

Resources for Small Businesses in North Carolina

State Agencies

Department of Commerce Business Link North Carolina (BLNC)

The BLNC is a network of statewide, State-funded agencies and organizations that provide services to the State's businesses, from Fortune 500 companies to start-ups. BLNC provides a single entry point to find experts who can help businesses start, grow and succeed.

Contact: 1-800-228-8443 www.blnc.gov

Department of Commerce Small Business Ombudsman

The Ombudsman works with small businesses to ensure they receive timely answers to questions and timely resolution of issues involving State government.

Contact: (919) 733-4151 www.nccommerce.com

Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Agribusiness Development

The Agribusiness Development program provides assistance with business planning or expansion, financing, and site location for new or existing agribusinesses.

Contact: (919) 733-7887 www.agr.state.nc.us/markets/agbizmarketing.htm

Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Agritourism

The Agritourism program provides assistance with business planning and networking for small and medium-sized farmers seeking to expand into agritourism.

Contact: (919) 733-7887 www.agr.state.nc.us/markets/agritourism/index.htm

Department of Environment and Natural Resources Customer Service Center

DENR's Customer Service Center offers individuals and businesses assistance with environmental regulations. Services include a toll-free line for information and assistance; one-stop and express permitting; and a small business ombudsman.

Contact: (800) 623-6748 www.envhelp.org/pages/about_csc.html

Department of Labor OSH Consultative Services

Labor's OSH Consultative Services can assist businesses with safety surveys, training and technical assistance.

Contact: (919) 807-2796 <http://www.nclabor.com/osh/consult/consult.htm>

NC Community College System Small Business Centers

Small Business Centers support the development of new businesses and the growth of existing businesses by providing training, counseling, and resource information. A Small Business Center is located within 30 minutes of nearly everyone in the state at a local Community College.

Contact: (919) 807-7100 <http://www.ncccs.cc.nc.us/>

NC Community College System Military Business Center

The Military Business Center provides free access to MatchForce.org, which helps connect NC businesses with military contracting opportunities. The Center's business development team also helps clients develop proposals and bid on military contracts.

Contact: (910) 323-4824 <http://www.ncmbc.us/>

Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC)

The SBTDC is the University of North Carolina's business and technology extension service. SBTDC specialists provide management counseling and educational services to small and mid-sized businesses throughout North Carolina. The SBTDC's core service is in-depth management counseling, addressing financing, marketing, human resources, operations, business and strategic planning, and feasibility assessment. Most SBTDC services are free of charge, and all SBTDC services are confidential.

Contact: (800) 258-0862 www.sbtcd.org

Nonprofits

NC Rural Economic Development Center:

The Rural Center runs two programs that provide capital for business start-ups and expansions. The Microenterprise Loan Program serves the smallest rural businesses through a combination of loans, business planning, and technical assistance. The Rural Venture Fund, announced in 2007, offers investments ranging from equity to subordinated debt for qualified businesses in economically distressed counties of North Carolina.

Contact: (919) 250-4314 <http://www.ncruralcenter.org/>

NC Biotechnology Center:

The Biotechnology Center provides low-interest loans to early-stage NC biotechnology companies across the state. These loans are designed to help companies meet meaningful commercial and research milestones associated with company inception, research and growth.

Contact: (919) 541-9366 www.biotech.org

Institute for Minority Economic Development:

The North Carolina Institute of Minority Economic Development is a statewide nonprofit organization representing the interest of underdeveloped and underutilized sectors of the state's economic base. The Institute's business development team works to assist historically underutilized businesses in accessing affordable capital, expanded market opportunities, and stable internal management and control systems. The Institute provides direct technical assistance and small group education and training.

Contact: (919) 956-8889 www.ncimed.com

Center for Community Self-Help:

The nonprofit Center for Community Self-Help and its financing affiliates Self-Help Credit Union and Self-Help Ventures Fund provide financing, technical support and advocacy for female, rural and minority borrowers across North Carolina. The Center provides loans to small businesses and nonprofit organizations that want to grow and continue their success. Loan products are targeted at companies and nonprofits whose financing needs are not met by traditional lenders.

Contact: (919) 956-4400 www.self-help.org

Federal

Small Business Administration:

The SBA helps Americans start, build and grow businesses. SBA provides a number of financial assistance programs for small businesses. They have been specifically designed to meet a business's key financing needs including the need for debt financing (loans), equity financing (investment/seed money), and surety bonds.

Contact: (800) 827-5722 www.sba.gov