Company Registration in Zambia

The Complete Checklist & Cost Guide for Foreign Investors (2026)

Foreign ownership	Up to 100%	**Authority**	PACRA
Timeline	~2-4 weeks end-to-end	**Incorporation**	~24 hrs to a few days
Corporate tax	30% (VAT 16%)	**Min. nominal capital**	ZMW 20,000 (~USD 740)

1. Before you start

- ☐ Choose your structure: Private Company Limited by Shares suits most foreign investors
- ☐ Foreign firms: decide between a local subsidiary, a branch (foreign company), or a business name
- ☐ Confirm directors (min. 2; at least half must be resident in Zambia) and shareholders
- ☐ Identify the ultimate beneficial owner(s) for the mandatory BO statement
- ☐ Secure a registered physical office address in Zambia
- ☐ Note: 100% foreign ownership is allowed; min. nominal capital ZMW 20,000 (~USD 740)

2. Reserve your company name

- ☐ Apply to PACRA (online portal or the One Stop Shop) with up to 3 preferred names in order
- ☐ Avoid names using 'Zambia' as a prefix or too similar to existing ones
- ☐ An approved name is reserved for 30 days (extendable by a further 90)
- ☐ Name clearance fee ~ZMW 83 (local) / ~ZMW 166 (foreign company)

3. Documents to prepare

- ☐ Articles of Association (standard, or 4 copies if non-standard)
- ☐ Companies Form 3 (Application for Incorporation) and Form 5 (Consent to Act as Director/Secretary)
- ☐ Companies Form 11 (Declaration of Compliance) - signed before a Commissioner of Oaths
- ☐ Statement of Beneficial Ownership (full particulars of the beneficial owners)
- ☐ Certified ID copies for all directors & shareholders (passports for foreigners, NRCs for Zambians)
- ☐ Branch (extra): Form 46/38, parent Certificate of Incorporation, charter, and a Zambia-resident documentary agent

4. Register with PACRA

- [ ] Submit the incorporation documents via the PACRA portal or at a PACRA office
- [ ] Pay the fees: filing fee 2.5% of nominal capital, plus certificate/declaration fees
- [ ] Typical all-in government cost ~ZMW 1,300 (~USD 48) for a private company
- [ ] Receive your Certificate of Incorporation (~24 hours to a few working days)

5. After registration

- [ ] Obtain a Taxpayer Identification Number (TPIN) from the ZRA (auto-generated for post-2020 companies)
- [ ] Register for VAT once turnover thresholds are met
- [ ] Register as an employer with NAPSA (5%+5%), NHIMA (1%+1%) and the Workers' Compensation Fund
- [ ] Open a corporate bank account with your Certificate of Incorporation
- [ ] Obtain any sector-specific licences and permits
- [ ] File annual returns with PACRA within 3 months of financial year-end

6. Foreign investors - don't forget

- [ ] 100% foreign ownership is allowed - no mandatory Zambian shareholder
- [ ] At least half of your directors must be resident in Zambia; a branch needs a resident documentary agent
- [ ] Profits and dividends can be repatriated freely under Zambia's liberalised exchange regime
- [ ] ZDA incentives (tax holidays, duty relief) for priority-sector / MFEZ investment ~USD 500,000+
- [ ] Foreign directors living & working in Zambia need an Investor's or Employment Permit
- [ ] Zambia is a member of COMESA, SADC and the AfCFTA, and is AGOA-eligible - a large regional market