sq ft)
- ☐ EPA lead (RRP) firm certification if you disturb paint in pre-1978 homes ($300 where EPA runs it)
- ☐ Insurance: general liability, commercial auto, workers' comp when you hire; ask about pollution/mold and equipment coverage
- ☐ Attorney-written work authorization for your state
- ☐ Written respiratory protection program if your crew wears respirators (OSHA 1910.134)

## 3. Certifications

- ☐ IICRC WRT, Water Damage Restoration Technician (3 days, 19 hours, no prerequisites)
- ☐ IICRC Certified Firm ($25 application + prorated year; $199 renewal; expires Dec 31)
- ☐ IICRC ASD, Applied Structural Drying (needs WRT; in person only)

- ☐ IICRC AMRT before selling mold work (needs WRT)
- ☐ Put continuing education renewal dates in your calendar

## 4. Lean starter kit (list prices checked Nov 14, 2026)

| Item | Example model | Qty | Listed total |
|---|---|---|---|
| LGR dehumidifier, XL | Dri-Eaz LGR 7000XLi | 1 | $3,525 |
| Air movers | Dri-Eaz Velo Pro | 8 | $3,680 |
| HEPA air scrubber, 500 CFM | Phoenix GuardianR Pro | 1 | $1,325 |
| Moisture meter kit | Delmhorst BD-2100 kit | 1 | $736 |
| Thermal camera | FLIR C5 | 1 | $699 |
| **Total** | | | **$9,965** |

*Not included: truck or van, extractor, PPE and respirators, containment, training, license fees, insurance, software, marketing and float cash. Brands are examples, not endorsements.*

## 5. Paperwork for every job

- ☐ Signed work authorization before work starts
- ☐ Photos: arrival, source of loss, every affected room, tear-out, equipment set, completion
- ☐ Moisture readings logged every day, with locations
- ☐ Equipment log: what was placed, where and for how many days
- ☐ Category of water and how you decided it (inspect; storm water is not automatically Category 3)
- ☐ Estimate written line by line (many carriers read Xactimate)
- ☐ Completion sign-off and deductible collected

## 6. First 90 days: getting calls

- ☐ Phone answered by a person or answering system 24/7
- ☐ Google Business Profile: main category Water damage restoration service, real service area, hours, photos
- ☐ Review request sent to every customer (not just the happy ones)
- ☐ Meet 5 plumbers, 3 property managers, 2 insurance agents
- ☐ Check Local Services Ads ("Water damage services" category) once licenses are in place
- ☐ Simple website: number at top, one page per service, service area, real photos
- ☐ Ask your attorney before paying for any referral (Florida bars it on insurance-paid work)

*Not legal advice. Rules change by state and city. Have a local attorney review your contracts and confirm which licenses apply to you.*