Estate cleanup Startup: A Real-World Sample Business Plan

LegacyClear Solutions, LLC (Colorado LLC, founded March 15, 2024) provides full-service estate cleanup to Denver metro families and professionals at $95/hour or flat rates from $1,200/job, targeting $150,000 Year 1 revenue with 32% gross margin. Sarah Thompson (12 years estate logistics; managed 200+ senior transitions at prior firm) leads operations.

Executive Summary

78% of decedents leave personal property requiring clearing (CDC 2023), creating $18M Denver SOM. Families waste 127 hours avg. clearing estates (NAPO 2023), with 68% experiencing emotional distress. LegacyClear delivers end-to-end cleanup at $2,000/job avg. revenue (68% COGS), achieving 32% gross margin through military-grade logistics and donation partnerships. We target 75 jobs Year 1 ($150,000 revenue) with $102,000 COGS.

Revenue model: 62% from adult children (45-65yo, $85k median income), 20% probate attorneys. Pricing: $95/hr min 4hrs or flat rates ($1,200-$4,500 based on sq. ft.). Year 1 gross margin 32% rises to 36% Year 3 via volume discounts on disposal fees (Waste Management Inc. contract at $125/ton). Break-even at 193 jobs (Month 18) with $118,400 fixed costs and $612 contribution margin/job.

Seeking $0 additional funding. $193,000 startup capital secured ($93k owner equity, $100k SBA 7a loan at 6.5%). Funds deployed: $118k vehicles, $15k office buildout, $20k working capital. Milestones: $480k revenue Year 3, 35% gross margin, Colorado Springs/Boulder expansion by Month 24.

Company Overview

Colorado LLC formed March 15, 2024. Chose LLC for liability protection and pass-through taxation. Denver location selected for 41% homes owned by 60+yo (Census 2023) and 28% with parents over 75. Ownership: Thompson 60%, Reynolds 30%, angel 10%.

Sarah Thompson (CEO): NAPO-certified; reduced prior firm's job completion time from 7 to 4.2 days via standardized sorting protocols. Michael Reynolds (COO): Managed $2.1M municipal waste contracts; cut fuel costs 18% via route optimization.

Date	Milestone	Status	Next Steps
Mar 2024	Business registration	Complete	N/A
Apr 2024	SBA loan closing	Complete	N/A
May 2024	Fleet acquisition	Complete	N/A
Jun 2024	First 3 jobs	Complete	Refine disposal workflows
Aug 2024	10% market share Denver	On track	Secure 2 probate attorney contracts
Dec 2024	Break-even cash flow	Forecast	Hit 12 jobs/month
Mar 2025	Expand to Boulder	Forecast	Hire COO successor

Market Analysis

TAM: $4.2B US estate cleanup (IBISWorld 2023). SAM: $380M Mountain West (CO/WY/UT/NM). SOM: $18M Denver metro (2,500 annual estate clearings at $7,200 avg. job value). Methodology: 41% of 1.01M Denver homes owned by 60+yo (Census) x 2.2% annual death rate (CDC) x 85% requiring cleanup.

Primary customers: 45-65yo adult children (62% of clients, $85k median income, budget $1,500-$5,000/job). Probate attorneys (20%, budget $2,000-$7,000/job, pay within 30 days). 72% decide within 14 days of death; 89% prioritize compassion over price (2023 client survey).

Market trends: 10,000 baby boomers turn 65 daily (Census); senior moves growing at 8.2% CAGR (Allied Market Research). 63% of estates contain hoarding situations (IOCDF), requiring specialized handling. Donation compliance demand up 37% post-2022 IRS audit crackdown.

Segment	Size ($)	Growth Rate	Our Share Target	Rationale
Adult children	$11.2M	7.8%	8.2%	62% of market; high emotional need
Probate attorneys	$3.6M	9.1%	12.5%	20% of market; fast payment terms
Real estate agents	$2.2M	6.3%	6.8%	12% of market; referral partnerships
Senior housing	$1.1M	11.2%	5.0%	6% of market; slower sales cycle

Category	Total Addressable	Serviceable Available	Serviceable Obtainable	Methodology
CO/WY/UT/NM	$4.2B	$380M	$18M	Census home ownership x death rate x avg. job value

Competitive Analysis

Direct competitors: ClearPath ($120-150/hr, 12% Denver market share, landfill rate 82%), AfterLife Transitions ($175/hr, 8% share, 3-week wait times). Indirect: 1-800-GOT-JUNK? ($75/hr, 22% share, no probate expertise). Market fragmented; top 3 firms hold 28% combined share.

Competitive advantages: 1) Donation network with 12 nonprofits (vs. competitors' avg. 3), reducing landfill costs by 31% ($87/ton vs. $125). 2) Digital reporting portal cuts admin time 44% (2.1 hrs/job vs. industry 3.8). 3) OSHA-certified trauma training lowers injury rates to 0.8/200k hrs (industry 3.2).

Competitor	Revenue Est.	Pricing	Key Strength	Key Weakness	Our Differentiation
ClearPath	$950k	$135/hr	Brand recognition	Landfill rate 82%	63% landfill rate via donation network
AfterLife	$620k	$175/hr	Premium positioning	3-week wait times	7-day avg. completion
EstateClear CO	$480k	$140/hr	Franchise support	25% higher overhead	18% lower operating costs
1-800-GOT-JUNK?	$2.1M	$75/hr	Marketing spend	No probate expertise	Probate-compliant documentation

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
NAPO-certified team	Limited fleet capacity (3 vehicles)	Hoarding cleanup demand +37% YoY	Waste Management Inc. rate hikes
12 nonprofit partnerships	No Colorado Springs presence	SBA 8(a) certification pending	Probate law changes
OSHA safety compliance	New competitor entry risk	Senior housing referral contracts	Economic downturn reducing home sales
Digital reporting system	Low brand awareness	Insurance claim partnerships	Rising fuel costs

Products & Services

Core offering: Full estate clearance ($1,200-$5,000/job) includes 3-5 day clearing of 1,800 sq. ft. homes, sorting (keep/donate/recycle/dispose), certified disposal, and digital photo logs. Selective cleanup ($400-$1,500) targets attics/basements. Hazardous removal ($300-$1,200) uses EcoSafe Colorado subcontractor.

Pricing: $95/hr min 4hrs (vs. ClearPath $135/hr) or flat rates based on square footage. Small homes (<1,000 sq. ft.): $1,200 (28% of jobs). Medium (1,000-2,000 sq. ft.): $2,500 (52% of jobs). Large (>2,000 sq. ft.): $4,500 (20% of jobs). Add-ons: biohazard +$500 (10% uptake), deep cleaning +$500 (30% uptake).

Tier	Price	Features	Target Customer	Expected % Rev	Gross Margin
Hourly	$95/hr	Min 4hrs, itemized log	Attorneys	18%	34%
Small flat	$1,200	<1,000 sq. ft., basic sorting	Families	28%	30%
Medium flat	$2,500	1,000-2,000 sq. ft., donation coord	Families	42%	33%
Large flat	$4,500	>2,000 sq. ft., biohazard option	Realtors	12%	36%

Metric	Value	Calculation/Notes
Price per job	$2,000	75 jobs / $150k rev Year 1
COGS per job	$1,360	$102k COGS / 75 jobs
Gross Profit	$640	$2,000 - $1,360
Gross Margin	32%	$640 / $2,000
CAC	$600	$45k marketing / 75 jobs
LTV	$2,400	$2,000 *1.2 (referral rate)*
LTV:CAC	4.0	$2,400 / $600

Payback Period	9.4 mos	$600 CAC / ($640 GP 0.71 monthly)

Marketing & Sales

Google Local Service Ads primary channel ($2,500/mo budget). Targets "estate cleanup Denver" (1,300 monthly searches, $8.20 CPC). Expected results: 304 leads/mo ($8.20 CPC), 4.1% conversion = 12.5 jobs/mo at $600 CAC. SEO content targets "hoarder cleanup Colorado" (480 searches, 3.2% CTR).

Sales cycle: 1) Lead (online/referral), 2) Free assessment (45-60 mins, 72% conversion), 3) Digital proposal (PandaDoc, 89% acceptance), 4) Job completion (avg. 4.3 days). Close rate: 68% from assessments. Sales cycle length: 11.2 days from inquiry to job start.

Retention: 10% repeat discount, free "Estate Transition Guide" eBook. Target churn: 4.2% monthly. Referral program: $100 gift card (32% uptake from attorneys, 18% from families).

Channel	Monthly Budget	Expected CAC	Expected Leads	Conversion Rate	Expected Jobs	ROI
Google LSAs	$2,500	$555	304	4.1%	12.5	3.2x
Referral partners	$1,200	$400	3	100%	3	5.0x
SEO/blog	$800	$800	1	15%	0.15	0.8x
Direct mail	$500	$1,000	1	5%	0.05	0.6x

Month	Google Ads	Social Media	Content/SEO	Events	Other	Total	Leads	Jobs
1	$2,500	$500	$800	$0	$200	$4,000	305	12
2	$2,500	$500	$800	$0	$200	$4,000	305	14
3	$2,500	$500	$800	$0	$200	$4,000	305	16
4	$2,500	$500	$800	$500	$200	$4,500	355	18
5	$2,500	$500	$800	$500	$200	$4,500	355	20
6	$2,500	$500	$800	$500	$200	$4,500	355	22
7	$2,500	$500	$800	$500	$200	$4,500	355	24
8	$2,500	$500	$800	$500	$200	$4,500	355	26
9	$2,500	$500	$800	$500	$200	$4,500	355	28
10	$2,500	$500	$800	$500	$200	$4,500	355	30
11	$2,500	$500	$800	$500	$200	$4,500	355	30
12	$2,500	$500	$800	$500	$200	$4,500	355	30

Operations

Operations: 7am-4pm shifts, 3-14 day scheduling. Jobs staffed with 3-4 crew + supervisor. Daily OSHA safety briefings; PPE compliance verified via Samsara fleet cameras. Disposal: Waste Management Inc. landfill ($125/ton), Republic Services recycling (free for sorted). Donation coordination: 12 nonprofits; 7-day holding period in 2,000 sq. ft. warehouse.

Technology: Zoho CRM ($99/mo) tracks leads; Jobber ($79/mo) schedules jobs; Samsara ($80/mo) monitors fleet. Fleet: 2 Ford Transit vans ($58k each), 1 F-250 truck ($1,500/mo payment). Facility: 2,500 sq. ft. warehouse ($2,200/mo lease).

Vendor/Supplier	Service	Monthly Cost	Contract Terms	Backup Option
Waste Management	Landfill disposal	$1,250	Month-to-month	Republic Services
EcoSafe Colorado	Biohazard remediation	$0	Per-job	SafeGuard Enviro
Goodwill	Donation pickup	$0	On-call	Salvation Army
Progressive	Commercial auto insurance	$420	Annual	State Farm

Tool	Purpose	Monthly Cost	Users	Alternatives Considered
Zoho One	CRM, email, docs	$99	4	HubSpot
Jobber	Scheduling, invoicing	$79	3	Housecall Pro
Samsara	Fleet tracking	$80	2	Verizon Connect
QuickBooks Online	Accounting	$45	2	Xero

Management Team

Structure: Thompson (CEO), Reynolds (COO), part-time CFO ($1,500/mo). Crew: 6 FTEs ($18-22/hr + benefits). Compensation: Base salaries at 15% below market, 10% bonus for hitting utilization targets (85% billable hours).

Advisory: Dr. Elena Perez (geriatric social worker) provides quarterly trauma training ($500/session). James Wu (CPA) oversees SBA compliance ($1,500/mo).

Month	Role	Salary	Priority	Source	Onboarding Time
6	2nd Supervisor	$48k	High	Indeed	30 days
9	Marketing Coordinator	$42k	Medium	Employee referral	45 days
12	Colorado Springs Manager	$55k	High	Recruiter	60 days

Financial Plan

Key assumptions: 1-10 jobs/month ramp (75 Year 1), $2,000 avg. revenue/job. Monthly churn: 4.2%. COGS: 68% of revenue (disposal fees $15k, direct labor $60k, supplies $27k). Payroll: $15k/mo fixed (6 crew). Marketing: $3,750/mo. Break-even: 193 jobs (Month 18).

Revenue model: 75 jobs Year 1 ($150k), 150 jobs Year 2 ($305k), 220 jobs Year 3 ($480k). Growth drivers: 10% referral commission to attorneys, Google LSAs at 4.1% conversion, flat-rate pricing uptake (52% of jobs).

Cost structure: 64% fixed costs ($190k), 36% variable ($122k) Year 1. Fixed: payroll $150k, rent $22k, software $2.5k. Variable: disposal fees, supplies, subcontracting. Fixed costs grow 5% annually; variable costs grow 3% below revenue.

Funding: $193k deployed. $118k vehicles, $15k office buildout, $20k working capital. 18-month runway. Milestones: Month 12 - $12.5k monthly revenue, Month 18 - break-even, Month 24 - Colorado Springs launch.

Category	Ite	Cost	Notes
Legal/Formation	LLC filing	$500	Colorado SOS
Licenses/Permits	Waste hauler permit	$1,200	CDPHE
Equipment	2 Ford Transit vans	$116,000	Financed via SBA
Equipment	F-250 truck	$12,000	Down payment
Technology Setup	Website development	$3,200	WordPre
Initial Supplies	Cleaning tools	$8,500	Uline order
Marketing Launch	Google Ads prepay	$7,500	3-month budget

Working Capital	3-month reserve	$20,000	Cash buffer
Insurance	General liability	$6,000	Progress policy
Insurance	Commercial auto	$3,500	Progress policy
Professional Fees	SBA consultant	$2,500	Loan packagin
Office/Facility	Warehouse buildout	$15,000	Shelving signage
Branding	Logo, uniforms	$2,000	Local designer
Training	OSHA certification	$1,800	6 crew members
Contingency	10% buffer	$19,300	Unplann costs
Total		**$193,000**	

Category	T	Monthly Cost	Annual Cost	Notes
Rent	Fixed	$2,200	$26,400	Warehou lease
Salaries	Fixed	$15,000	$180,000	6 crew members
Benefits	Fixed	$2,250	$27,000	15% of payroll

Insurance	Fixed	$792	$9,500	General + auto
Software	Fixed	$250	$3,000	Zoho, Jobber, Samsara
Utilities	Fixed	$300	$3,600	Electric, water
Marketing	Fixed	$3,750	$45,000	Google Ads, referrals
Professional Services	Fixed	$583	$7,000	CFO, legal
Supplies	Variable	$1,000	$12,000	Cleaning materials
Disposal Fees	Variable	$1,250	$15,000	Waste Managen Inc.
Vehicle & Fuel	Variable	$1,500	$18,000	Loan + operating
Maintenance	Variable	$500	$6,000	Fleet repairs
Fixed Total		**$24,875**	**$298,500**	
Variable Total		**$3,750**	**$45,000**	
Combined Total		**$28,625**	**$343,500**	

Line Item	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12	Y1 Total
Revenue	$2,000	$4,000	$6,000	$8,000	$10,000	$12,000	$14,000	$16,000	$18,000	$20,000	$20,000	$20,000	$150,000
COGS	$1,360	$2,720	$4,080	$5,440	$6,800	$8,160	$9,520	$10,880	$12,240	$13,600	$13,600	$13,600	$102,000
Gross Profit	$640	$1,280	$1,920	$2,560	$3,200	$3,840	$4,480	$5,120	$5,760	$6,400	$6,400	$6,400	$48,000
Marketing	$4,000	$4,000	$4,000	$4,500	$4,500	$4,500	$4,500	$4,500	$4,500	$4,500	$4,500	$4,500	$52,500
Salaries	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000	$180,000

Rent	$2,200	$2,200	$2,200	$2,200	$2,200	$2,200	$2,200	$2,200	$2,200	$2,200	$2,200	$2,200	$26,400
Software	$250	$250	$250	$250	$250	$250	$250	$250	$250	$250	$250	$250	$3,000
Insurance	$792	$792	$792	$792	$792	$792	$792	$792	$792	$792	$792	$792	$9,500
Other OpEx	$5,383	$5,383	$5,383	$5,383	$5,383	$5,383	$5,383	$5,383	$5,383	$5,383	$5,383	$5,383	$64,600
Total OpEx	$27,625	$27,625	$27,625	$28,125	$28,125	$28,125	$28,125	$28,125	$28,125	$28,125	$28,125	$28,125	$335,000
EBITDA	-$26,985	-$26,345	-$25,705	-$25,565	-$24,925	-$24,285	-$23,645	-$23,005	-$22,365	-$21,725	-$21,725	-$21,725	-$287,000
Depreciation	$2,167	$2,167	$2,167	$2,167	$2,167	$2,167	$2,167	$2,167	$2,167	$2,167	$2,167	$2,167	$26,000
EBIT	-$29,152	-$28,512	-$27,872	-$27,732	-$27,092	-$26,452	-$25,812	-$25,172	-$24,532	-$23,892	-$23,892	-$23,892	-$313,000
Interest	$542	$542	$542	$542	$542	$542	$542	$542	$542	$542	$542	$542	$6,500
Taxes	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Net Income	-$29,694	-$29,054	-$28,414	-$28,274	-$27,634	-$26,994	-$26,354	-$25,714	-$25,074	-$24,434	-$24,434	-$24,434	-$319,500

Line Item	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12
Beginning Cash	$20,000	$10,306	$1,252	-$17,166	-$35,440	-$52,434	-$68,788	-$84,502	-$99,576	-$114,010	-$127,844	-$141,278
Cash In	$1,000	$2,000	$3,000	$4,000	$5,000	$6,000	$7,000	$8,000	$9,000	$10,000	$10,000	$10,000
Funding	$193,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Total Cash In	$194,000	$2,000	$3,000	$4,000	$5,000	$6,000	$7,000	$8,000	$9,000	$10,000	$10,000	$10,000
Cash Out	$183,694	$29,054	$28,414	$28,274	$27,634	$26,994	$26,354	$25,714	$25,074	$24,434	$24,434	$24,434
Net Cash Flow	$10,306	-$27,054	-$25,414	-$24,274	-$22,634	-$20,994	-$19,354	-$17,714	-$16,074	-$14,434	-$14,434	-$14,434
Ending Cash	$10,306	$1,252	-$17,166	-$35,440	-$52,434	-$68,788	-$84,502	-$99,576	-$114,010	-$127,844	-$141,278	-$154,312

Metric	Y1	Y2 Q1	Y2 Q2	Y2 Q3	Y2 Q4	Y3 Q1	Y3 Q2	Y3 Q3	Y3 Q4	Y3 Total
Revenue	$150,000	$71,250	$76,250	$81,250	$86,250	$110,000	$120,000	$125,000	$125,000	$480,000
COGS	$102,000	$48,450	$51,850	$55,250	$58,650	$70,400	$76,800	$80,000	$80,000	$307,200
Gross Profit	$48,000	$22,800	$24,400	$26,000	$27,600	$39,600	$43,200	$45,000	$45,000	$172,800
OpEx	$335,000	$83,750	$83,750	$83,750	$83,750	$100,000	$100,000	$100,000	$100,000	$400,000
EBITDA	-$287,000	-$60,950	-$59,350	-$57,750	-$56,150	-$60,400	-$56,800	-$55,000	-$55,000	-$227,200

Net Income	-$319,500	-$67,450	-$65,850	-$64,250	-$62,650	-$66,900	-$63,300	-$61,500	-$61,500	-$253,200
Ending Cash	-$154,312	-$221,762	-$287,612	-$351,862	-$414,512	-$481,412	-$544,712	-$606,212	-$667,712	-$667,712

Metric	Value	Calculation
Monthly Fixed Costs	$24,875	From OpEx table
Variable Cost per Job	$900	$1,360 COGS - ($24,875 *0.36)*
Price per Job	$2,000	Avg. revenue
Contribution Margin	$1,100	$2,000 - $900
Contribution Margin %	55%	$1,100 / $2,000
Break-Even Units	22.6	$24,875 / $1,100
Break-Even Revenue	$45,200	22.6 $2,000
Expected Break-Even	Month 18	Projection shows positive EBITDA Q2 Y2
Safety Margin	12.4%	(75 jobs - 22.6) / 75

Metric	Y1	Y2	Y3	Industry Benchmark
Gross Margin %	32%	34%	36%	30-40% (services)
Operating Margin %	-226%	-215%	-83%	-10-15% (early stage)
Net Profit Margin %	-213%	-214%	-53%	-20-10% (early stage)
Current Ratio	0.8	0.7	0.9	1.5-3.0

Quick Ratio	0.7	0.6	0.8	1.0-2.0
CAC Payback	9.4 mos	8.7 mos	7.2 mos	6-18 mos
LTV:CAC Ratio	4.0	4.3	4.7	3.0+
Monthly Burn Rate	$26,625	$26,458	$21,100	N/A
Runway (mos)	7.7	11.2	31.6	6-12

Risk Analysis

Top risks: 1) Probate payment delays (probability 4/5, impact $18k monthly cash flow). 2) Crew injury (probability 3/5, impact $50k liability). 3) Landfill rate hikes (probability 4/5, impact 5% margin erosion). 4) New competitor entry (probability 3/5, impact 15% market share loss).

Mitigation: 1) Require 50% deposit; offer payment plans; build 3-month reserve ($20k). 2) OSHA training; $2M liability insurance; mandatory PPE. 3) Fuel surcharge clause; increase recycling to 63% (from 50%) to reduce landfill fees. 4) Lock in attorney contracts with 10% referral fees; build brand via Google LSAs.

Risk	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Mitigation Strategy	Contingency Plan	Owner
Probate payment delays	4	4	16	50% deposit requirement	Line of credit access	Thompson
Crew injury	3	5	15	Quarterly OSHA training	Backup crew staffing	Reynolds
Landfill rate hikes	4	3	12	Increase recycling to 63%	Negotiate Republic Services contract	Reynolds
New competitor entry	3	4	12	Attorney referral contracts	Price matching guarantee	Thompson
Economic downturn	2	4	8	Diversify into hoarding cleanup	Reduce fleet size	Thompson
Regulatory non-compliance	3	3	9	Quarterly legal check-ins	Hire compliance officer	Thompson
Property damage	2	5	10	Pre-job photo documentation	Claims reserve fund	Reynolds
Reputation damage	2	5	10	Client feedback system	Crisis PR plan	Thompson

Implementation Timeline

Priority 1: Achieve 12 jobs/month by Month 6 to extend runway. Critical path: Secure 2 probate attorney contracts (Month 4) and reduce CAC to $600 (Month 3). Dependencies: Google Ads approval (Month 1), SBA loan disbursement (Month 2).

Month	Milestone	Deliverables	Resources Needed	Success Metric	Owner
1	Operations launch	First 3 jobs completed	Fleet, crew hired	90% client satisfaction	Reynolds
2	Google Ads live	LSAs generating leads	$2,500 budget	4.1% conversion rate	Thompson
3	CAC reduction	Marketing efficiency report	CRM data	CAC < $650	Thompson
4	Attorney contracts	2 signed referral agreements	10% commission offer	$1,000 monthly referral revenue	Thompson
5	Process optimization	Job completion time report	Jobber data	Reduce job time to 4.3 days	Reynolds
6	Cash flow breakeven	12 jobs completed	Marketing ramp	$24,000 monthly revenue	Thompson
7	Donation network expansion	3 new nonprofit partners	Reynolds outreach	Reduce landfill costs 5%	Reynolds
8	Software integration	Zoho-Jobber sync live	$500 dev cost	Reduce admin time 20%	Thompson
9	First profit job	Job with >40% margin	Process tweaks	15% of jobs at 40%+ margin	Reynolds
10	Referral program launch	10 signed partners	$100 gift cards	20% referral uptake	Thompson
11	Y1 financial review	Full P&L analysis	CFO consultation	Identify 2 cost reduction areas	Thompson
12	Expansion planning	Colorado Springs market report	$2,000 research budget	Confirm 15% market growth	Thompson