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Hot Dogs El Unico
Julio and Veronica Cervantes, Owners
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El Centro, CA 92243
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See story on page 53.
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For over 30 years, the Tennessee Small Business Development Center (TSBDC) network has been empowering small business owners, entrepreneurs, and individuals with a business idea to innovate new products and services that compete in the global marketplace. We are a network of certified professional business counselors conveniently located in a community near you. We have 20 various locations; 13 of which are service centers, 6 are satellite offices, and 1 is an affiliate office.

More than 100,000 businesses have received assistance from the Tennessee Small Business Development Network. Whether you are a manufacturer, retailer, service provider, or a professional; we are here to help entrepreneurs help themselves. The TSBDC provides a myriad of services for entrepreneurs to take advantage of like free confidential counseling as well as training seminars, both public and private, on many business related topics. We pride ourselves on our commitment to quality and confidentiality, in addition to our reputation of producing demonstrable results for the communities we serve.

Score is delighted to be a resource partner with the Small Business Administration. Score is a non-profit organization which provides mentoring and coaching for startup and existing small businesses.

Score volunteers provide confidential mentoring and educational experiences to their clients. The volunteers are working and retired business executives, business owners, educators and business professionals. In 2016, volunteers in Tennessee provided service to over 7000 clients through face to face mentoring, workshops and seminars.

A list of Score locations in TN and national can be found at www.Score.org

Score Mission: Foster vibrant small business communities through mentoring and education

Score Vision: Every person has the support necessary to thrive as a small business owner

Please visit our website www.score.org for more information about the services available from both our local chapters and our National organization.
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Even if you haven’t made a mistake, defending a lawsuit can be a big cost for your business. Customized insurance from Hiscox can help you keep moving forward with confidence.

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#encourage
THE TENNESSEE DISTRICT OFFICE
The Tennessee District Office is responsible for the delivery of SBA’s many programs and services. The District Office is located at 2 International Plaza, Suite 500, Nashville, TN. Office hours are from 8:00 AM until 4:30 PM, CST, Monday through Friday.

CONTACTING THE TENNESSEE DISTRICT OFFICE
For program and service information, please contact us at 615-736-5881.

SERVICES AVAILABLE
Financial assistance for new or existing businesses through guaranteed loans made by area bank and non-bank lenders. Free counseling, advice and information on starting, better operating or expanding a small business through the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) and Women’s Business Centers (WBC).

Assistance to businesses owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals through the Business Development Program.

We Welcome Your Questions
For extra copies of this publication or questions please contact:

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Terence Douglas, Alliant Corporation—
Tennessee SBA 2016 Small Business Person of the Year

Knoxville, Tenn—While working for General Electric and Martin Marietta during the first part of his career, Terence Douglas developed a desire to one day start his own consulting firm that would be able to deliver tailored solutions to its clients in environmental management, occupational safety and health, and project management. In 2000 that consulting firm came to fruition when he and his business partner, Mr. Greg Galaher, founded Alliant Corporation. Mr. Douglas and Mr. Galaher first met while working together for another small consulting firm in the Knoxville, TN area. It was during this period that the two eventual founders of Alliant discovered a mutual commitment to delivering service excellence to every client at every opportunity.

Alliant’s start was certainly austere – self-capitalized with home offices and Mr. Douglas’ kitchen doubling as the corporate board room. “It is the austere times that test your mettle and strengthen your resolve, and it did ours. With a vision toward managed and sustainable growth, Alliant began building the team that we have today by adding key professionals who shared our common commitment to service excellence. Over the past 15 years, many outstanding professionals have contributed in very significant ways to Alliant being the firm that it is today,” said Douglas in accepting the honor as the 2016 Tennessee SBA Small Business Person of the Year.

Alliant is a consulting firm providing professional services in environmental management, occupational safety and health, and project management from our headquarters in Knoxville, and project offices located in Piketon, OH and Idaho Falls, ID.

“Alliant, like other small businesses, has benefited from the ongoing advocacy by the U.S. Small Business Administration,” notes Douglas. Alliant is also a certified Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) with the Veterans Administration.

Alliant was awarded the 2015 Veterans Excellence Award by the Tennessee Veterans’ Business Association (TVBA), an organization with which the Tennessee SBA District office has partnered since its inception. TVBA’s Veterans Excellence Award is given in recognition of a veteran-owned company that has exhibited the ability to grow and thrive even in challenging times. Douglas now adds the SBA Tennessee Small Business Person of the Year honor to the TVBA award.

In addition to volunteerism and charitable involvement by Douglas’ firm, Alliant employees have participated extensively in community boards and associations. For example, one of the company’s executives, Ms. Belinda Price, is serving as the Chair of the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board for Fiscal Year 2016. ORSSAB is a federally chartered citizens’ panel that provides independent advice and recommendations on environmental cleanup projects and related issues to DOE, which is responsible for the cleanup of the Oak Ridge Reservation, which includes Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL). Douglas himself is a board member of the East Tennessee Economic Council (ETEC). ETEC is an independent, regional, non-profit membership organization dedicated to supporting the federal government’s missions in Oak Ridge, Tennessee.
Every year, the U.S. Small Business Administration and its nationwide network of resource partners help millions of potential and existing small business owners start, grow and succeed.

Whether your target market is global or local, the SBA and its resource partners can help at every stage of turning your entrepreneurial dream into a thriving business.

If you’re just starting out, the SBA and its resources can help you with business and financing plans. If you’re already in business, you can use the SBA’s resources to help manage and expand your business, obtain government contracts, recover from disaster, find foreign markets for your produce or services, and make your voice heard in the federal government.

You can access SBA information at www.sba.gov or visit one of our local offices for assistance.

SBA’S RESOURCE PARTNERS

In addition to our district offices, which serve every state and territory, the SBA works with a variety of local resource partners to meet your small business needs: SCORE chapters, Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), and Women’s Business Centers (WBCs). This partner network reaches into communities across America: More than 13,000 business counselors, mentors and trainers are available through over 320 SCORE chapters, 900 Small Business Development Centers, and 110 Women’s Business Centers. These professionals can help with writing a formal business plan, locating sources of financial assistance, managing and expanding your business, finding opportunities to sell your goods or services to the government, and recovering from disaster. To find your local district office or SBA resource partner, visit www.sba.gov/tools/local-assistance.

SCORE

SCORE is a national network of more than 11,000 entrepreneurs, business leaders and executives who volunteer as mentors to America’s small businesses. SCORE leverages decades of experience from seasoned business professionals to help small businesses start, grow companies and create jobs in local communities. SCORE does this by harnessing the passion and knowledge of individuals who have owned and managed their own businesses and want to share this “real world” expertise with you. With more than 320 offices throughout the country, SCORE provides key services both face-to-face and online to busy entrepreneurs who are just getting started or in need of an experienced business professional as a sounding board for their existing business. SCORE can help you as they have done for more than 10 million entrepreneurs and small business owners by matching your specific needs with a business mentor, traveling to your place of business for an on-site evaluation, and teaming with several SCORE mentors to provide you with tailored assistance in a number of business areas.

• SCORE mentors understand the needs and challenges of managing successful businesses because they’ve experienced them too. Most have owned and operated their own businesses or served in management positions for our nation’s top companies.

• SCORE chapters provide business workshops and seminars on topics customized to the needs of the local business community. In all communities, SCORE offices advocate the need for business planning and offer an introduction to the fundamentals of a business plan.

• For established businesses, SCORE offers in-depth training on topics such as customer service, hiring practices, using the Internet for business, marketing, home-based business operations and many other issues.

Since 1997, SCORE has offered a leading online business resource for entrepreneurs – www.score.org. This site is a comprehensive small business resource that includes SCORE’s 24/7 email mentoring service. Entrepreneurs can use email mentoring available at www.score.org/mentors to search a database of hundreds of SCORE online mentors.

COUNSELING

Getting Help to Start, Market and Manage Your Business

ON THE UPSIDE

It’s true, there are a lot of reasons not to start your own business. But for the right person, the advantages of business ownership far outweigh the risks.

• You get to be your own boss.

• Hard work and long hours directly benefit you, rather than increasing profits for someone else.

• Earnings and growth potential are unlimited.

• Running a business will provide endless variety, challenge and opportunities to learn.
mentors with a combined knowledge of more than 600 business backgrounds. For information on SCORE and to get your own business mentor, visit www.sba.gov/score, go to www.score.org or call 1-800-634-0245 for the SCORE office nearest you.

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Hours: by appointment only

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**SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS**
The U.S. Small Business Administration’s Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) mission is to build, sustain, and grow small businesses; promote small business development; and enhance local economies by creating businesses and fulfilling its mission of creating jobs.

The SBDCs are vital to SBA’s entrepreneurial outreach and have been providing service to small businesses for over 35 years. It is one of the largest professional small business management and technical assistance networks in the nation. With over 900 locations across the country, SBDCs offer existing and future entrepreneurs free one-on-one expert business counseling and low-cost training by qualified small business professionals.

In addition to its core business development services, the SBDCs offer special focus areas such as disaster recovery and preparedness, technology transfer and commercialization, regulatory compliance, and accessing unique resources for women, minority, and veteran business owners and entrepreneurs. SBDCs have also increased their capacity to help U.S. entrepreneurs enter global markets through export readiness assessment, training, regulatory compliance and a broad range of international trade assistance for new and existing exporters.

The program combines a unique combination of federal, state and private sector resources to provide, in every state and territory, the foundation for the economic growth of small businesses. In FY2015 they:

- Assisted more than 12,000 entrepreneurs to start new businesses – equating to nearly 32 new business starts per day.
- Provided counseling services and training services to over 549,000 clients.
- Raised more than 4.68 billion in capital infusion.

The efficacy of the SBDC program has been validated by a nationwide evaluation study. Of the clients surveyed, more than 80 percent reported that the business assistance they received from the SBDC counselor was worthwhile. The top five impacts of counseling cited by SBDC clients were revising marketing strategy, increasing sales, expanding products and services, improving cash flow and increasing profit margin. More than 40 percent of long-term clients who received five hours or more of counseling reported an increase in sales and profit margins.

For information on the SBDC program, visit www.sba.gov/sbdc.
Murfreesboro Location:
Middle Tennessee State University
Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce
3050 Medical Center Pkwy., Ste. 200
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615-898-2745 • 615-893-7089 Fax
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U.S. Export Assistance Centers
SBA trade finance specialists are co-located in 19 U.S. Export Assistance Centers throughout the U.S., with U.S. Department of Commerce and, in some locations, Export-Import Bank of the U.S. personnel. This multiple agency collaboration provided trade promotion and export-finance assistance in a single location. The USEACs also work closely with other federal, state and local international trade organizations to provide assistance to small businesses. To find your nearest USEAC, visit: http://www.sba.gov/content/us-export-assistance-centers. You can find additional export training and counseling by contacting your local SBA district office.

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WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTERS
The SBA’s Women Business Center (WBC) program is a network of over 100 community-based centers that provide business training, counseling, coaching, mentoring and other assistance geared toward women, particularly those who are socially and economically disadvantaged. WBCs are located in nearly every state and U.S. territory including the District of Columbia and the territories of Puerto Rico and American Samoa. They are partially funded through a cooperative agreement with the SBA.
To meet the needs of women entrepreneurs, WBCs offer services at convenient times and locations, including evenings and weekends.

WBCs are located within non-profit host organizations that offer a wide variety of services in addition to the services provided by the WBC. Many of the WBCs also offer training and counseling and provide materials in different languages in order to meet the diverse needs of the communities they serve.
WBCs often deliver their services through long-term training or group counseling, both of which have shown to be effective. WBC training courses are often free or are offered for a small fee. Some centers will also offer scholarships based on the client’s needs.
A number of WBCs also provide courses and counseling via the Internet, and in mobile classrooms and satellite locations. In fiscal year 2015, the WBC program counseled and trained over 140,000 clients, creating local economic growth and vitality. The WBCs helped entrepreneurs access more than $87 million dollars in capital. Based on a 2010 Impact Study, of the WBC clients that have received three or more hours of counseling, 15 percent indicated that the services led to hiring new staff, 34 percent indicated that the services led to an increased profit.
margin, and 47 percent indicated that the services led to an increase in sales.

In addition, the WBC program has taken a lead in preparing women business owners to apply for the Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Federal Contract program that authorizes contracting officers to set aside certain federal contracts for eligible women-owned small businesses or economically disadvantaged women-owned small businesses. For more information on the program, visit www.sba.gov/wosb.

To find the nearest SBA WBC, visit www.sba.gov/women.

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www.brightbridgewbc.org

Leslie Hayes, Center Director
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201 Venture Cir.
Nashville, TN 37228
615-425-7171
Info@PathwayWBC.org
www.pathwayWBC.org

SBA EMERGING LEADERS
The intense seven-month entrepreneurship training for identified SBA Emerging Leaders creates a learning environment to accelerate the growth of high-potential small businesses, stimulates job creation and helps drive economic development within their communities. A competitive selection process results in company executives participating in high-level training and peer-networking sessions led by professional instructors. Graduates are poised to create an economic ripple effect because they are now equipped with the support, resources and enhanced business skills necessary to succeed.

**Impact of Emerging Leaders:**
The initiative is currently offered in 51 underserved communities across the country.
To date 3,000 businesses have participated and nearly 2,700 Emerging Leaders have graduated since its inception. A study of Emerging Leaders past participants reported that:

- Nearly 70% obtained revenue growth
- Over 80% created new jobs or retained all
- Participants secured federal, state, local and tribal contracts awards over $1 Billion
- 95% were satisfied with the Emerging Leaders program

Visit [www.sba.gov/emergingleaders](http://www.sba.gov/emergingleaders) for more information.

SBA’S LEARNING CENTER
SBA’s Learning Center is a virtual campus complete with free online courses, workshops, podcasts and learning tools.

**Key Features of the SBA’s Learning Center:**
- Training is available anytime and anywhere — all you need is a computer (or mobile device) with Internet access.
- Nearly 50 free online and interactive courses are available.
- Checklists and worksheets to get your business planning underway.
- Course topics include how to write a business plan, financing options that include SBA lending programs, mastering overseas markets through exporting, public sector procurement tactics, and specialty material for veterans, young entrepreneurs, and women business owners.
- Over ten new courses launched in the last year; including a new Spanish-language version of a course for Young Entrepreneurs.

Visit [www.sba.gov/learning](http://www.sba.gov/learning) for these free resources.

SBA’S CLUSTER INITIATIVE
The SBA is investing in regional innovation clusters throughout the US that span a variety of industries, ranging from energy and manufacturing to advanced defense technologies. Clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, academic institutions, service providers and associated organizations with a specific industry focus. They provide high-value, targeted connecting of small and large businesses, including networking with potential industry partners abroad.

The Regional Innovation Clusters serve a diverse group of sectors and geographies. Three of the initial pilot clusters, termed Advanced Defense Technology clusters, are specifically focused on meeting the needs of the defense industry. The Wood Products Cluster, debuted in 2015, supports the White House’s Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Initiative for coal communities. All of the clusters support small businesses by fostering a synergistic network of small and large businesses, university researchers, regional economic organizations, stakeholders, and investors, while providing matchmaking, business training, counseling, mentoring, and other services to help small businesses expand and grow.

Throughout the initiative, SBA has asked a third-party evaluator to examine SBA’s Regional Innovation Clusters in detail, including their various stakeholder participants and the services and activities provided.
by the clusters, with a focus on small business participants. Some highlights from the Year 3 report, released in July 2014, include the following:
- 80% of participants agree that cluster activities led to increases in collaborative activity within their region;
- Cluster administrators provided more than 13,000 hours of one-on-one assistance to more than 460 small businesses, with recipient small businesses receiving an average of nearly 29 hours each.
- The value of economic activity in the third year of the program totaled more than $3.9 Billion.
- Employment in cluster-associated small businesses grew an average of 6.9%, more than 4 times faster than the regional benchmark.
- Revenues in cluster-associated small businesses increased an average of 6.9%, nearly twice as fast as comparable firms.

For more information on SBA’s Cluster Initiative, go to www.sba.gov/clusters.

**SBA’S SCALEUP AMERICA INITIATIVE**

The SBA’s new ScaleUp America Initiative is designed to help small firms with high potential to “scale up” and grow their businesses so that they will provide more jobs and have a greater economic impact, both locally and nationally. The SBA has structured this community-focused initiative with local entrepreneurial ecosystems in mind: a key emphasis of the program is building and strengthening entrepreneurial networks within a particular community, so that firms can grow by leveraging and complimenting the existing resources and expertise in their areas.

The ScaleUp initiative functions by supporting communities’ efforts to deliver cohort-based intensive assistance to established high-potential small businesses and entrepreneurs that are primed for growth beyond the start-up or early stages. The initiative provides funds to organizing entities in local communities to do the following:
- deliver a proven entrepreneurship education curriculum for growth-oriented entrepreneurs and small businesses; provide on-going one-on-one support;
- provide mentoring and technical assistance;
- facilitate connections to growth capital; and
- identify opportunities to build and strengthen connections and networks in their community.

Since launching this initiative, the SBA has awarded funding support to a geographically and organizationally diverse group of fifteen ScaleUp communities.

For more information on SBA’s ScaleUp America Initiative, go to www.sba.gov/scaleup.

**FINANCIAL LITERACY**

If you want to start a business or learn how to better manage your business money, consider Money Smart for Small Business.

Smart for Small Business provides a practical introduction to the everyday tasks of starting and managing a business. Developed jointly by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), this instructor-led curriculum consists of 13 modules. Each module includes a fully scripted instructor guide, participant workbook, and PowerPoint slides. These resources enable an organization to offer Money Smart for Small Business classes right away. The modules provide the most essential information on running a small business from a financial standpoint. In addition to grounding participants in the basics, the curriculum serves as a foundation for more advanced training and technical assistance. You can find this curriculum by visiting www.sba.gov/moneysmart.

To learn more about the Financial Literacy and Education Commission, visit www.mymoney.gov.

**REACHING UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES**

The SBA also offers a number of programs specifically designed to meet the needs of underserved communities.

**ENCORE ENTREPRENEURS**

With their range of life experiences and their tendency to have more disposable income, entrepreneurs age 50 and older are one of the fastest growing groups of business owners. To help meet the needs of “encore entrepreneurs,” SBA and AARP have joined forces to mentor, counsel, and educate Americans age 50 and over on how to start or grow a small business. Through this partnership, SBA and AARP collaborate to connect

**BUSINESS SMART TOOLKIT**

SBA’s Office of Entrepreneurial Development in partnership with the National Association of Government Guaranteed Lenders (NAGGL) developed the Business Smart Toolkit. The toolkit is a ready-to-use workshop that lays the groundwork for helping new and aspiring entrepreneurs launch a business idea and understand the steps to building a business that is credit ready. The Business Smart Toolkit was designed to provide resources for underserved communities. The information is laid out simply in three modules. The three modules focus on: 1) Basics of Business startup; 2) Essentials of becoming credit-ready; and 3) How and where to find additional small business support and educational resources. The toolkit is designed for local community organizations whose constituents are interested in starting a business but do not know where to begin. The curriculum will allow the local organization to provide their constituents with enough basic
knowledge to get them on the right track in starting and connecting them to local resources—along with providing further support along their entrepreneurial journey. The toolkit and instructor guide are written at a level so that a community volunteer can feel comfortable presenting the information. The Business Smart Toolkit is free and readily-downloadable at www.SBA.gov/BusinessSmart.

**FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES**

SBA’s Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives works to engage and build strong partnerships with community and nonprofit organizations, both secular and faith-based, to support entrepreneurs and economic growth and promote prosperity for all Americans. The Center works in coordination with other offices within the Agency to formulate policies and practices that extend the reach and impact of SBA programs into local communities. SBA recognizes the important role community leaders and networks have in economic development at the local and national level. Further, the Center plays a key role in helping identify, engage and impact underserved communities. For additional information, visit www.sba.gov/faith-based.

**LGBT BUSINESS OUTREACH INITIATIVE**

The SBA’s groundbreaking outreach to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) community is for the first time bringing SBA resources directly to LGBT business owners. Recognizing the unique challenges faced by the nation’s 1.4 million LGBT-owned businesses, the SBA has partnered with several national business advocacy organizations, including the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, to increase the use of SBA programs by LGBT owned businesses. The SBA is the nation’s leading advocate and champion for all entrepreneurs and is deeply committed to helping LGBT-owned small businesses launch, innovate, hire and grow. Across the country, our resource partners are providing LGBT entrepreneurs with game-changing business advice. For more information on LGBT business development, go to www.sba.gov/LGBT or e-mail: lgbt@sba.gov.

**NATIVE AMERICAN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

The SBA Office of Native American Affairs (ONAA) ensures that American Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians seeking to create, develop and expand small businesses have full access to the business development and expansion tools available through the Agency’s entrepreneurial development, lending, and contracting programs. The office provides a network of training initiatives that include a Native Entrepreneurial Empowerment Workshop, a Native American 8(a) Business Development Workshop, a Money Smart Workshop, an Incubator Workshop and the online tool, “Small Business Primer: Strategies for Growth.” ONAA also is responsible for consulting with tribal governments prior to finalizing SBA policies that may have tribal implications. Visit www.sba.gov/NAAD for more information.

**WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS**

Women entrepreneurs are changing the face of America’s economy. In the 1970s, women owned less than 5 percent of the nation’s businesses. Today, they are majority owners of about a third of the nation’s small businesses and are at least equal owners of about half of all small businesses. SBA serves women entrepreneurs nationwide through its various programs and services, some of which are designed especially for women.

The SBA’s Office of Women’s Business Ownership (OWBO) serves as an advocate for women-owned businesses. The office oversees a nationwide network over 100 Women’s Business Centers that provide business training, counseling and mentoring geared specifically to women, especially those who are socially and economically disadvantaged. The program is a public-private partnership with locally-based nonprofits.

Women’s Business Centers serve a wide variety of geographic areas, population densities, and economic environments, including urban, suburban, and rural. Each Women’s Business Center tailors its services to the needs of its individual community, but all offer a variety of innovative programs, often including courses in different languages. They provide training in finance, management, and marketing, as well as access to all of the SBA’s financial and procurement assistance programs.

In addition to the women’s business centers, the Office of Women’s Business Ownership works with other offices within SBA to monitor how women are utilizing SBA programs such as our loan programs, investment programs and contracting opportunities. OWBO also establishes partnerships with many women’s business organizations to help ensure that more women have access to the services provided by SBA and its partners.

Through a strategic alliance with Thunderbird School of Global Management, SBA is pleased to provide access to the DreamBuilder online training curriculum in both English and Spanish. This curriculum is currently being used by over 30 women’s business centers. It is available at no cost to entrepreneurs at https://www.dreambuilder.org/sba

For the second year, the Office of Women’s Business Ownership has held the InnovateHer competition. The InnovateHER Challenge provides an opportunity for entrepreneurs to showcase products and services that: have a measurable impact on the lives of women and families, have the potential for commercialization, and fill a need in the marketplace. SBA’s InnovateHER: Innovating for Women Business Summit on March 17, 2016 in Washington, D.C. will bring together creative ideas to support women’s efforts to push the limits, break the glass ceiling and create long-term, positive changes in gender equality.

**YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS**

The SBA recognizes the importance of fostering young entrepreneurs and small business ownership and their role in the economy. The SBA offers different activities and resources throughout the year aimed at aspiring young entrepreneurs, including social media outreach and customized online courses available at www.sba.gov/learning. For additional information, visit www.sba.gov/young.

SBA also administers two contracting and business development programs that are specifically designed to benefit underserved communities. For more information on the 8(a) Business Development Program and the HUBZone Program, see the Contracting section.
Each year SBA serves over 200,000 veterans, service disabled veterans and military spouses across the United States and at military installations around the globe. SBA provides training and mentorship, access to capital, preparation for opportunities in federal procurement, cultivating connections within commercial supply chains and disaster relief assistance.

SBA’s Office of Veterans Business Development (OVBD) offers a number of programs and services to support aspiring and existing veteran entrepreneurs and military spouses of all eras, women veterans, and service disabled veterans. These programs, Boots to Business, Boots to Business: Reboot, Veteran Women Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship (V-WISE), and Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities (EBV), offer cutting edge, experiential training in entrepreneurship and small business management. These programs were developed to introduce transitioning service members, veterans, and military spouses, to entrepreneurship, exploring self-employment opportunities, and turning an idea into a growth venture. In addition, these programs also help to connect participants to SBA’s local network of resource partners and establish a support structure for graduates.

For more information on any of SBA’s program for veterans, please visit www.sba.gov/veterans.

**BOOTS TO BUSINESS AND BOOTS TO BUSINESS: REBOOT**

Boots to Business is an entrepreneurial education and training program offered by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) as a training track within the Department of Defense’s Transition Assistance Program (TAP). The curriculum provides valuable assistance to transitioning Service members exploring business ownership or other self-employment opportunities by leading them through the key steps for evaluating business concepts and providing the foundational knowledge required to develop a business plan. In addition, participants are introduced to SBA resources available to help access start-up capital and additional technical assistance.

Boots to Business Reboot is a two-step entrepreneurship training program offered by the U.S. Small Business Administration through a public private partnership with the Institute of Veterans and Military Families, the Marcus Foundation and First Data Corporation. This course is open to Veterans of all eras (Servicemembers, including members of the National Guard and Reserves) and their spouses. The curriculum provides assistance to those interested in exploring business ownership or other self-employment opportunities by leading them through the key steps for evaluating business concepts and providing foundational knowledge required to develop a business plan. In addition, participants are introduced to SBA resources available to access start-up capital, technical assistance and contracting opportunities.

**VETERAN WOMEN IGNITING THE SPIRIT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP (V-WISE)**

Veteran Women Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship (V-WISE) is a three-phase program, V-WISE is offered three times per year across the nation, to approximately 200 participants per session. The program includes a growth track for women veterans and women military spouses already in business as well as start-up training for new entrepreneurs.

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP BOOTCAMP FOR VETERANS WITH DISABILITIES**

The EBV National Program is a novel, one-of-a-kind initiative designed to leverage the skills, resources and infrastructure of higher education to offer cutting-edge, experiential training in entrepreneurship and small business management to post-9/11 veterans with service-connected disabilities and a passion for entrepreneurship as well as military family members who serve in a caregiver role to a veteran with a service-connected disability. The aim of the program is to open the door to economic opportunity for our veterans and their families by developing their competencies in creating and sustaining an entrepreneurial

**VETERANS BUSINESS OUTREACH CENTERS (VBOCS)**

The Veterans Business Outreach Center Program is designed to provide entrepreneurial development services such as business training, counseling and mentoring, and referrals for eligible veterans owning or considering starting a small business. The SBA has 14 organizations participating in this cooperative agreement and serving as Veterans Business Outreach Centers (VBOC).

Veterans Institute for Procurement (VIP) · VIP is designed for veteran owned businesses to increase their ability to win government contracts by establishing best business practices. The training is available to established veteran business owners through a cooperative agreement between SBA, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, the State of Maryland, and private sponsors. VIP includes an accelerator-like in-residence educational training program consisting of a three-day comprehensive certification course instructed by professional service experts, government officials, and agency representatives. Since the program launched in 2009, VIP has graduated 546 veteran-owned businesses from 37 states, Washington D.C., and Guam.

**CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS DURING DEPLOYMENT**

SBA also connects veterans and military spouses to lenders that offer loan programs providing fee relief for eligible veterans and military spouses and offers special low-interest-rate financing to small businesses when an owner or essential employee is called to active duty. SBA’s Veterans Advantage program provides fee relief for eligible veterans and military spouses and survivors. The Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program (MREIDL) provides loans up to $2 million to eligible small businesses to cover operating costs that cannot be met due to the loss of an essential employee called to active duty in the Reserves or National Guard.
Most new business owners who succeed have planned for every phase of their success. Thomas Edison, the great American inventor, once said, “Genius is 1 percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration.” That same philosophy also applies to starting a business. First, you’ll need to generate a little bit of perspiration deciding whether you’re the right type of person to start your own business.

IS ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR YOU?

There is simply no way to eliminate all the risks associated with starting a small business, but you can improve your chances of success with good planning, preparation and insight. Start by evaluating your strengths and weaknesses as a potential owner and manager of a small business. Carefully consider each of the following questions:

- **Are you a self-starter?** It will be entirely up to you to develop projects, organize your time, and follow through on details.

- **How well do you get along with different personalities?** Business owners need to develop working relationships with a variety of people including customers, vendors, staff, bankers, employees and professionals such as lawyers, accountants, or consultants. Can you deal with a demanding client, an unreliable vendor, or a cranky receptionist if your business interests demand it?

- **How good are you at making decisions?** Small business owners are required to make decisions constantly — often quickly, independently, and under pressure.

- **Do you have the physical and emotional stamina to run a business?** Business ownership can be exciting, but it’s also a lot of work. Can you face six or seven 12–hour workdays every week?

- **How well do you plan and organize?** Research indicates that poor planning is responsible for most business failures. Good organization — of financials, inventory, schedules, and production — can help you avoid many pitfalls.

- **Is your drive strong enough?** Running a business can wear you down emotionally. Some business owners burn out quickly from having to carry all the responsibility for the success of their business on their own shoulders. Strong motivation will help you survive slowdowns and periods of burnout.

- **How will the business affect your family?** The first few years of business start-up can be hard on family life. It’s important for family members to know what to expect and for you to be able to trust that they will support you during this time. There also may be financial difficulties until the business becomes profitable, which could take months or years. You may have to adjust to a lower standard of living or put family assets at risk.

Once you’ve answered these questions, you should consider what type of business you want to start. Businesses can include franchises, at-home businesses, online businesses, brick-and-mortar stores or any combination of those.

**FRANCHISING**

There are more than 3,000 business franchises. The challenge is to decide on one that both interests you and is a good investment. Many franchising experts suggest that you comparison shop by looking at multiple franchise opportunities before deciding on the one that’s right for you.

Some of the things you should look at when evaluating a franchise: historical profitability, effective financial management and other controls, a good image, integrity and commitment, and a successful industry. In the simplest form of franchising, while you own the business, its operation is governed by the terms of the franchise agreement. For many, this is the chief benefit for franchising. You are able to capitalize on a business format, trade name, trademark and/or support system provided by the franchisor. But you operate as an independent contractor with the ability to make a profit or sustain a loss commensurate with your ownership.

If you are concerned about starting an independent business venture, then franchising may be an option for you. Remember that hard work, dedication and sacrifice are key elements in the success of any business venture, including a franchise.

Visit [www.sba.gov/franchise](http://www.sba.gov/franchise) for more information.

**HOME-BASED BUSINESSES**

Going to work used to mean traveling from home to a plant, store or office. Today, many people do some or all their work at home.

**Getting Started**

Before diving headfirst into a home-based business, you must know why you are doing it. To succeed, your business must be based on something greater than a desire to be your own boss. You must plan and make improvements and adjustments along the road.

Working under the same roof where your family lives may not prove to be as easy as it seems. One suggestion is to set up a separate office in your home to create a professional environment.

**Ask yourself these questions:**

- Can I switch from home responsibilities to business work easily?
- Do I have the self-discipline to maintain schedules while at home?
- Can I deal with the isolation of working from home?

**Legal Requirements**

A home-based business is subject to many of the same laws and regulations affecting other businesses.

**Some general areas include:**

- **Zoning regulations.** If your business operates in violation of them, you could be fined or shut down.
- **Product restrictions.** Certain products cannot be produced in the home. Most states outlaw home production of fireworks, drugs, poisons, explosives, sanitary or medical products and toys. Some states also prohibit home-based businesses from making food, drink or clothing.

Be sure to consult an attorney and your local and state departments of labor and health to find out which laws and regulations will affect your business. Additionally, check on registration and accounting requirements needed to open your home-based business. You may need a work certificate or license from the state. Your business name may need to be registered with the state. A separate business telephone and bank account are good business practices.

Also remember, if you have employees you are responsible for withholding income and Social-Security taxes, and for complying with minimum wage and employee health and safety laws.
After you’ve thought about what type of business you want, the next step is to develop a business plan. Think of the business plan as a roadmap with milestones for the business. It begins as a pre-assessment tool to determine profitability and market share, and then expands as an in-business assessment tool to determine success, obtain financing and determine repayment ability, among other factors.

Creating a comprehensive business plan can be a long process, and you need good advice. The SBA and its resource partners, including Small Business Development Centers, Women’s Business Centers, Veterans Business Outreach Centers, and SCORE, have the expertise to help you craft a winning business plan. The SBA also offers online templates and a course to get you started.

**In general, a good business plan contains:**

**Introduction**
- Give a detailed description of the business and its goals.
- Discuss ownership of the business and its legal structure.
- List the skills and experience you bring to the business.
- Discuss the advantages you and your business have over competitors.

**Marketing**
- Discuss the products and services your company will offer.
- Identify customer demand for your products and services.
- Identify your market, its size and locations.
- Explain how your products and services will be advertised and marketed.
- Explain your pricing strategy.

**Financial Management**
- Develop an expected return on investment and monthly cash flow for the first year.
- Provide projected income statements and balance sheets for a two-year period.
- Discuss your break-even point.
- Explain your personal balance sheet and method of compensation.
- Discuss who will maintain your accounting records and how they will be kept.
- Provide "what if" statements addressing alternative approaches to potential problems.

**Operations**
- Explain how the business will be managed day-to-day.
- Discuss hiring and personnel procedures.
- Discuss insurance, lease or rent agreements.
- Account for the equipment necessary to produce your goods or services.
- Account for production and delivery of products and services.

**Concluding Statement**
Summarize your business goals and objectives and express your commitment to the success of your business. Once you have completed your business plan, review it with a friend or business associate and professional business counselor like SCORE, WBC or SBDC representatives, SBA district office economic development specialists or veterans’ business development specialists.

Remember, the business plan is a flexible document that should change as your business grows.
Many entrepreneurs need financial resources to start or expand a small business and must combine what they have with other sources of financing. These sources can include family and friends, venture-capital financing and business loans.

This section of the Small Business Resource guide discusses SBA’s primary business loan and equity financing programs. These are: the 7(a) Loan Program, the Certified Development Company or 504 Loan Program, the Microloan Program and the Small Business Investment Company Program. The distinguishing features for these programs are the total dollar amounts that can be borrowed, the type of lenders who can provide these loans, the uses for the loan proceeds and the terms placed on the borrower. The SBA does not provide grants to individual business owners to start or grow a business.

### SBA Business Loans

If you are contemplating a business loan, familiarize yourself with the SBA’s business loan programs to see if there may be a viable option. The SBA has a variety of loan programs which are distinguished by their different uses of the loan proceeds, their dollar amounts, and the requirements placed on the actual lenders. The three principal players in most of these programs are the applicant small business, the lender and the SBA. *(The Agency does not actually provide the loan, but rather they guaranty a portion of the loan provided by a lender (except for microloans)).* The lender can be a regulated bank or credit union, or a community based lending organization.

For help locating a lender in your area, SBA has an online tool called LINC that matches small businesses with participating SBA lenders. LINC begins with a simple online form that requests basic information about your business and financing needs. That information is transmitted to all participating SBA lenders operating within your county. If a lender is interested, you will receive an email with the contact information for that lender. LINC can be accessed through SBA’s website at [https://www.sba.gov/tools/linc](https://www.sba.gov/tools/linc).

Submitting an inquiry through LINC does not constitute a loan application but is instead a valuable tool to identify SBA lenders within your community. Once you have identified those lenders, you will apply directly to the lenders by providing them the documents they require. Generally an application includes a business plan that explains what resources will be needed to accomplish the desired business purpose including the associated costs, the applicants’ contribution, planned uses for the loan proceeds, a listing of the assets that will secure the loan (collateral), a history of the business and explanation of how the business generates income, and most important, an explanation of how the business will be able to repay the loan in a timely manner.

The lender will analyze the application to see if it meets their criteria and make a determination if they will need an SBA guaranty in order to provide the loan. SBA will look to the lender to do much, if not all, of the analysis before it provides its guaranty to the lender’s proposed loan. The SBA’s business loan guaranty programs provide a key source of financing for viable small businesses that have real potential but cannot qualify for credit on reasonable terms by themselves.

If no lenders respond to your inquiry through LINC or if you are unable to secure financing from the lenders that you have contacted, please contact your local SBA District Office for additional resources.

### 7(a) Loan Program

The 7(a) Loan program is the SBA’s primary business loan program. It is the agency’s most frequently used non-disaster financial assistance program because of its flexibility in loan structure, variety of uses for the loan proceeds and availability. The program has broad eligibility requirements and credit criteria to accommodate a wide range of financing needs.

Congress authorized SBA to provide financial assistance either directly or in cooperation with banks or other financial institutions through agreements to participate in section 7(a) of the Small Business Act. Historically, a 7(a) loan was provided either directly from SBA or from regulated lenders who provided the loan after they obtained a guaranty from SBA. Since 1996, all 7(a) loans have only been provided on a guaranteed basis, meaning from a lender participating in the 7(a) Loan Guaranty Program.

The business loans that SBA guarantees do not come from the Agency, but rather from banks and other approved lenders. The loans are funded by these organizations and they
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What to Take to the Lender

Documentation requirements will vary depending upon the purpose of the loan. Contact your lender for the information you must supply. **Common requirements include the following:**

**A Business Plan that includes:**
- Purpose of the loan
- History of the business
- Projections of income, expenses and cash flow as well as an explanation of the assumptions used to develop these projections
- Personal financial statements on the principal owners
- Resume(s) of the principal owners and managers.
- Amount of investment in the business by the owner(s)
- Projected opening-day balance sheet (new businesses)
- Lease details
- Proposed Collateral

**Three Years of Financial Statements that include:**
- Balance Sheet and Income Statement (P&L) for three years (existing businesses) (Tax Returns usually suffice)
- Interim Financial Statements dated within 180 days of the request for assistance
- Schedule of term debts (existing businesses)
- Aging of accounts receivable and payable (existing businesses), plus
- Interim Financial Statements dated within 180 days of the request for assistance

**How the 7(a) Program Works**

Small Business applicant assembles their request for financing based on the intended purpose of the proposed loan and what documents the lender requires. A loan to help a moving company acquire a new truck will be less involved than a loan to acquire or start-up a business. The paperwork can be completed on either a business loan application provided by the lender or an SBA application, but using the SBA forms does not actually increase the chance an applicant has in getting a business loan. The applicant then submits their loan application to a lender for the initial review. If the applicant is applying for their first business loan, it is recommended that the selected lender be the one who maintains the personal account of the owner(s).

The lender will generally review the credit merits of the request before deciding if they will make the loan themselves or if they will need an SBA guaranty. If a guaranty is needed, the lender will also review the application for SBA eligibility. The applicant should be prepared to complete some additional documents if the lender says they need an SBA guaranty for approval. Applicants who feel they need more help with the process should contact their local SBA district office or one of the SBA’s resource partners for assistance.

There are several ways a lender can request a 7(a) Guaranty for a proposed business loan from SBA. The main differences between these processing methods are based on the experience the lender has in requesting guarantees from SBA, the documentation the lender provides to SBA, the amount of review the SBA conducts after receiving the request, the amount of the loan and the lender responsibilities in case the loan defaults and the business’ assets must be liquidated. The current different processing methods are:

- Standard 7(a) Guaranty
- Certified Lender Program
- Preferred Lender Program
- SBA Express
- Export Express
- Community Advantage

When a lender requests a 7(a) guaranty for a business loan they propose to provide a small business their application consist of two parts. The applicant fills out SBA Form 1919 while the lender completes SBA Form 1920. The Form 1919 is designed for the applicant to explain what they intend to do with the money and how they will repay the loan. The Form 1920 requires the lender to explain their analysis of the eligibility and credit merits of the request.

When the request loan amount is smaller (generally under $350,000) the lender is allowed to provide SBA with less information in their application for guaranty but that does not mean the applicant business can provide the lender with less information. The lender has the ability to ask the applicant for as much detail as they believe is necessary for them to make their decision on the specific request.

When the SBA receives a request for guaranty from a lender they will either re-analyze, review or trust the lender’s eligibility and credit analysis before deciding to approve or reject the request. See the section on 7(a) Loan Processing from Lenders later on in this article for more detail on what SBA does when it receives a request for guaranty from the lender.

By guaranteeing a loan, the SBA assures the lender that, in the event the borrower does not repay the loan, the government will reimburse the lending institution for a percentage of the amount owed. By providing this guaranty, the SBA is able to help tens of thousands of small businesses every year get financing they might not otherwise obtain.

When SBA approves a guaranty they notify the lender who will work with the applicant to make sure the terms and conditions designed for the specific loan are met before closing. The lender also disburses the funds and assumes responsibility for collecting the payments and general servicing. The borrower makes loan payments directly to the lender. As with any loan, the borrower is obligated to repay the full amount of the loan in a timely manner.

**What the SBA Looks for:**
- Ability to repay the loan on time from the projected operating cash flow;
- Owners and operators who are of good character;
- Feasible business plan;
- Management expertise and commitment necessary for success;
- Sufficient funds, including (but not limited to) the SBA guaranteed loan, to operate the business on a sound financial basis (for new businesses, this includes the resources to meet start-up expenses and the initial operating phase);
- Adequate equity invested in the business; and
- Enough collateral to fully secure the loan or, all worthwhile available business collateral plus personal real estate if the loan cannot be fully secured.

**The Impact of a Credit Score**

SBA also credit scores every business that is a potential recipient of a loan guaranteed by SBA. If the loan is for $350,000 or less, the credit score obtained will have a significant impact on the amount of work the lender has to complete when applying for an SBA guaranty. As such it is important for any owner of a business to be aware of their credit score and correct any discrepancies prior to approaching their lender.
make the decision to approve or deny the applicant’s loan request. The guaranty that SBA provides the lender reduces the lender’s risk of borrower non-payment because the guaranty assures the lender that if the borrower defaults, the lender can request that SBA pay the debt rather than the borrower. SBA only guarantees a portion or percentage of every loan, so in the event of default the lender will only get partially repaid by SBA. However the borrower is still obligated for the full loan amount.

To qualify for an SBA guaranteed loan, a small business must meet the lender’s criteria and the 7(a) program requirements. One of those requirements is that the lender must certify that it would not provide this loan under the proposed terms and conditions without an SBA guaranty. If the SBA is going to provide a lender with a guaranty, the applicant must be eligible and creditworthy and the loan structured under conditions acceptable to the SBA.

The 7(a) Program includes ten (10) types of loans which all share certain eligibility requirements but which also have some different requirements so they can accommodate specific business needs and/or give lenders greater flexibility with loan structure. The most popular 7(a) loan type is the Basic 7(a) Loan, which can be used for the most diverse purposes. The other nine 7(a) loan types are variations of the Basic 7(a) Loan with different uses for the loan proceeds and alternative structures.

The applicant business must:
1. Be an operating business (except for loans to Eligible Passive Companies);
2. Be organized for profit;
3. Be located in the United States;
4. Be able to demonstrate a need for the desired credit.
5. Be a business, along with its Affiliates, that meets SBA’s Size Standard Requirements.
6. Be a business that is not engaged in a prohibited business activity or owned by a non-qualified owner, or located at a prohibited place.
7. Only use the Loan Proceeds for only acceptable purposes, which includes proceeds to start-up a new business, buy an existing business, acquire machinery & equipment and/or furniture & fixtures, acquire or renovate a building which the business will occupy, permanent working capital, and refinancing existing business debt under certain conditions. Proceeds from a Basic 7(a) cannot be used to buy investments that are held for their potential appreciation, or to be provided to an associate of the business except under very limited circumstances.
8. Be able to demonstrate that it can’t get the proceeds from its own resources or those of its principal owners and the lender must certify that they would only approve the loan if it is able to obtain a guaranty from SBA.
9. Have ownership that is of Good Character
10. Be able to satisfy any Miscellaneous Eligibility Requirements that may be imposed on a loan request based on the circumstances of the case including, but not limited to the purpose of the loan.

THE BASIC 7(a) LOAN

The Basic 7(a) Loan is the most commonly provided type of SBA business loan based on historical dollars approved. They are the most flexible types of SBA loans because they can help finance such a large variety of business purposes for the largest number of business types, engaged in the widest spectrum of activities.

In the Federal Government’s 2013 Fiscal Year (October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013) about 80 percent of the dollars and 38 percent of the number of all 7(a) loans were Basic 7(a) Loans. The reciprocal percentages were divided between the nine other 7(a) Programs.

The Basic 7(a) Loan is a term loan usually repaid with one monthly payment of principal and interest. Interest only repayment periods are permitted when needed, such as for a start-up business that doesn’t achieve breakeven in its initial months of operation. Other repayment structures are also permitted depending upon the borrower’s needs and the flexibility of the lender.

A Basic 7(a) Loan does not revolve so the sum of the disbursements is the loan amount. SBA can guaranty revolving lines of credit, but that is accomplished through some of the nine variations to the Basic 7(a) Loan.
The following aspects of the Basic 7(a) Loan are also applicable to all other 7(a) Loan unless specifically referenced as not applying to a specific Special 7(a) Loan.

Percentage of Guarantees and Loan Maximums

SBA only guarantees a portion of any particular 7(a) loan so each loan will have an SBA share and an unguaranteed portion which gives the lender a certain amount of exposure and risk on each loan. The percentage of guaranty depends on either the dollar amount or the program the lender uses to obtain its guaranty. For loans of $150,000 or less the SBA generally guarantees as much as 85 percent and for loans over $150,000 the SBA generally provides a guaranty of up to 75 percent.

The maximum dollar amount of a single 7(a) loan is $5 million and there is no minimum. The maximum dollar amount of the SBA share which can be provided to any one business (including affiliates) is $3,750,000.

Interest Rates

The actual interest rate for a 7(a) loan guaranteed by the SBA is negotiated between the applicant and lender but is subject to the SBA maximums. Both fixed and variable interest rate structures are available. The maximum rate comprises two parts, a base rate and an allowable spread. There are three acceptable base rates (Wall Street Journal Prime*, London Interbank One Month Prime plus 3 percent, and an SBA Peg Rate). Lenders are allowed to add an additional spread to the base rate to arrive at the final rate. For loans with maturities of less than seven years, the maximum spread will be no more than 2.25 percent. For loans with maturities of seven years or more, the maximum spread will be 2.75 percent. The spread on loans under $50,000 and loans processed through Express procedures have higher maximums. Most 7(a) term loans are repaid with monthly payments of principal and interest. For fixed-rate loans the payments stay the same because the interest rate is constant. For variable rate loans the lender can change the payment amount when the interest rates change. Applicants can request that the lender establish the loan with interest-only payments during the start-up and expansion phases (when eligible) to allow the business time to generate income before it starts making full loan payments.

Guaranty and Other Fees

Loans guaranteed by the SBA are assessed a guaranty fee. This fee is based on the loan’s maturity and the dollar amount guaranteed, not the total dollar amount of the loan. The guaranty fee is initially paid by the lender and then passed on to the borrower at closing. The funds the business needs to reimburse the lender can be included in the overall loan proceeds.

On any loan with a maturity of one year or less, the fee is just 0.25 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan. On loans with maturities of more than one year, the normal guaranty fee is:

- 2.0 percent of the SBA guaranteed portion on loans up to $150,000; **
- 3.0 percent on loans over $150,000 but not more than $700,000; and
- 3.5 percent on loans over $700,000. There is also an additional fee of 0.25 percent on any guaranteed portion over $1 million.

* All references to the prime rate refer to the base rate in effect on the first business day of the month the loan application is received by the SBA.

** For all SBA-guaranteed loans of $150,000 or less that are approved between October 1, 2016 and September 30, 2017, the guaranty fee will be 0%.

Benefit For Veterans and/or Spouses with 51% ownership or more: Any guaranteed loans approved to businesses owned by Veterans of any era or their Spouses during fiscal year 2017 (October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017) will receive the benefit of having its regular guaranty fee reduced by 50%, for loans between $150,001 and $500,000 only.

If the loan being provided a business owner by qualifying veterans is for $350,000 or less and the lender chooses to apply for its guaranty of that loan by using Express processing procedures (described elsewhere in this article) then the guaranty fee will be zero as long as the guaranty is approved before September 30, 2017.

The lender may not charge a prepayment penalty if the loan is paid off before maturity but the SBA will charge the borrower a prepayment fee if the loan has a maturity of 15 or more years and is pre-paid during the first three years.

7(a) Loan Maturities

The SBA’s loan programs are generally intended to encourage longer term small-business financing, but actual loan maturities are based on the ability to repay, the purpose of the loan proceeds and the useful life of the assets financed. Maturity generally ranges from 7 to 10 years for working capital, business start-ups, and business acquisition type loans, and up to 25 years if the purpose is to acquire real estate or fixed assets with a long term useful life.

Collateral

The SBA expects every 7(a) loan to be secured first with the assets acquired with the loan proceeds and then with additional business and personal assets, depending upon the loan amount and the way the lender requests their guaranty. However, SBA will not decline a request to guaranty a loan if the only unfavorable factor is insufficient collateral, provided all available collateral is offered. When the lender says they will need an SBA guaranty, the applicant should be prepared for liens to be placed against all business assets. Personal guaranties are required from all the principal owners of the business. Liens on personal assets of the principals may also be required. SBA does not require any collateral for any 7(a) guaranteed loan for $25,000 or less but the lender can require collateral if they chose.

Loan Structure

The structure of a Basic 7(a) Loan is that repayment has to be set up so the loan is paid in full by maturity. Over the term of the loan there can be additional payments or payment relaxation depending on what is happening with the business. Balloon payments and call provisions are not allowed on any 7(a) term loan.

Eligibility

7(a) loan eligibility is based on a number of different factors, ranging from Size and Nature of Business to Use of Proceeds and factors that are case specific.

Size Eligibility

The first eligibility factor is size, as all loan recipients must be classified as “small” by the SBA. The size standards for all 7(a) loans are outlined below. A more in-depth listing of standards can be found at: [www.sba.gov/size](http://www.sba.gov/size).

SBA Size Standards have the following general ranges:

- **Manufacturing** — from 500 to 1,500 employees
- **Wholesale Trades** — Up to 100 employees
- **Retail Sales** — Up to 1,000 employees
- **Construction** — Up to 250 employees
- **Transportation and Utilities** — Up to 50 employees
- **Trade, Services, and Other** — Up to 100 employees
- **Agricultural** — Up to 500 employees
- **Astronomical** — Up to 20 employees
- **Arts** — Up to 100 employees
- **Entertainment** — Up to 100 employees
- **Education** — Up to 150 employees
- **Law** — Up to 100 employees
- **Medical Services** — Up to 50 employees
- **Religious and Social** — Up to 50 employees
- **Special** — Up to 100 employees
• Services — $2 million to $35.5 million in average annual receipts
• Retail Trades — $7 million to $35.5 million in average annual receipts
• Construction — $7 million to $33.5 million in average annual receipts
• Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting — $750,000 to $17.5 million in average annual receipts

There is an alternate size standard for businesses that do not qualify under their industry size standards for SBA funding. That alternative is that the applicant business (plus affiliates) can’t have a tangible net worth exceeding $15 million and average net income exceeding $5 million for the last two years. This new alternate makes more businesses eligible for SBA loans and applies to SBA non-disaster loan programs, namely its 7(a) Business Loans and Certified Development Company programs.

Nature of Business
The second eligibility factor is based on the nature of the business and the process by which it generates income or the customers it serves. The SBA has general prohibitions against providing financial assistance to businesses involved in such activities as lending, speculating, passive investment, pyramid sales, loan packaging, presenting live performances of a prurient nature, businesses involved in gambling and any illegal activity.

The SBA also cannot make loan guaranties to non-profit businesses, private clubs that limit membership on a basis other than capacity, businesses that promote a religion, businesses owned by individuals incarcerated or on probation or parole, municipalities, and situations where the business or its owners previously failed to repay a federal loan or federally assisted financing, or are delinquent on existing federal debt.

Use of Proceeds
The third eligibility factor is Use of Proceeds. A Basic 7(a) Loan can provide proceeds to purchase machinery, equipment, fixtures, supplies, and to make improvements to land and/or buildings that will be occupied by the subject applicant business.

Proceeds can also be used to:
• Permanent Working Capital;
• Purchase Inventory;
• Expand or renovate facilities;
• Acquire machinery, equipment, furniture, fixtures and leasehold improvements;
• Acquire a business;

• Start a business;
• Acquire Land and Build a Location for the applicant business; and
• Refinance existing debt under certain conditions.

SBA 7(a) loan proceeds cannot be used:
• For the purpose of making investments.
• To provide funds to any of the owners of the business except for ordinary compensation for actual services provided.
• For Floor Plan Financing
• For a purpose that does not benefit the business

Miscellaneous Factors
The fourth factor involves a variety of requirements such as SBA’s credit elsewhere test where the personal resources of the owners need to be checked to see if they can make a contribution before getting a loan guaranteed by the SBA. It also includes the SBA’s anti-discrimination rules and limitations on lending to agricultural enterprises because there are other agencies of the Federal government with programs to fund such businesses. Generally, SBA loans must meet the following criteria:
• Every loan must be for a sound business purpose;
• There must be sufficient invested equity in the business so it can operate on a sound financial basis;
• There must be a potential for long-term success;
• The owners must be of good character and reputation; and
• All loans must be so sound as to reasonably assure repayment.

For more information, go to www.sba.gov/apply.

SPECIAL PURPOSE 7(a) LOAN PROGRAMS
The 7(a) loan program is the most flexible of the SBA’s lending programs. Over time, the Agency has developed several variations of the Basic 7(a) Loan in order to address specific financing needs for particular types of small businesses or to give the lender greater flexibility with the loan’s structure. The general distinguishing feature between these loan types is their use of proceeds. These programs allow the proceeds to be used in ways that are not otherwise permitted in a basic 7(a) loan. These special purpose programs are not necessarily for all businesses but may be very useful to some small businesses. They are generally governed by the same rules, regulations, fees, interest rates, etc., as the basic 7(a) loan. Lenders can advise you of any variations. The Special Purpose Loans include:

International Trade Loan Program
The SBA’s International Trade Loan (ITL) is designed to help small businesses enter and expand into international markets or, when adversely affected by import competition, to make the investments necessary to better compete. The ITL offers a combination of fixed asset, working capital financing and debt refinancing with the SBA’s maximum guaranty—90 percent—on the total loan amount. The maximum loan amount is $5 million.

Guaranty Coverage
The SBA can guaranty up to 90 percent of an ITL up to a maximum of $4.5 million, less the amount of the guaranteed portion of other SBA loans outstanding to the borrower. The maximum guaranty for any working capital component of an ITL is limited to $4 million. Any other working capital SBA loans that the borrower has are counted against the $4 million guaranty limit.

Use of Proceeds
• For the facilities and equipment portion of the loan, proceeds may be used to acquire, construct, renovate, modernize, improve or expand facilities or equipment in the U.S. to produce goods or services involved in international trade, including expansion due to bringing production back from overseas if the borrower exports to at least one market.
• Working capital is an allowable use of proceeds under the ITL.
• Proceeds may be used for the refinancing of debt not structured on reasonable terms and conditions, including any debt that qualifies for refinancing under the standard SBA 7(a) Loan Program.

Loan Term
• Maturities on the working capital portion of the ITL are typically limited to 10 years.
• Maturities of up to 10 years on equipment unless the useful life exceeds 10 years.
• Maturities of up to 25 years are available for real estate.
Benefits of the EWCP

- Financing for suppliers, inventory or production of export goods.
- Export working capital during long payment cycles.
- Financing for stand-by letters of credit used as bid or performance bonds or advance payment guarantees.
- Reserves domestic working capital for the company’s sales within the U.S.
- Permits increased global competitiveness by allowing the exporter to extend more liberal sales terms.
- Increases sales prospects in underdeveloped markets which may have high capital costs for importers.
- Low fees and quick processing times.

Guaranty Coverage

- Maximum loan amount is $5,000,000.
- 90 percent of principal and accrued interest up to 120 days.
- Low guaranty fee of one-quarter of one percent of the guaranteed portion for loans with maturities of 12 months or less.
- Loan maturities are generally for 12 months or less, but can be up to a maximum of 36 months.

Use of Proceeds

- To pay for the manufacturing costs of goods for export.
- To purchase goods or services for export.
- To support standby letters of credit to act as bid or performance bonds.
- To finance foreign accounts receivable.

Interest Rates

The SBA does not establish or subsidize interest rates on loans. The interest rate can be fixed or variable and is negotiated between the borrower and the participating lender.

Advance Rates

- Up to 90 percent on purchase orders.
- Up to 90 percent on documentary letters of credit.
- Up to 85 (90 percent on insured) foreign accounts receivable.
- Up to 75 percent on eligible foreign inventory located within the U.S.
- In all cases, not to exceed the exporter’s costs.

Collateral Requirements

The export-related inventory and the receivables generated by the export sales financed with EWCP funds generally will be considered adequate collateral. The SBA requires the personal guarantee of owners with 20 percent or more ownership.

How to apply

Application is made directly to SBA-participating lenders. Businesses are encouraged to contact SBA staff at their local U.S. Export Assistance Center (USEAC) to discuss whether they are eligible for the EWCP and whether it is the appropriate tool to meet their export financing needs. Participating lenders review/approve the application and submit the guaranty request to SBA staff at the local USEAC.

CAPLines

The CAPLines Program is designed to help small businesses meet their short-term and cyclical working capital needs. The programs can be used to finance seasonal working capital needs; finance the direct costs of performing certain construction, service and supply contracts, subcontracts, or purchase orders; finance the direct cost associated with commercial and residential construction; or provide general working capital lines of credit. The maturity can be for up to 10 years except for the Builders Capline which is limited to 36 months after the first structure is completed. Guaranty percentages are the same as for a Basic 7(a) Loan. There are four distinct short term loan programs under the CAPLine umbrella:

- **The Contract Loan Program** is used to finance the cost associated with contracts, subcontracts, or purchase orders. Proceeds can be disbursed before the work begins. If used for one contract or subcontract, it is generally not revolving; if used for more than one contract or subcontract at a time, it can be revolving. The loan maturity is usually based on the length of the contract, but no more than 10 years. Contract payments are generally sent directly to the lender but alternative structures are available.
- **The Seasonal Line of Credit Program** is used to support buildup of inventory, accounts receivable or labor and materials above normal usage for seasonal inventory. The business must have been in business for a period of 12 months and must have a definite
Therefore, if a potential applicant sees
by SBA to the needs of the business.
and use their own closing documents.
structure their own repayment terms
of the Express processes are considered
to obtain 7(a) guarantees through any
closing forms. Lenders with the ability
also require the lender to use certain
tells the lender how principal and
repayment terms meaning the Agency
listed above have SBA structured
All the Special Purpose Programs
• The Builders Line Program
provides financing for small
contractors or developers to
construct or rehabilitate residential
or commercial property. Loan
maturity is generally three years
but can be extended up to five
years, if necessary, to facilitate
sale of the property. Proceeds are
used solely for direct expenses of
acquisition, immediate construction
and/or significant rehabilitation
of the residential or commercial
structures. The purchase of the land
can be included if it does not exceed
20 percent of the loan proceeds. Up
to 5 percent of the proceeds can
be used for physical improvements
that benefit the property.
• The Working Capital Line
Program is a revolving line of credit
(up to $5,000,000) that provides
short term working capital. These
lines of credit are generally used
by businesses that provide credit to
their customers, or whose principle
asset is inventory. Disbursements
are generally based on the size of a
borrower’s accounts receivable and/
or inventory. Repayment comes
from the collection of accounts
receivable or sale of inventory. The
specific structure is negotiated with
the lender. There may be extra
servicing and monitoring of the
collateral for which the lender can
charge up to 2 percent annually to
the borrower.

Other Guaranty Lines of Credit
All the Special Purpose Programs
listed above have SBA structured
repayment terms meaning the Agency
tells the lender how principal and
interest is to be repaid. These programs
also require the lender to use certain
closing forms. Lenders with the ability
to obtain 7(a) guarantees through any
of the Express processes are considered
experienced enough to be able to
structure their own repayment terms
and use their own closing documents.
With this ability the lender can tailor
a line of credit that it gets guaranteed
by SBA to the needs of the business.
Therefore, if a potential applicant sees
that the previously listed Basic 7(a) or
Special Purpose 7(a) Programs don’t
meet their needs they should discuss
their options with a lender capable of
providing an SBA Express or Export
Express loan with an SBA guaranty.

SBA Express
The SBAExpress Loan or Line of
Credit is a flexible smaller loan up
to $350,000 that a designated lender
can provide to its borrower using
mostly their own forms, analysis and
procedures to process, structure, service,
and disburse this SBA-guaranteed
loan. When structured as a term loan
the proceeds and maturity are the
same as a Basic 7(a) Loan. When
structured as a revolving line of credit
the requirements for the payment
of interest and principal are at the
discretion of the lender and maturity
can’t exceed 7 years.

Export Express
SBA’s Export Express loans offers
flexibility and ease of use for both
borrowers and lenders on loans up to
$500,000. It is the simplest export loan
product offered by the SBA.

Use of Proceeds
Loan proceeds may be used for
business purposes that will enhance a
company’s export development. Export
Express can take the form of a term
loan or a revolving line of credit. As
an example, proceeds can be used to
fund participation in a foreign trade
show, finance standby letters of credit,
translate product literature for use in
foreign markets, finance specific export
orders, as well as to finance expansions,
equipment purchases, and inventory or
real estate acquisitions, etc.

Ineligible Use of Proceeds
Proceeds may not be used to finance
overseas operations other than those
strictly associated with the marketing
and/or distribution of products/services
exported from the U.S.

Interest Rates
Terms are negotiated between the
borrower and lender but interest rates
may not exceed Prime plus 4.5 percent
on loans over $50,000 and Prime plus
6.5 percent on loans of $50,000 or less.

Exporter Eligibility
Any business that has been in
operation, although not necessarily in
exporting, for at least 12 full months
and can demonstrate that the loan
proceeds will support its export
activity is eligible for Export Express.
The one year in business operations
requirement can be waived if the
applicant can demonstrate previous
successful business experience and
exporting expertise and the lender does
conventional underwriting, not relying
solely on credit scoring.

Foreign Buyer Eligibility
The exporter’s foreign buyer must be
a creditworthy entity and not located
in countries prohibited for financial
support on the Export-Import Bank’s
Country Limitation Schedule and the
methods of payment must be acceptable
to the SBA and the SBA lender.

How to Apply
Interested businesses should contact
their existing lender to determine
if they are an SBA Export Express
lender. Application is made directly
to the lender. Lenders use their own
application material in addition to
SBA’s Borrower Information Form.
Lenders’ approved requests are then
submitted with a limited amount of
eligibility information to SBA’s National
Loan Processing Center for review.

7(a) LOAN PROCESSES FOR
LENDERS

There are various ways a lender
can apply to SBA for a 7(a) guaranty.
Some are designed for experienced
lenders who are fully committed to
providing business loans guaranteed
by SBA to their clientele that need
them, while others are designed for
lenders with limited experience or
when there are certain issues that
require SBA to thoroughly review
the situation. The fundamental process
available to all lenders who have
signed up to participate with SBA is
called the Standard Loan Guaranty
Process. It is used by lenders to request
a guaranty from SBA when they are
new to SBA lending or the request
requires an SBA review. Other methods
of processing a request for guaranty
have less requirements for SBA, so the
time SBA takes is less, but potentially
more requirements or responsibilities
for the lender. The determining factors
on which one is use depends on the
experience of the lender in dealing
with SBA, the complexity of the case,
the purpose of the loan, and the dollar
amount being requested.
Standard 7(a) Loan Processing

After the applicant business and lender complete their required documents, the lender makes application to SBA for a guaranty by submitting them to SBA’s Loan Guaranty Processing Center. The center will screen the application and, if satisfactory complete a thorough review of both eligibility and creditworthiness before making the decision to approve the issuance of a guaranty as submitted, approve with modifications (which will be discussed with the lender), or reject the request. When the lender makes application to SBA, they have already internally agreed to approve the recommended loan to the applicant if, and only if, the SBA provides a guaranty.

Standard processing means a lender makes their request for guaranty using SBA Form 1920 and the applicant completes SBA Form 1919, even if the applicant previously completed the lender’s required application forms.

The analysis of eligibility starts with a review of the “Eligibility Questionnaire,” completed by the lender. The analysis of credit starts with a review of the SBA Form 1920 and the lender’s credit memo which must discuss at least six elements:
1. Balance sheet and ratio analysis;
2. Analysis of repayment. It is not acceptable to base repayment ability solely on the applicant’s credit score.
3. Assessment of the management skills of the applicant;
4. Explanation of the collateral used to secure the loan and the adequacy of the proposed collateral;
5. Lender’s credit history with applicant including an explanation of any weaknesses;
6. Current financial statements and pro-forma financial spread. SBA pro-forma analysis reflects how the business will look immediately following disbursement, not one year after disbursement.

SBA also expects that the lender’s credit memo includes the intended use of the loan proceeds and any historical and current issues that require explanation. SBA also expects a discussion of the process by which the applicant business generates its income when it is not immediately obvious. An explanation of how the business conducts its operation is also expected.

SBA has three days to screen and 10 days to process the request for guaranty from the lender. Any additional time a lender takes to make their determination prior to requesting a guaranty from SBA will add to the length of time to reach a final decision. If the guaranty is approved, SBA will prepare a loan authorization outlining the terms and conditions under which the guaranty is provided and prepare an approval letter for transmission to the lender.

Guaranty Coverage

The SBA provides lenders with a 90 percent guaranty on loans up to $350,000 and a 75 percent guaranty on loans between $350,001 and $500,000.

Community Advantage Loans

The Community Advantage Pilot Program is aimed at helping businesses located in underserved communities gain access to capital by opening up 7(a) lending to mission-focused, community-based lenders — such as Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), Certified Development Companies (CDCs), and SBA Microloan Intermediaries. These lenders provide technical assistance and economic development support to businesses located in underserved markets.

The application process is the same as for a Basic 7(a) Loan. The main difference with this program from other SBA 7(a) loan programs is the lender who ultimately provides the loan funds is not a traditional SBA lender. The maximum loan amount is $350,000.

Visit: www.sba.gov/content/community-advantage-loans for more information about this program.

CERTIFIED DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LOAN PROGRAM (504 LOANS)

The 504 Loan program is an economic development program that supports American small business growth and helps communities through business expansion and job creation. The 504 loan program provides long-term, fixed-rate, subordinate mortgage financing for acquisition and/or renovation of capital assets including land, buildings and equipment. Some refinancing is also permitted. Most for-profit small businesses are eligible for this program. The types of businesses excluded from 7(a) loans (listed previously) are also excluded from the 504 loan program.

The SBA’s 504 Certified Development Companies (CDC) serve their communities by financing business expansion needs. Their professional staff works directly with borrowers to tailor a financing package that meets program guidelines and the credit capacity of the borrower’s business. CDCs work with banks and other lenders to make loans in first position on reasonable terms, helping lenders retain growing customers and provide Community Reinvestment Act credit.

The SBA 504 loan is distinguished from the SBA 7(a) loan program in these ways:
The maximum debenture, or long-term loan, is:

- $5 million for businesses that create a certain number of jobs or improve the local economy;
- $5 million for businesses that meet a specific public policy goal, including loans for aiding rural development and expansion of small businesses owned by veterans, women, and minorities; and
- $5.5 million for manufacturers and energy-related public policy projects.

Recent additions to the program allow $5.5 million for each project that reduces the borrower's energy consumption by at least 10 percent; and $5.5 million for each project that generates renewable energy fuels, such as biodiesel or ethanol production. Projects eligible for up to $5.5 million under one of these two requirements do not have to meet the job creation or retention requirement, so long as the CDC portfolio reflects an average jobs to debenture portfolio ratio of at least 1 job per $65,000

- Eligible project costs are limited to long-term, fixed assets such as land and building (occupied by the borrower) and substantial machinery and equipment.
- Most borrowers are required to make an injection (borrower contribution) of just 10 percent which allows the business to conserve valuable operating capital. A further injection of 5 percent is needed if the business is a start-up or new (less than two years old), and a further injection of 5 percent is also required if the primary collateral will be a single-purpose building (such as a hotel).
- Two-tiered project financing: A lender finances approximately 50 percent of the project cost and receives a first lien on the project assets (but no SBA guaranty); A CDC (backed by a 100 percent SBA-guaranteed debenture) finances up to 40 percent of the project costs secured with a junior lien. The borrower provides the balance of the project costs.
- Fixed interest rate on SBA loan. The SBA guarantees the debenture 100 percent. Debentures are sold in pools monthly to private investors. This low, fixed rate is then passed on to the borrower and establishes the basis for the loan rate.
- All project-related costs can be financed, including acquisition (land and building, land and construction of building, renovations, machinery and equipment) and soft costs, such as title insurance and appraisals. Some closing costs may be financed.
- Collateral is typically a subordinate lien on the assets financed; allows other assets to be free of liens and available to secure other needed financing.
- Long-term real estate loans are up to 20-year term, heavy equipment 10- or 20-year term and are self-amortizing.

**Businesses that receive 504 loans are:**

- Small — net worth under $15 million, net profit after taxes under $5 million, or meet other SBA size standards.
- Organized for-profit.
- Most types of business — retail, service, wholesale or manufacturing.

For information, visit [www.sba.gov/504](http://www.sba.gov/504).

**Areawide Development Corp.**

216 Corporate Place
Alcoa, TN 37701
865-273-6008
Don Woods
dwoods@etdd.org

**BrightBridge, Inc.**
535 Chestnut St., Ste. 161
Chattanooga, TN 37401
423-424-4227
Mike Ohlman
mohlman@brightbridgeinc.org

**Mid-Cumberland Area Development Corp.**
501 Union St., 6th Fl.
Nashville, TN 37219
615-862-8831
Amanda Giner
aginer@gnrc.org

**S. Central TN Business Development Corp.**
101 Sam Watkins Blvd.
Mt. Pleasant, TN 38474
931-379-2929
Eddie Fitzgerald
efitzgerald@sctdd.org

**Six Bridges Capital Corp.**
200 S. Commerce
Little Rock, AR 72201
800-216-7237
Al Hodge
ahodge@arcapital.com
*Authorized to do loans in Shelby, Fayette and Tipton Counties.

**Tennessee Business Development Corp.**
1301 E. Wood St., Ste. 2
Paris, TN 38242
731-644-1335
Jim Thigpen
Jthigpen@tnbdc.com

**Microloan Program**

(Loans up to $50,000)

The Microloan Program provides very small loans (up to $50,000) to women, low-income, minority, veteran, and other small business owners through a network of more than 100 Intermediaries nationwide. Under this program, the SBA makes funds available to nonprofit intermediaries that, in turn, make the small loans directly to start-up and existing businesses. Entrepreneurs work directly with the Intermediaries to receive financing and business knowledge support. The proceeds of a microloan can be used for working capital, or the purchase of furniture, fixtures, supplies, materials, and/or equipment. Microloans may not be used for the purchase of real estate. Interest rates are negotiated between the borrower and the Intermediary. The maximum term for a microloan is six years. Because funds are borrowed from the Intermediary, SBA is not involved in the business loan application or approval process. And, payments are made directly from the small business to the Intermediary.

The program also provides business-based training and technical assistance to micro-lenders and potential micro-borrowers to help them successfully start or grow their businesses. Such training and technical assistance may include general business education, assistance with business planning, industry-specific training, and other types of training support.

 Entrepreneurs and small business owners interested in small amounts of business financing should contact the nearest SBA district office for more information about the nearest Microloan Program Intermediary Lender or go to [www.sba.gov/microloans](http://www.sba.gov/microloans).

**Communities Unlimited**
516 Tennessee St., Ste. 234
Memphis, TN 38104
901-312-9797 • 901-612-9798 Fax
Cynthia Norwood
Cynthia.norwood@CommunitiesUL.org
www.communitiesul.org
Service Area: Shelby County Area

**Pathway Lending**
201 Venture Cir.
Nashville, TN 37228
615-425-7197 • 615-425-7172 Fax
hank.helton@pathwaylending.org
www.pathwaylending.org
All counties in Tennessee.
awarded to socially and economically disadvantaged concerns, HUBZone contractors, and veterans, and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses. All other bonds guaranteed in the Prior Approval Program receive an 80 percent guarantee. Sureties must obtain the SBA’s prior approval for each bond guarantee issued. Under the Preferred Program, the SBA guarantees 70 percent, and sureties may issue, monitor and service bonds without the SBA’s prior approval. Small businesses, surety companies, and bond agents are invited to visit our website at www.sba.gov/osg.

Participating agents and sureties may be found at http://web.sba.gov/orasbgpub/dsp_welcome.cfm.

The program office may be reached at 202-205-6540 or

Tamar E. Murray
Underwriting Marketing Specialist
Denver, CO
303-927-3479

Linda M. Laws
Underwriting Marketing Specialist
Seattle, WA
206-553-7317

The Small Business Investment Company (SBIC) program is a multi-billion dollar program founded in 1958, as one of many financial assistance programs available through the U.S. Small Business Administration. The structure of the program is unique in that SBICs are privately owned and managed investment funds, licensed and regulated by SBA, that use their own capital plus funds borrowed with an SBA guarantee to make equity and debt investments in qualifying small businesses. The funds raise private capital and can receive SBA-guaranteed leverage up to three times private capital, with a leverage ceiling of $150 million per SBIC and $225 million for two or more licenses under common control. Licensed SBICs are for-profit investment firms whose incentive is to share in the success of a small business. The U.S. Small Business Administration does not invest directly into small business through the SBIC Program, but provides funding through SBA guarantee debentures to qualified investment management firms with expertise in certain sectors or industries.

Small Business Investment Company Programs

CCSD II, L.P.
R. Burton Harvey
40 Burton Hills Blvd., Ste. 250
Nashville, TN 37219
615-690-7183 • 615-690-7183 Fax
bharvey@capfunds.com

Claritas Capital Specialty Debt Fund, L.P.
R. Burton Harvey, Contact
40 Burton Hills Blvd., Ste. 250
Nashville, TN 37215
615-680-7183 • 615-690-7183 Fax
bharvey@capfunds.com

Contemporary Healthcare Fund I, LP
Craig Taylor, Contact
801 Broad St., Ste. 200
Chattanooga, TN 37402
423-424-1842 • 877-424-1842 Fax
craylor@contemporarycapital.com

Contemporary Healthcare Senior Lien Fund I, LP
Craig Taylor, Contact
801 Broad St., Ste. 200
Chattanooga, TN 37402
423-424-1842 • 877-424-1842 Fax
craylor@contemporarycapital.com

Harbert Mezzanine Partners II SBIC, L.P.
Pryor Smartt, Contact
618 Church St., Ste. 500
Nashville, TN 37219
615-301-6395 • 615-301-6401 Fax

Petra Growth Fund II, L.P.
Robert A. Smith, Contact
3825 Bedford Ave., Ste. 101
Nashville, TN 37215
615-313-5999 • 615-313-5990 Fax
mlb@petracapital.com

Petra Growth Fund III, L.P.
Robert A. Smith
3825 Bedford Ave., Ste. 101
Nashville, TN 37215
615-313-5997 • 615-313-5990 Fax
ras@petracapital.com

Pharos Capital Partners II, L.P.
Kneeland Youngblood, Contact
8 Cadillac Dr., Ste. 180
Nashville, TN 37219
615-234-5522 • 615-263-0234 Fax
jgoldberg@pharosfunds.com

Pharos Capital Partners III-A, L.P.
Kneeland Youngblood
8 Cadillac Dr., Ste. 180
Brentwood, TN 37027
615-234-5522 • 615-263-0234 Fax
jgoldberg@pharosfunds.com

Tenth Street Fund III, L.P.
Bill Nutter
30 Burton Hills Blvd., Ste. 350
Nashville, TN 37215
615-665-3636 • 615-665-3896 Fax
bill@tenthstreetcapital.com

People, Inc. Financial Services
1173 W. Main St.
Abingdon, VA
276-619-2239 • 276-628-2931 Fax
Deborah S. Wagner
dwagner@peopleinc.net
www.peopleinc.net

Only Sullivan County in Tennessee.
THE SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH PROGRAM

The Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program is a highly competitive program that encourages domestic small businesses to engage in Federal Research/Research and Development (R&D) that has the potential for commercialization. Through a competitive awards-based program, SBIR enables small businesses to explore their technological potential and provides the incentive to profit from its commercialization. By including qualified small businesses in the nation’s R&D arena, high-tech innovation is stimulated and the United States gains entrepreneurial spirit as it meets its specific research and development needs.

SBIR Program Eligibility

Only United States small businesses are eligible to participate in the SBIR program. An SBIR awardee must meet the following criteria at the time of Phase I and II awards:

1. Organized for profit, with a place of business located in the United States;
2. No more than 500 employees, including affiliates;
3. Be a concern which is more than 50% directly owned and controlled by one or more individuals (who are citizens or permanent resident aliens of the United States), other small business concerns (each of which is more than 50% directly owned and controlled by individuals who are citizens or permanent resident aliens of the United States), or any combination of these;
4. Be a concern which is more than 50% owned by multiple venture capital operating companies, hedge funds, private equity firms, or any combination of these (for agencies electing to use the authority in 15 U.S.C. 638(dd)(1)); or
5. Be a joint venture in which each entity to the joint venture must meet the requirements set forth in paragraph (a)(1)(ii) of (a)(1)(ii) of this section. A joint venture that includes one or more concerns that meet the requirements of paragraph (a)(1)(ii) of this section must comply with $121.705(b) concerning registration and proposal requirements.
6. No single venture capital operating company, hedge fund, or private equity firm may own more than 50% of the concern.
7. For awards from agencies using the authority under 15 U.S.C. 638(dd)(1), an awardee may be owned and controlled by more than one VC, hedge fund, or private equity firm so long as no one such firm owns a majority of the stock.
8. If an Employee Stock Ownership Plan owns all or part of the concern, each stock trustee and plan member is considered an owner.
9. If a trust owns all or part of the concern, each trustee and trust beneficiary is considered an owner.
10. Phase I awardees with multiple prior awards must meet the benchmark requirements for progress toward commercialization.

SBIR-Participating Agencies

Each year, Federal agencies with extramural research and development (R&D) budgets that exceed $100 million are required to reserve 2.9% (FY 15) of the extramural research budget for SBIR awards to small businesses. These agencies designate R&D topics and accept proposals. Currently, eleven agencies participate in the SBIR program:

- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Commerce - National Institute of Standards and Technology
- Department of Commerce - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Department of Defense
- Department of Education
- Department of Energy
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of Transportation
- Environmental Protection Agency
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- National Science Foundation

For additional information visit www.sbir.gov.

SMALL BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER PROGRAM

Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) is another program that expands funding opportunities in the federal innovation research and development (R&D) arena. Central to the program is expansion of the public/private sector partnership to include the joint venture opportunities for small businesses and nonprofit research institutions. The unique feature of the STTR program is the requirement for the small business to formally collaborate with a research institution in Phase I and Phase II. STTR’s most important role is to bridge the gap between performance of basic science and commercialization of resulting innovations.

STTR Program Eligibility

Only United States small businesses are eligible to participate in the STTR program. The small business must meet all of the following criteria at time of award:

- Organized for profit, with a place of business located in the United States;
- At least 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more individuals who are citizens of, or permanent resident aliens in, the United States, and;
- No more than 500 employees, including affiliates.

The nonprofit research institution must also meet certain eligibility criteria:

- Located in the U.S.
- Meet one of three definitions:
  - Nonprofit college or university
  - Domestic nonprofit research organization
  - Federally funded R&D center (FFRDC)

STTR differs from SBIR in three important aspects:

1. The SBC and its partnering institution are required to establish an intellectual property agreement detailing the allocation of intellectual property rights and rights to carry out follow-on research, development, or commercialization activities.
2. STTR requires that the SBC perform at least 40% of the R&D and the single partnering research institution to perform at least 30% of the R&D.
3. Unlike the SBIR program, STTR does not require the Principal Investigator to be primarily employed by the SBC.

STTR-Participating Agencies

Each year, Federal agencies with extramural research and development (R&D) budgets that exceed $1 billion are required to reserve 0.40% (FY 15) of the extramural research budget for STTR awards to small businesses. These agencies designate R&D topics and accept proposals. Currently, five agencies participate in the STTR program:

- Department of Defense
- Department of Energy
- Department of Health and Human Services
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- National Science Foundation

For additional information visit www.sbir.gov.
The old adage “time is money” is perhaps one of the most pertinent statements that you can apply to small business owners. Whether you’re starting a business or managing a growing one, entrepreneurs and business owners wear many hats and have many questions:

- What laws and regulations apply to my business?
- How do I start to write a business plan?
- Where can I get help with X, Y and Z?

Many of us invariably turn to our networks and the Internet to find answers. But how can you trust that the information you are getting is truly applicable to your business and, let’s face it, even accurate?

As part of its mission to help business owners start, succeed and grow, SBA, through the SBA.gov website has developed numerous online tools and guides to help small businesses get information and answers they need quickly and efficiently. For example, these 10 Steps to Starting a Business and these 10 Steps to Hiring your First Employee guides are essential reading. Then there are the Licenses and Permits Search Tool and the Loans and Grants Search Tool.

New Online Tools to Help Business Owners Plan, Manage and Grow

The SBA has expanded its capacity and selection of tools and information that business owners need by developing a whole range of new online features! Check them out:

1. Find an SBA Lender through the Leveraging Information and Networks to access Capital (LINC) Tool

The SBA extends financial assistance to for-profit small businesses through its lending partners, such as banks, certified development companies, and microloan intermediaries. For help locating a lending partner in your area, use SBA’s LINC tool that matches small businesses with SBA lenders. LINC begins with a simple online form that requests basic information about your business and financing needs. That information is transmitted to all participating SBA lenders operating within your county. If a lender is interested, you will receive an email with the contact information for that lender. LINC can be accessed through SBA’s website at https://www.sba.gov/tools/linc.

2. Get to Know Your Market and Competition Better with the SizeUp Tool

Want to know how your business stacks up against the competition? Where your potential competitors are located? Where the best places are to advertise your business? These are all critical inputs for your business plan and can also help back up any financing applications.

Now with the new SizeUp tool you can crunch millions of data points and get customizable reports and statistics about your business and its competition. Just enter your industry, city, state and other details. SizeUp then runs various reports and provides maps and data related to your competition, suppliers and customers. It also highlights potential advertising opportunities.

3. Build a Business Plan Tool

Business planning can seem a daunting task, but it doesn’t have to be that way. To help you plan and steer your business, this new “Build a Business Plan” tool guides you through the process of creating a basic, downloadable business plan. The great thing about it is you can build a plan in smaller chunks of time, save your progress and return at your leisure.

To use the tool, simply log into SBA.gov and enter information into a template for each section of the business plan, including, market analysis, company description and financial projections. The tool is secure and confidential and will keep your plan on record for up to six months. You can also save, download or email the plan at any time.

4. Size Standards Tool - Find Out Fast if You Qualify for Government Contracts

In order to be eligible to sell to the government and compete for small business “set-aside” contracts, business owners had to rummage through various rules and matrices to find out if their business is truly “small” according to SBA size standards. Now, with this new Size Standards Tool, you can follow three simple steps to cut through the guesswork and quickly find out if you qualify for government contracting opportunities. SBA also offers other resources including government contracting training courses, and guides to help you register as a contractor.

5. Events Calendar - Locate Business Training and Seminars

SBA and its partners, including Small Business Development Centers, Women’s Business Centers, and SCORE, hold hundreds of small business training seminars and workshops across the country. Until now, there was no single repository for these events. Now, with SBA’s Events Calendar, you can quickly find and sign up for training. Enter a date range and/or zip code to locate events in your area. Results are filtered by topic such as “starting a business,” “managing a business,” “business planning,” and “financing a business.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Who Qualifies</th>
<th>Use of Proceeds</th>
<th>Maturity</th>
<th>Maximum Loan Amount</th>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Benefits to Borrower</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic 7(a)</td>
<td>For profit businesses that can meet SBA’s size standards, nature of business, use of proceeds, credit elsewhere, and other miscellaneous eligibility factors.</td>
<td>Acquire land; purchase existing building; convert, expand or renovate buildings; construct new buildings; acquire inventory; purchase supplies and raw materials; purchase a business; start a business, leasehold improvements, term working capital; and, under certain conditions, to refinance certain outstanding debts.</td>
<td>Based on the use of proceeds and borrower’s ability to repay. Not based on collateral. Maximum maturity: 10 years for working capital (seven years is common), 10 years for fixed assets, 25 years for real estate.</td>
<td>A Basic 7(a) can be for as much as $5 million. SBA’s limit to any one business is $3.75 million so a business can have multiple loans guaranteed by SBA but the guaranteed portion combined cannot exceed $3.75 million.</td>
<td>Term loans with one monthly payment of principal and interest (P&amp;I). Borrower contribution required. Interest rate depends upon how lender applies for guaranty (see lender program chart). Cannot revolve, no balloon or call provisions.</td>
<td>Business can obtain financing not otherwise available, fixed maturity, available when collateral is limited. Can establish or re-affirm relationship with lender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Trade Loan (ITL)</td>
<td>Same as Basic 7(a), plus, business must be engaged or preparing to engage in exporting or be adversely affected by competition from imports.</td>
<td>Acquire, renovate, modernize facilities or equipment used in making products or services to be exported, plus, for permanent working capital or to refinance business debts currently on unreasonable terms.</td>
<td>Same as Basic 7(a).</td>
<td>Same as Basic 7(a).</td>
<td>Same as Basic 7(a).</td>
<td>Same as Basic 7(a). Plus, long-term financing export-related fixed assets and working capital to ensure the company becomes more competitive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Export Working Capital Loan (EWCP)</td>
<td>Same as Basic 7(a). Plus, must be in business one year and engaged in exporting or preparing to engage in exporting. One-year in business requirement can be waived for principals with previous exporting and business expertise.</td>
<td>Short-term working capital to cover the costs of filling export orders, including ability to support an Export Stand-By Letter of Credit.</td>
<td>Can be up to a maximum of 36 months or generally 12 months or less.</td>
<td>Gross loan amount $5.0 million with 90% guaranty. SBA maximum guaranteed portion is $4.5 million.</td>
<td>Finance single or multiple transactions. Interest paid monthly, principal paid as payments from items shipped overseas are collected. Can be renewed annually. Extra servicing fees are allowed. Can be transactional or revolving asset-based line of credit.</td>
<td>Provides U.S. exporters with a line of credit that can be separated from domestic operations line of credit. Can be used to finance 100% of the cost of filling export orders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasonal CAPlines</td>
<td>Same as Basic 7(a). Plus, in business for at least one year and can demonstrate seasonal financing needs.</td>
<td>To finance the seasonal increases of accounts receivable, inventory and labor.</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>Same as Basic 7(a).</td>
<td>Short-term financing for seasonal activities to be repaid at the end of the season when payment for the seasonal activity is made to business.</td>
<td>Provides opportunity for seasonal businesses to get seasonal financing not otherwise available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract CAPlines</td>
<td>Same as Basic 7(a). Plus, will perform on contract or purchase order for some third-party buyer.</td>
<td>To finance the cost of one or more specific contract, sub-contract, or purchase order, including overhead or general and administrative expenses, allocable to the specific contract(s).</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>Same as Basic 7(a).</td>
<td>Short-term financing for performance of approved contract, sub-contract, or purchase order to be repaid when payment for the activity is made to business. Can be revolving or not.</td>
<td>Provides opportunity for contractors and sub-contractors to get financing not otherwise available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builders CAPlines</td>
<td>Same as Basic 7(a). Plus, building/renovating residential or commercial structure for re-sale without knowing buyer at time of approval.</td>
<td>For the direct expenses related to the construction and/or &quot;substantial&quot; renovation costs of specific residential or commercial buildings for resale, including labor, supplies, materials, equipment rental, direct fees. The cost of land is potentially eligible.</td>
<td>Maximum of three years to disburse and build or renovate. Extension possible to accommodate sale.</td>
<td>Same as Basic 7(a).</td>
<td>Short-term financing to build or renovate home or building for sale to unknown third party. &quot;Substantial&quot; means rehabilitation expenses of more than one-third of the purchase price or fair market value at the time of application. Can be revolving or not.</td>
<td>Provides opportunity for residential and commercial builders to get financing not otherwise available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working Capital CAPlines</td>
<td>Same as Basic 7(a). Borrower should sell on credit and/or have inventory needing immediate replacement after the sale.</td>
<td>For short-term working capital and operating needs, including to finance export sales. Proceeds must not be used to pay delinquent withholding taxes or similar trust funds (state sales taxes, etc.) or for floor planning.</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>Same as Basic 7(a).</td>
<td>Structured with requirements for payment of principal tied to the businesses collection of payments from their clientele</td>
<td>Provides opportunity for businesses that sell on credit to get revolving financing not otherwise available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBA Express Lender Structured Loans or Lines of Credit</td>
<td>Businesses needing a term loan or a line of credit to conduct credit in the USA.</td>
<td>Term loan to support business operations Including equipment and real estate. Working capital</td>
<td>If revolving, seven-year maximum, including term out period. Equipment, useful life; real estate, 25 years.</td>
<td>$350,000</td>
<td>Structure is established by individual lender. Lender must have SBA Express designation</td>
<td>Has availability for a line of credit to help with short-term cash needs of the business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Export Express Lender Structured Loans or Lines of Credit</td>
<td>Businesses needing a term loan or line of credit to support exporting activity.</td>
<td>Term loan to support business operations Including equipment and real estate. Working capital, 70 percent of which is to be used to support exporting activities.</td>
<td>If revolving line of credit for working capital, seven-year maximum, including term out period. Equipment, useful life; real estate, 25 years.</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>Structure is established by individual lender. Lender must have Export Express designation</td>
<td>Has availability for a line of credit or loan to help with short-term cash needs of the business to support expanding export sales or to expand production for the sale of exported goods or services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-7(a) Programs</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>504 Loan Program</td>
<td>For-profit businesses that can meet the SBA’s size standards, nature of business, use of proceeds, credit elsewhere, and other miscellaneous factors.</td>
<td>For the acquisition of long-term fixed assets, equipment with a useful life of at least 10 years; refinance loan-term fixed asset debt under certain conditions; working capital under certain conditions; to reduce energy consumption; and to upgrade renewable energy resources.</td>
<td>Based on the use of proceeds. Twenty years for real estate. Ten years for machinery and equipment.</td>
<td>The SBA portion of the financing can generally be up to $5.0 million but may be up to $5.5 million for manufacturing businesses or energy saving public policy goals.</td>
<td>Loans packaged by Certified Development Companies (CDC) and designed to finance up to 40 percent of a “project”1 secured with a 2nd position lien. Another loan from a third party lender financing up to 50 percent of the same project secured in 1st position, and borrower contribution of at least 10 percent. Extra contributions for special-purpose properties and new businesses.</td>
<td>Long-term Treasury fixed rates that are below market, low borrower contribution only 10 to 20 percent, full amortization with no call or balloon conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microloan Program</td>
<td>Same as Basic 7(a). Plus, nonprofit child-care businesses.</td>
<td>Similar to Basic 7(a). Plus, start-up nonprofit child-care businesses.</td>
<td>Shortest term possible, not to exceed six years.</td>
<td>$50,000 to the small business at any given time.</td>
<td>The SBA provides a loan to a nonprofit micro-lender called an “intermediary” who uses the proceeds to make microloans to small businesses. Technical assistance can also be provided.</td>
<td>Direct loan from nonprofit intermediary lender, fixed-rate financing, can be very small loan amounts, and technical assistance is available.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 “Project” is the purchase or lease, and/or improvement or renovation of long-term fixed assets by a small business, with 504 financing, for use in its business operations.

All SBA programs and services are extended to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis.
## Lender’s Programs Chart

**Ways lenders can request guarantees**

(Information current as of 04/27/2016)

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<th>Program Processing</th>
<th>Which Lenders Qualify</th>
<th>Types of Loans that can be Guaranteed</th>
<th>Maximum Allowable Interest Rates</th>
<th>Eligibility Analysis</th>
<th>Credit Analysis</th>
<th>Maximum Loan Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Processing</td>
<td>Lenders that have an executed participation agreement with the SBA. Export Working Capital requires additional 750-EX agreement.</td>
<td>Basic 7(a). International Trade, Export Working Capital, all CAPlines.</td>
<td>Base rate is Wall Street Journal prime, or LIBOR* one month rate plus 3 percent, or SBA Peg rate. <strong>Plus,</strong> an allowable spread from 2.25 to 2.75 percent based on term. Lender can add 2 percent if loan is $25,000 or less, and 1 percent if loan is $25,001 to $50,000. Can be fixed or variable. No maximum set on Export Working Capital.</td>
<td>Lender completes eligibility questionnaire and SBA reviews eligibility during loan processing.</td>
<td>Lender to cover all aspects of prudent credit analysis with emphasis on applicant’s ability to repay loan from operation. SBA conducts analysis of lender’s analysis.</td>
<td>Maximum loan $5 million. Loans up to $150,000 guaranteed up to 85 percent; loans over $150,000 guaranteed up to 75 percent. Business with multiple SBA loans may get some variations. Export Working Capital and International Trade Loans have 90% guaranty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred Lender Program (PLP) Processing</td>
<td>Same as Standard 7(a). Plus, an executed PLP agreement.</td>
<td>Same as Standard processing except restrictions on loans involving some types of debt refinancing.</td>
<td>Same as Standard 7(a).</td>
<td>Lender completes Eligibility Analysis.</td>
<td>Delegated to lender.</td>
<td>Maximum loan $5 million. Guaranty percentage same as Standard 7(a).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBA Express Processing</td>
<td>Same as Standard 7(a). Plus, an executed SBA Express agreement.</td>
<td>Basic 7(a) with restrictions on some types of debt refinancing. Plus, lender structured term and revolving loans.</td>
<td>If $50,000 or less, cannot exceed prime + 6.5 percent. If over $50,000, cannot exceed prime + 4.5 percent. Prime may be lender prime.</td>
<td>Lender completes SBA Form 1920 “Eligibility Information.”</td>
<td>Delegated to lender.</td>
<td>Maximum loan $350,000. Guaranty percentage 50 percent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Export Express Processing</td>
<td>Same as Standard 7(a). Plus, an executed Export Express agreement.</td>
<td>Similar to SBA Express, but must meet export-related eligibility criteria and use of proceeds requirement.</td>
<td>If $50,000 or less, cannot exceed prime + 6.5 percent. If over $50,000, cannot exceed prime + 4.5 percent. Prime may be lender prime.</td>
<td>Lender completes SBA Form 1920 “Eligibility Information.”</td>
<td>Delegated to lender.</td>
<td>Maximum loan $500,000. Guaranty percentage range between 75 and 90 percent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Advantage</td>
<td>Lenders that have an executed Community Advantage agreement.</td>
<td>Basic 7(a) except restrictions on some types of refinancing.</td>
<td>Prime + 6 percent.</td>
<td>Lenders complete SBA Form 1920 “Eligibility Information.”</td>
<td>Similar to Standard 7(a) except credit factors to consider are more defined.</td>
<td>Maximum loan $250,000. Guaranty percentage same as Standard 7(a).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*London InterBank Offered Rate

All SBA programs and services are extended to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis.
The U.S. government is the largest single purchaser of goods and services in the world, buying everything from armored vehicles and cutting-edge scientific research, to paper clips and super computers. Every year, the federal government awards more than $500 billion in contracts, and a significant share of those contracts are made specifically available for award to small businesses.

The Small Business Administration works with agencies to award at least 23 percent of all prime government contracts to small businesses, including specific statutory goals for small disadvantaged businesses (SDB) – 5%, businesses that are women-owned (WOSB) – 5% or service-disabled veteran-owned (SDVOSB) – 3%, and businesses that are located in historically underutilized business zones (HUBZone firms) – 3%.

The agency ensures that small businesses have access to long-lasting development opportunities, which means working with small businesses to help them to become and remain competitive, as well as encouraging federal agencies to award more contracts to small businesses. The SBA performs an advocacy function for small businesses through outreach programs, matchmaking events, and online training opportunities. The agency works directly with individual Federal buying offices and large business government contractors to identify contracting opportunities for small businesses.

HOW GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING WORKS

Sealed bidding vs. Negotiation

There are two primary competitive contracting methods the government uses to purchase goods and services, sealed bidding and negotiation. The first method, sealed bidding, involves the issuance of an invitation for bid (IFB) by a procuring agency. Under the sealed bidding method, a contract is awarded to the responsive and responsible bidder whose bid, conforms to the requirements of a solicitation (IFB) that will be most advantageous to the government, considering only price and the price-related factors included in the IFB. The second method, negotiation, involves issuing a request for proposal (RFP) or request for quotation (RFQ). The business with the best proposal in terms of technical content, best value, price and other factors generally is awarded the contract.

Types of Contracts

Fixed-price contracts place the full responsibility for the costs and risk of loss on the contractor, and generally do not permit any adjustment on the basis of the contractor’s costs during the performance of the contract. It provides maximum incentive for the contractor to control costs and perform effectively and imposes a minimum administrative burden upon the contracting parties. This type of contract is used in all sealed bid and some negotiated procurements.

Cost reimbursement contracts provide for the payment of allowable costs incurred by the contractor plus a reasonable profit, to the extent stated in the contract. The contract establishes a ceiling price, above which a contractor may not exceed without the approval of the contracting officer. Cost reimbursement contracts are commonly used in research and development contracts.

Some contracts do not fit neatly into these two categories, such as time and material contracts (prices for hourly wages are established but the hours are estimated), and although rarely used, letter contracts, which authorizes a contractor to begin work on an urgent requirement before all terms and conditions are finalized.

Small Business Set-Asides

A “set-aside” for small businesses reserves an acquisition exclusively for small business competition. This includes requirements competed among HUBZone Certified Small Businesses, SBA 8(a) Certified small businesses, Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned small businesses, and Economically Disadvantaged/Women-Owned small businesses in specific industries. Generally, set asides are appropriate, or in some cases required, if the contracting officer has a reasonable expectation of receiving two or more offers from responsible concerns and award can be made at fair market prices. Some programs also have authority for sole awards (awards with competition) depending on the circumstances.

There are two ways in which set-asides can be determined. First, if an acquisition of goods or services has an anticipated dollar value above
$3,500 (micropurchase threshold), but not exceeding $150,000 (simplified acquisition threshold (SAT)), it is automatically reserved for small businesses. The acquisition will be set aside above the SAT only if the contracting officer determines there are two or more responsible small businesses that are competitive in terms of price, quality, and delivery, and an award can be made at a fair market price. Reasonable expectations of small business competition are based on market research including an evaluation of past acquisition history for an item or similar items. As part of market research, contracting officers may publish Sources Sought notices on the Federal Business Opportunities (FBO; www.fbo.gov) website seeking firms for upcoming opportunities. Be sure to respond to these notices so you can be solicited for the requirements.

There are several exceptions and unique rules for specific kinds of small businesses and industries, so you should become familiar with the rules, which are contained in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). For small business set-asides for manufactured items, any business proposing to furnish a product that it did not manufacture must furnish the product of a small business manufacturer unless the SBA has granted either a waiver or exception to this requirement, referred to as the Non-manufacturer rule. In industries where the SBA finds that there are no small business manufacturers, it may issue a waiver to the non-manufacturer rule. Waivers permit small businesses dealers or distributors to provide the product of any size concern regardless of the place of manufacture (but other laws such as the Buy American Act or Trade Agreements Act may apply). For service and construction requirements, the small business must perform set percentages of the work with its own employees (Limitations on Subcontracting), on set-aside requirements.

**Sole Source**

Although competition is the preferred means of contracting, the SBA’s 8(a) Business Development Program (FAR subpart 19.8), HUBZone (subpart 19.13), Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Business (subpart 19.14) and Woman-Owned Small Business Programs (subpart 19.15) each have provisions allowing for sole-source awards, when applicable. A contracting officer must give equal consideration to firms in each of these Programs when considering an award.

**Subcontracting**

Subcontracting opportunities are a great opportunity for small businesses, especially for those not ready to bid as prime contractors. Experience gained from subcontracting with a federal prime contractor can better prepare businesses to bid for prime contracts.

Current regulations stipulate that for contracts offering subcontracting opportunities with values over $700,000 for goods and services, or $1.5 million for construction must offer the maximum practicable subcontracting opportunities to small businesses. In addition, potential large business prime contractors must submit a subcontracting plan with their proposal describing how they will successfully maximize subcontracting opportunities to small businesses.

To find subcontracting opportunities, a list of federal prime solicitations is listed under the U.S. Small Business Administration Subcontracting Network (SUBNET) web.sba.gov/subnet/search/index.cfm and through the General Services Administration (GSA) at www.gsa.gov/portal/content/101195. Research the list of prime contractors and determine which are best suited to your business. Develop a marketing strategy, and then contact the Small Business Liaison Officer (SBLO) listed for each prime to schedule an appointment. The SBA has a cadre of Commercial Market Representatives (CMRs) who work closely with large prime contractors to maximize use of small businesses as subcontractors. They can also assist small businesses with subcontracting matters. To find a CMR, go to: https://www.sba.gov/content/cmr-directory.

**SBA CONTRACTING PROGRAMS**

**HUBZONE**

The Historically Underutilized Business Zones (HUBZone) program helps small businesses located in distressed urban and rural communities gain access to federal set-aside contracts and sole source contracts, as well as a price evaluation preference in full and open contract competitions. Federal agencies have a goal of awarding 3 percent of the total value of all prime contract and subcontract awards to small businesses that SBA has certified as HUBZone. The list of HUBZone small business can be located at http://dsbs.sba.gov/dsbs/search/dsp_searchhubzone.cfm. To qualify for the program, a business (except those that are tribally-owned) must meet the following criteria:

- Small Business by SBA size standards
- Owned and controlled at least 51 percent by U.S. citizens, or a Community Development Corporation (CDC), an agricultural cooperative, or an Indian tribe
- Principal office must be located within a “Historically Underutilized Business Zone,” which includes lands considered “Indian Country” and military facilities closed by the Base Realignment and Closure Act
- At least 35 percent of its employees must reside in a HUBZone.

**Note:** Different rules apply for Tribal Governments, Alaska Native Corporations, Community Development Corporations and small agricultural cooperatives. These are delineated in Title 13 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 126.

Existing businesses that choose to move to qualified areas are eligible to apply for certification provided they meet all the eligibility requirements. To fulfill the requirement that 35 percent of a HUBZone firm’s employees reside in a HUBZone, employees must live in a primary residence at a place for at least 180 days, or as a currently registered voter, and with intent to live there indefinitely.

**The SBA is responsible for:**

- Determining whether or not applicants are qualified HUBZone small business concerns;
- Maintaining a list of qualified HUBZone small business concerns for use by acquisition agencies in awarding contracts under the program;
- Adjudicating protests and appeals of eligibility to receive HUBZone contracts.

For additional information, visit www.sba.gov/hubzone.

**8(a) BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

The 8(a) program is an essential instrument for helping socially and economically disadvantaged entrepreneurs gain access to the economic mainstream of American society. The 9-year program helps thousands of aspiring entrepreneurs gain a foothold in government contracting. The program offers business development assistance that includes one-on-one training and counseling, training workshops, match-
making opportunities with federal buyers and other management and technical guidance. 8(a) participants can receive sole-source contracts, up to a ceiling of $4 million for goods and services and $6.5 million for manufacturing. While we help 8(a) participants build their competitive and institutional know-how, we also encourage them to participate in competitive acquisitions to become viable firms that continue to grow after graduating from the program. There is a statutory requirement that small disadvantaged business concerns be awarded not less than 5 percent of the total value of all prime contract awards. All 8(a) firms are considered small disadvantaged business concerns for the purpose of federal contracting.

To be eligible for the 8(a) Business Development program, a business must meet the following criteria:

- Small Business in the Primary NAICS;
- Owned (at least 51 percent) by one or more individuals who qualify as socially and economically disadvantaged, and who are U.S. citizens of good character;
- Controlled, managed, and operated full-time by one or more individuals who qualify as disadvantaged, and;
- Must demonstrate potential for success (generally by being in business for at least two full years) and have the capacity to perform on government and non-government contracts before applying.

Socially disadvantaged individuals are those who have been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice or cultural bias because of their identity as a member of a group without regard to their individual capabilities. The following individuals are automatically presumed to be socially disadvantaged: Black Americans, Native Americans, Alaska Natives or Native Hawaiians, Hispanic Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, and Subcontinent Asian Americans. An individual who is not a member of one of these groups must establish individual social disadvantage by a preponderance of evidence.

Economically disadvantaged individuals are socially disadvantaged individuals whose ability to compete in the free-enterprise system has been impaired due to diminished capital and credit opportunities as compared to others in the same or similar line of business who are not socially disadvantaged. Such individuals have a net worth of less than $250,000 (excluding primary residence and other exclusions).

Firms owned by Alaska Native Corporations, Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, and Community Development Corporations can also apply to the SBA for 8(a) business development assistance. Entity owned firms may receive sole source contracts without dollar limitation.

Each 8(a) firm is assigned a Business Opportunity Specialist at the nearest SBA District Office geographically near the business to coordinate the firm’s business development assistance.

In addition, 8(a) participants may take advantage of specialized business training, counseling, marketing assistance, and high-level executive development provided by the SBA and our resource partners. 8(a) participants can also be eligible for assistance in obtaining access to surplus government property and supplies, SBA-guaranteed loans, and bonding assistance.

For additional information about applying for the SBA’s 8(a) Program, visit www.sba.gov/8a.
SMALL DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS
A Small Disadvantaged Business (SDB) is defined as a small business that is at least 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more individuals who are socially and economically disadvantaged.

There is a federal government-wide goal of awarding at least 5 percent of prime contracting dollars to SDBs each year. Large prime contractors must also establish a 5 percent subcontracting goal for SDBs in their subcontracting plans which includes SBA 8(a) certified small businesses.

Firms self-certify as SDB in the federal database called the System for Award Management (SAM) without submitting any application to the SBA; however, firms approved by the SBA into the 8(a) Business Development Program are automatically certified as an SDB. To self-certify, firms should access the website: www.sba.gov/sdb. By reading the information contained therein you will be given guidance as to what steps are required.

SERVICE-DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS
The Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) program has a federal government-wide goal of awarding at least 5 percent of prime and subcontracting dollars to Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses each year. Large prime contractors must also establish a subcontracting goal for SDVOSBs in their subcontracting plans. These subcontracting goals are reviewed at time of proposal by both the contracting officer and the SBA prior to the award of a contract.

While the SBA does not certify companies as SDVOSBs, the SDVOSB protest process is administered by SBA to ensure that only businesses owned by service-disabled veterans receive contracts reserved exclusively for them. When a business’s SDVOSB self-certification is challenged, the SBA determines if the business meets the status, ownership and control requirements.

An SDVOSB must be owned and controlled by one or more individuals with a service connected disability. To determine your eligibility, contact your local veterans’ business development officer, visit the various program websites, or contact SBA’s Office of Veterans Business Development at www.sba.gov/ovbd.

WOMEN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS FEDERAL CONTRACT PROGRAM
On October 7, 2010, the SBA published a final rule effective February 4, 2011, aimed at expanding federal contracting opportunities for women-owned small businesses.

The Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Federal Contract Program authorizes contracting officers to set aside certain federal contracts for eligible women-owned businesses and economically disadvantaged women-owned small businesses (EDWOSB) in specified industries where it has been determined WOSBs and EDWOSBs are underrepresented. Commencing October 14, 2015, certain contract requirements can be awarded on a sole-source basis to WOSB and EDWOSB concerns in those specified industry categories.

To be eligible, a firm must be at least 51 percent owned or controlled by one or more women. The women must be U.S. citizens and the WOSB or EDWOSB must be “small” under its primary industry in accordance with SBA’s size standards established for under the North American Industry Classification code assigned to that industry. To be deemed “economically disadvantaged” its owners must demonstrate economic disadvantage in accordance with the requirements set forth in the final rule. For additional information, visit www.sba.gov/wosb.

Protests under the WOSB Federal Contract Program are also adjudicated by the SBA. When a company’s WOSB or economically disadvantaged WOSB self-certification is challenged, the SBA determines if the business meets ownership and control requirements.

Large prime contractors must also establish a subcontracting goal for Woman-Owned Small Businesses in their Subcontracting Plans. These subcontracting goals are reviewed at time of proposal by both the contracting officer and the SBA prior to the award of a contract.
Once you have identified the important information regarding your business, it is time to start the process of procuring a government contract.

1. Identify your DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) Number
   To register your business, obtain a DUNS number used to identify and track millions of businesses. You can obtain your free DUNS number when registering with the System for Award Management. Log on to www.sam.gov for more information or by contacting Dun & Bradstreet at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform.

2. Identify your EIN (Employer Identification Number)
   An EIN, otherwise known as a federal tax identification number, is generally required of all businesses. For more information, go to www.irs.gov.

3. Identify your NAICS (North American Industry Classification) codes
   The NAICS codes are used to classify the industry a particular business occupies. You will need at least one NAICS code to complete your registration, but be sure to list as many as apply. You may also add or change NAICS codes at any time. Visit www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/ to find NAICS codes.

4. Register with the System for Award Management (SAM), formerly the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) - www.sam.gov
   The SAM is an online federal government maintained database of companies wanting to do business with the federal government. Agencies search the database for prospective vendors. You must be registered in SAM in order to do business as a Federal contractor. Register at www.SAM.gov. After completing registration, you will be asked to enter your business profile information through the SBA Supplemental Page. The information will be displayed in the Dynamic Small Business Search. Creating a profile in SAM and keeping it current ensures your firm has access to federal contracting opportunities. Entering your small business profile, including your business information and key word description, allows contracting officers, prime contractors, and buyers from state and local governments to learn about your company.

5. Submit an offer for a GSA Schedule Contract
   The GSA (General Services Administration) Multiple Award Schedule (aka Federal Supply Schedule) is used by GSA to establish long-term, government-wide contracts with commercial firms. Although their use is not generally mandatory, many Agencies and buying offices use GSA schedules for their contracting needs. Once these contracts are established, government agencies can order the supplies and services they need directly from the firms through the use of an online shopping tool. Becoming a GSA schedule contractor increases your opportunity for contracts across all levels of government. Businesses interested in becoming GSA schedule contractors should review the information available at www.gsa.gov/schedules.

6. Make Sure Your Business is Financially Sound
   This critical step is absolutely necessary to make sure that your business is financially prepared for the journey ahead. Even if you are able to obtain a government contract, you will not be receiving all of the money at once. It helps to have a clear plan of how your business will stage the benefits of the contract.

7. Search Federal Business Opportunities (FedBizOpps) for Contracting Opportunities
   FedBizOpps, is an online service operated by the federal government that announces available business opportunities. FedBizOpps helps identify the needs of federal agencies and available contracting opportunities. To begin searching for contracting opportunities, go to www.fbo.gov.

8. Marketing Your Business
   Registering your business is not enough to obtain a federal contract; you will need to market your business to attract federal agencies. Tips for good marketing are:
   - Determine which federal agencies buy your product or service, and get to know them;
   - Identify the contracting procedures of those agencies;
   - Focus on opportunities in your niche and prioritize them;
   - You should identify the PSC (Product Services Code) and/or a FSC (Federal Supply Classification), which describes your business. These codes provide additional information about the products and services your business offers.

9. Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs)
   Doing business with the government is a big step to growing your business. Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs) provide local, in-person counseling and training services for you, the small business owner. They are designed to provide technical assistance to businesses that want to sell products and services to federal, state, and/or local governments. PTAC services are available either free of charge, or at a nominal cost. PTACs are part of the Procurement Technical Assistance Program, which is administered by the Defense Logistics Agency.

   What can a PTAC do for you?
   - Determine if your business is ready for government contracting;
   - Pursuing government contracts is a challenge, and can be burden for your company if you do not have the resources or maturity to handle a contract. A PTAC representative can sit with you one-on-one and determine if your company is ready, and how to position yourself for success.
The following federal procurement resources may also be of assistance:

- **The Certificates of Competency (CoC) program** allows SBA to review a contracting officer’s non-responsibility determination that it is unable to fulfill the requirements of a specific government contract. The SBA will conduct a detailed review of the firm’s technical and financial capabilities to perform on the contract. If the business demonstrates the capability to perform, the SBA issues a Certificate of Competency to the contracting officer, requiring award of that contract to the small business.

- **Procurement Center Representatives (PCR) and Commercial Marketing Representatives (CMR)** work to increase the small business share of federal procurement awards. CMRs offer many services to small businesses, including counseling on how to obtain subcontracts. To find a PCR or CMR near you, go to [www.sba.gov/content/procurement-center-representatives](www.sba.gov/content/procurement-center-representatives).

- **SBDCs (Small Business Development Centers):** Like PTACs, SBDCs are important SBA Resource Partners which provide “hands-on” assistance to small businesses. To find an SBDC servicing your area, go to [www.sba.gov/content/procurement-center-representatives](www.sba.gov/content/procurement-center-representatives).

- **Department of Defense (The DoD is the largest purchaser of goods from small businesses):** [www.acq.osd.mil/osbp](www.acq.osd.mil/osbp)

- **Office of Federal Procurement Policy:** [www.whitehouse.gov/omb/procurement_default](www.whitehouse.gov/omb/procurement_default)

- **Acquisition Forecast:** [www.acquisition.gov/commercial-marketing-forecasts/index.html](www.acquisition.gov/commercial-marketing-forecasts/index.html)

- **Federal Supply Schedule (FSS):** [www.gsa.gov](www.gsa.gov)


- **GSA Center for Acquisition Excellence:** [www.gsa.gov/content/procurement-center-representatives](www.gsa.gov/content/procurement-center-representatives)

- **Natural Resources Sales Assistance** The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) administers a Property Sales Assistance Program through its Office of Government Contracting. The Program includes; Royalty Oil, Strategic Materials from the National Stockpile, Leases involving rights to minerals; coal, oil and gas, Surplus Real & Personal Property Sales, and the U.S. Small Business Administration’s Timber Sale Program. The SBA oversees timber sales by working in conjunction with the following agencies via Memorandums of Understanding (MOU): Department of Agriculture, Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management and Fish & Wildlife Service, Department for Defense, Department of Energy, and the Tennessee Valley Authority. There are also directives governing the program in the Forest Service Handbook 2409.18, and 13 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) section 121.501-512. Timber sales are not governed by the Federal Acquisition Regulation. SBA’s Timber Program is administered via a Senior Representative located in SBA Headquarters, and 3 Industrial Specialists

- **Forestry (IFP) located in Atlanta, GA:** Denver, CO; and Portland, OR. The IFP’s monitor the 148 market areas that make-up the national parks, forests, and Federally-owned lands. Timber is regularly sold from Federal forests and other federally managed lands. SBA works with the Forest Service and other agencies to ensure opportunities exist for small businesses to bid on these Federal timber sales.

### U.S. EXPORT RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR BUSINESSES

#### MARKET RESEARCH

- **Trade Statistics**
  - Trade State Express | [tse.export.gov](tse.export.gov)
  - State and Metro Export Reports [www.trade.gov/mas/ian/statereports](www.trade.gov/mas/ian/statereports)

- **Market Research Library/Country**
  - [www.export.gov/mrktestresearch](www.export.gov/mrktestresearch)

- **FTA Tariff Tool**
  - [www.export.gov/ftatifftool](www.export.gov/ftatifftool)

- **A Basic Guide to Exporting**
  - [www.export.gov/basicguide](www.export.gov/basicguide)

#### OPPORTUNITIES: FINDING BUYERS AND MAKING CONTACTS

**U.S. Export Assistance Centers**
- Located in over 100 cities, specializing the below services to help small businesses export

- **Trade Counseling**
  - Develop a market entry strategy, find the best export finance options, navigate export controls and complete the required trade documentation.

- **Business Matchmaking**
  - Get connected with pre-screened foreign buyers, participate in trade events, and set up meetings with government officials in your target markets.

- **Market Intelligence**
  - Conduit analysis of market potential and foreign competition, complete background checks on companies, and get help from USEAC staff on navigating any cultural differences

- **“Gold Key” Services**
  - The Department’s “Gold Key” suite of service includes: customized matchmaking meetings scheduled overseas to find business partners and customers, pre-screened appointments arranged before travelling, market and industry briefings with trade specialists, post-meeting debriefings and assistance in developing appropriate follow-up strategies, and help with travel, accommodations, interpreter service, and clerical support

#### FEDERAL EXPORT FINANCING AND INSURANCE OPTIONS

- **Export Financing and Insurance**
  - Federal export financing options can make your company more competitive by helping you offer a potential buyer more attractive payment terms

- **The Small Business Administration (SBA)**
  - Take advantage of a wide range of financing options for small businesses, including the Export Express Program, Export Working Capital Program, and International Trade Loan | [www.sba.gov](www.sba.gov)

#### COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS

- **Export Licenses (BIS)**
  - Obtain information on exports requiring a license before shipping
  - [www.bis.doc.gov](www.bis.doc.gov)

- **Economic and Trade Sanctions (Treasury)**
  - Find out the countries, entities, and individuals with whom U.S. firms cannot do business | [treas.gov/ofac](treas.gov/ofac)

- **Electronic Export Information (Census)**
  - Upon exporting any good value at over $2500, information must be submitted to the Automated Export System. Get help on filing AES, classifying merchandise, regulations and trade data
  - 1-800-549-0595

Visit us online: [www.sba.gov/tn](www.sba.gov/tn)
The disaster program is SBA’s largest direct loan program, and the only SBA program for entities other than small businesses. SBA is responsible for providing affordable, timely and accessible financial assistance to non-farm businesses of all sizes, private, nonprofit organizations, homeowners and renters following declared disasters.

The SBA is authorized by the Small Business Act to make two types of disaster loans:

**Physical Disaster Loans**

Physical Disaster Loans are the primary source of funding for permanent rebuilding and replacement of uninsured or underinsured disaster-caused damages to privately-owned real and/or personal property. SBA’s physical disaster loans are available to businesses of all sizes, private nonprofit organizations of all sizes, homeowners and renters. Businesses and private, nonprofit organizations of any size may apply for a loan up to $2 million (actual loan amounts are based on the amount of uncompensated damage) to repair or replace real property, machinery, equipment, fixtures, inventory and leasehold improvements. A homeowner may apply for a loan of up to $200,000 to repair or replace the primary residence to its pre-disaster condition. Homeowners or renters may apply for a loan up to $40,000 to help repair or replace personal property, such as clothing, furniture or automobiles, lost in the disaster.

The SBA may increase a loan up to 20 percent of the total amount of physical damages as verified by SBA to make improvements that protect the property from similar future disasters.

**Economic Injury Disaster Loans**

Economic Injury Disaster Loans provide the necessary working capital after a declared disaster until normal operations resume. Small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture (fisheries, for example) and most private nonprofit organizations of all sizes are eligible for EIDL assistance, regardless of whether there was any physical damage. The loan limit is $2 million. The EIDL helps small businesses meet ordinary and necessary operating expenses as they recover from a disaster. The limit for physical and EIDL loans combined is $2 million.

The Military Reservists Economic Injury Disaster Loan is a working capital loan for small businesses facing financial loss when the owner or an essential employee is called up to active duty in their role as a military reservist. The loan limit is $2 million and the business can use the funds to cover operating expenses until the essential employee or business owner is released from active duty.

The SBA can only approve disaster loans to applicants having an acceptable credit history and repayment ability. The terms of each loan are established in accordance with each borrower’s ability to repay. The law gives SBA several powerful tools to make disaster loans affordable: low-interest rates (around 4 percent), long-terms (up to 30 years), and refinancing of prior liens (in some cases). As required by law, the interest rate for each loan is based on SBA’s determination of whether the applicant has credit available elsewhere — the ability to borrow or use their own
resources to recover from the disaster without causing undue hardship.

More information on all of SBA’s disaster assistance programs, including information for military reservists, is available at www.sba.gov/disaster. Apply online using the Electronic Loan Application (ELA) via SBA’s secure Website at: https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela.

Disaster Preparedness

Recovering from a disaster doesn’t begin with clearing the debris and returning to work. Imagine stepping into your store, or restaurant, or the office where you run your business, a day or two after the fire has been contained, the tornado has passed, or floodwaters have receded. First come the questions: “How much will it cost to rebuild? Will my insurance cover all this? How will I pay my employees and vendors and cover the bills during the recovery phase?” Before a disaster strikes is a good time to start, or update and test your business continuity plan.

And while SBA disaster loans go a long way toward revitalizing communities devastated by the economic fallout that follows disasters, with a solid preparedness plan in place, your business will be able to recover sooner, possibly without taking on new debt.

Assessing your risks and needs are an important first step in developing your business continuity strategy. The American Red Cross’ Ready Rating™ program (www.readyrating.org) is a free online tool that helps businesses get prepared for disaster and other emergencies. With Ready Rating you can evaluate your level of disaster readiness, and you’ll get customized feedback on how to establish or expand your disaster plan.

Another useful site provided by FEMA — Ready.gov (www.ready.gov) — provides practical disaster preparedness tips and checklists for businesses, homeowners and renters. SBA has teamed up with Agility Recovery Solutions to offer business continuity strategies through the “PrepareMyBusiness” website (www.preparemybusiness.org) and monthly disaster planning webinars. Previous topics — presented by experts in their fields — have included crisis communications, testing the preparedness plan, and using social media to enhance small business recovery. At the website you can sign up for future webinars, view previous webinars, and download checklists that give you tips on risk assessment, evacuation plans and flood preparedness, that will help you develop a solid business continuity plan.

Meanwhile, here are a few preparedness tips to consider:

• Review Your Insurance Coverage.
  Contact your insurance agent to find out if your coverage is right for your business and make sure you understand the policy limits.

• Establish a solid supply chain.
  If all your vital external vendors and suppliers are local and if the disaster is significantly widespread, you’ll all be in the same boat, struggling to recover. It’s a good idea to diversify your list of vendors for key supplies to companies outside your area or internationally, if possible. Create a contact list for important contractors and vendors you plan to use in an emergency and find out if those suppliers have a recovery plan in place. Keep this list with other documents filed in a place that’s accessible, and also at a protected off-site location.

• Plan for an alternate location. Do some research well in advance of the disaster for several alternative places to relocate your company in the event a disaster forces you to shut down indefinitely. Some options include contacting a local real estate agent to get a list of available vacant office space. Make an agreement with a neighboring business to share office space if disaster strikes. If possible, make plans for employees to telecommute until the office has been rebuilt.

The financial and emotional cost of rebuilding a business after a disaster can be overwhelming. However, with a business continuity plan in place, you’ll be able to rebound and reopen quickly, and in a better position to contribute to the economic recovery of your community.

As small businesses are leading America’s economic recovery, many of them are investing time and money into their plans to grow and create jobs. Developing a strong disaster preparedness plan should be a critical and integral piece of those efforts. Planning for a disaster is the best way of limiting its effects.
OFFICE OF ADVOCACY

The Office of Advocacy is an independent office within the U.S. Small Business Administration. Advocacy’s mission is to be the “small business watchdog” in the federal government. The office is headed by the chief counsel for advocacy, who is appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

The office examines the role and status of small business in the economy and independently represents the views of small business to federal agencies, Congress, the president and federal courts. The Office of Advocacy compiles and interprets statistics on small business and is the primary entity within the federal government to disseminate small business data. The office also funds outside research on small business issues and produces numerous publications to inform policymakers about the important role of small businesses in the economy and the impact of government policies on small businesses. In addition, the office monitors federal agency compliance with the Regulatory Flexibility Act – the law that requires agencies to analyze the impact of their proposed regulations on small entities (including small businesses, small governmental jurisdictions and small nonprofit organizations), and consider regulatory alternatives that minimize the economic burden on small entities.

Advocacy’s mission is enhanced by a team of regional advocates, located in the SBA’s 10 regions. They are Advocacy’s direct link to small business owners, state and local government entities, and organizations that support the interests of small entities. The regional advocates help identify regulatory concerns of small business by monitoring the impact of federal and state policies at the grassroots level.

Learn more about the Office of Advocacy at www.sba.gov/advocacy.

OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL OMBUDSMAN:

Bringing Fair Regulatory Enforcement to America’s Small Businesses

The National Ombudsman has helped thousands of small businesses save time and money by resolving difficult regulatory compliance and enforcement issues. As part of President Obama’s mandate to promote a level playing field for small business, we work directly with federal regulators to facilitate practical and timely resolutions of Regulatory Enforcement Fairness (REF) matters impacting small businesses.

The National Ombudsman oversees fair enforcement of small business regulation by:

• Providing small business owners a confidential way to report and resolve federal REF problems, like excessive enforcement action or disproportionate fines
• Escalating small business concerns to federal agencies for fairness review & resolution
• Grading federal agencies on their small business policies and practices

Small businesses can connect with the National Ombudsman online at sba.gov/ombudsman, in-person, or through a national network of Regulatory Fairness Board Members. The National Ombudsman meets with small business owners around the country at listening sessions and regulatory fairness dialogues in all ten SBA Regions. These outreach events provide critical, real-time input from the small business community on REF issues impacting small business growth and help federal regulators better understand how government can best support small business success.

Regional Regulatory Fairness Boards in each of SBA’s 10 regions promote regulatory fairness by alerting federal regulators to important REF issues such as unintended consequences of a new rule or regulation. These Boards, each made up of five small business owners, also help raise awareness in their communities about resources available to small businesses through the SBA and the National Ombudsman.

Every year, the National Ombudsman reports to Congress its findings on the impact of the policies and practices of every federal agency that touches small business.

To learn more about how the National Ombudsman can help your small business, or to confidentially report a REF issue, call 888-REG-FAIR (888-734-3247) or complete the simple one-page form at sba.gov/ombudsman/comment.
Even if you are running a small home-based business, you will have to comply with many local, state and federal regulations. Avoid the temptation to ignore regulatory details. Doing so may avert some red tape in the short term, but could be an obstacle as your business grows. Taking the time to research the applicable regulations is as important as knowing your market. Bear in mind that regulations vary by industry. If you’re in the food-service business, for example, you will have to deal with the health department. If you use chemical solvents, you will have environmental compliances to meet. Carefully investigate the regulations that affect your industry. Being out of compliance could leave you unprotected legally, lead to expensive penalties and jeopardize your business.

BUSINESS LICENSES

There are many types of licenses, both state and local as well as professional. Depending on what you do and where you plan to operate, your business may be required to have various state and/or municipal licenses, certificates or permits.

Licenses are typically administered by a variety of state and local departments. Consult your state or local government for assistance.

BUSINESS INSURANCE

Like home insurance, business insurance protects your business against fire, theft and other losses. Contact your insurance agent or broker. It is prudent for any business to purchase a number of basic types of insurance. Some types of coverage are required by law, others simply make good business sense. The types of insurance listed below are among the most commonly used and are merely a starting point for evaluating the needs of your business.

Liability Insurance – Businesses may incur various forms of liability in conducting their normal activities. One of the most common types is product liability, which may be incurred when a customer suffers harm from using the product. There are many other types of liability, which are frequently related to specific industries. Liability law is constantly changing. An analysis of your liability insurance needs by a competent professional is vital in determining an adequate and appropriate level of protection for your business.

Property – There are many different types of property insurance and levels of coverage available. It is important to determine the property insurance you need to ensure the continuation of your business and the level of insurance you need to replace or rebuild. You should also understand the terms of the insurance, including any limitations or waivers of coverage.

Business Interruption – While property insurance may pay enough to replace damaged or destroyed equipment or buildings, how will you pay costs such as taxes, utilities and other continuing expenses during the period between when the damage occurs and when the property is replaced? Business Interruption (or “business income”) insurance can provide sufficient funds to pay your fixed expenses during a period of time when your business is not operational.

“Key Man” – If you (and/or any other individual) are so critical to the operation of your business that it cannot continue in the event of your illness or death, you should consider “key man” insurance. This type of policy is frequently required by banks or government loan programs. It also can be used to provide continuity of operations during a period of ownership transition caused by the death, incapacitation or absence due to a Title 10 military activation of an owner or other “key” employee.

Automobile – It is obvious that a vehicle owned by your business should be insured for both liability

County Court Clerk or Miscellaneous Tax Division
Tennessee Department of Revenue
In state: 800-342-1003
In Davidson County and out-of-state: 615-862-6254
www.tn.gov/revenue
http://www.nashvilleclerk.com/

Online Tax Registrations
You can find more information about registrations and licenses at the TN Department of Revenue website https://apps.tn.gov/bizreg

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME

Search to determine if the name of your proposed business is already in use. If it is not used, register the name to protect your business. For more information, contact the county clerk’s office in the county where your business is based. If you are a corporation, you’ll need to check with the state.

Visit us online: www.sba.gov/tn

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and replacement purposes. What is less obvious is that you may need special insurance (called “non-owned automobile coverage”) if you use your personal vehicle on company business. This policy covers the business’ liability for any damage which may result from such usage.

**Officer and Director** – Under most state laws, officers and directors of a corporation may become personally liable for their actions on behalf of the company. This type of policy covers this liability.

**Home Office** – If you are establishing an office in your home, it is a good idea to contact your homeowners’ insurance company to update your policy to include coverage for office equipment. This coverage is not automatically included in a standard homeowner’s policy.

## TAXES

Taxes are an important and complex aspect of owning and operating a successful business. Your accountant, payroll person, or tax adviser may be very knowledgeable, but there are still many facets of tax law that you should know. The Internal Revenue Service is a great source for tax information.


When you are running a business, you don’t need to be a tax expert. However, you do need to know some tax basics. The IRS Small Business/ Self-Employed Tax Center gives you the information you need to stay tax compliant so your business can thrive.


### FEDERAL PAYROLL TAX (EIN NUMBERS)

An Employer Identification Number (EIN), also known as a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN), is used to identify a business entity. Generally, businesses need an EIN to pay federal withholding tax.

You may apply for an EIN in various ways, one of which is to apply online at [www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-Self-Employed](http://www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-Self-Employed). This is a free service offered by the Internal Revenue Service.

Call 800-829-1040 if you have questions. You should check with your state to determine if you need a state number or charter.

**FEIN**

Federal Employer Identification Number - FEIN
Fill out Form SS-4, (SS-4 Available at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov))
866-816-2065 Toll Free
IRS at 215-516-3900 Fax
Attn: EIN Operation
Will Fax back in 7 days if you include your Fax Number
Mail: IRS Center, Attention: EIN Operation
Philadelphia, PA 19255
800-829-1040 Toll Free
(Not Required for Sole Proprietor without employees)

**SEIN**

State Employer Identification Number – SEIN
Fill out Application for Employer Number
Fax to Local Office
Or mail to:
Employer Services
TN Dept of Labor and Workforce Development
500 James Robertson Pkwy., 8th Fl.
Nashville, TN 37245-3555
http://www.tn.gov/workforce/topic/unemployment-insurance-tax

### FEDERAL SELF-EMPLOYMENT TAX

Every employee must pay Social Security and Medicare taxes. If you are self-employed, your contributions are made through the self-employment tax.

The IRS has publications, counselors and workshops available to help you sort it out. For more information, contact the IRS at 800-829-1040 or [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

### SALES TAX EXEMPTION CERTIFICATE

If you plan to sell products, you will need a Sales Tax Exemption Certificate. It allows you to purchase inventory, or materials, which will become part of the product you sell, from suppliers without paying taxes. It requires you to charge sales tax to your customers, which you are responsible for remitting to the state. You will have to pay penalties if it is found that you should have been taxing your products and now owe back taxes to the state. For information on sales tax issues, contact your state government.

### FEDERAL INCOME TAX

Like the state income tax, the method of paying federal income taxes depends upon your legal form of business.

**Sole Proprietorship:** You must file IRS Federal Form Schedule C along with your personal Federal Income Tax return (Form 1040) and any other applicable forms pertaining to gains or losses in your business activity.

**Partnership:** You must file a Federal Partnership return (Form 1065). This is merely informational to show gross and net earnings of profit and loss. Also, each partner must report his share of partnership earnings on his individual Form 1040 based on the information from the K-1 filed with the Form 1065.

**Corporation:** You must file a Federal Corporation Income Tax return (Form 1120). You will also be
required to report your earnings from the corporation including salary and other income such as dividends on your personal federal income tax return (Form 1040).

**FEDERAL PAYROLL TAX**

*Federal Withholding Tax:* Any business employing a person must register with the IRS and acquire an EIN and pay federal withholding tax at least quarterly. File Form SS-4 with the IRS to obtain your number and required tax forms. Call 800-829-3676 or 800-829-1040 if you have questions.

**IRS WEB PRODUCTS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES**
For the most timely and up-to-date tax information, go to www.irs.gov.

**VIRTUAL SMALL BUSINESS WORKSHOP**

The Virtual Small Business Tax Workshop is the first of a series of video products designed exclusively for small business taxpayers. This workshop helps business owners understand federal tax obligations. Workshops are sponsored and presented by IRS partners who are federal tax specialists.

Workshop topics vary from a general overview of taxes to more specific topics such as recordkeeping and retirement plans. Although most are free, some workshops have fees associated with them. Fees for a workshop are charged by the sponsoring organization, not the IRS.

The IRS’s Virtual Small Business Tax Workshop is an interactive resource to help small business owners learn about their federal tax rights and responsibilities. This educational product, available online and on CD consists of nine stand-alone lessons that can be selected and viewed in any sequence. A bookmark feature makes it possible to leave and return to a specific point within the lesson. Users also have access to a list of useful online references that enhance the learning experience by allowing them to view references and the video lessons simultaneously.

The Tax Calendar for Small Businesses and Self-Employed contains useful information on general business taxes, IRS and SSA customer assistance, electronic filing and paying options, retirement plans, business publications and forms, common tax filing dates, and federal legal holidays. It can be found at www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed.

**SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS**

All employees must have a Social Security number and card. It must be signed by its owner, and you should always ask to see and personally record the Social Security number. Failure to do so may cause your employee to lose benefits and considerable trouble for yourself in back tracking to uncover the error.

Each payday, your employees must receive a statement from you telling them what deductions were made and how many dollars were taken out for each legal purpose. This can be presented in a variety of ways, including on the check as a detachable portion or in the form of an envelope with the items printed and spaces for dollar deductions to be filled in.

**Federal Unemployment Taxes**

The Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA), together with state unemployment systems, provides for payments of unemployment compensation to workers who have lost their jobs. Most employers pay both a federal and state unemployment tax. This tax is collected by the U.S. Department of the Treasury, Internal Revenue Service.

IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers are your source for personal tax help. No appointment is necessary, but it is suggested to call or visit the web site below to learn about available services as they vary from site to site. You may also get help with IRS letters or resolve tax account issues by phone, toll free at 800-829-1040 (individuals) or 800-829-4933 (businesses).

**Chattanooga**
5740 Uptain Rd.
Chattanooga, TN 37411
423-855-6460
www.irs.gov
Service: Mon.-Fri. 8:30am-4:30pm

Jackson
109 S. Highland
Jackson, TN 38301
731-423-2441
www.irs.gov
Service: Mon.-Fri. 8:30am-4:30pm

Johnson City
2513 Wesley St., #2
Johnson City, TN 37601
423-610-7050
www.irs.gov
Service: Mon.-Fri. 8:30am-4:30pm
(Closed for lunch 12:30pm-1:30pm)

Knoxville
710 Locust St., #400
Knoxville, TN 37902
865-545-4794
www.irs.gov
Service: Mon.-Fri. 8:30am-4:30pm

Memphis
22 N. Front St.
Memphis, TN 38103
901-544-3243
www.irs.gov
Service: Mon.-Fri. 8:30am-4:30pm

Nashville
801 Broadway
Nashville, TN 37203
615-250-5656
www.irs.gov
Service: Mon.-Fri. 8:30am-4:30pm

*Note:* The phone numbers above are not toll-free for all locations. When you call, you will reach a recorded business message with information about office hours, locations, and services provided in that office.

You may leave a message to request an appointment for help resolving a tax issue or to reschedule an existing appointment. You will receive a return call within two business days.

**Workers’ Compensation**

Every employer which employs five or more persons must provide Workers’ Compensation insurance coverage. General contractors are required to have Workers’ Compensation for even one person because of their liability for uninsured subcontractors.

Workers’ Compensation is acquired through commercial insurance agents who in turn obtain the actual coverage through the National Workers’ Compensation Office in Birmingham, Ala. For Tennessee companies, there is no choice as the National Office assigns coverage to a member of a nation wide risk pool. Therefore, premiums will be the same.

Initial premiums are based on industry classification as well as specific job classification within industries. Subsequent premiums factor in a company’s accident rate and claims experience.
EMPLOYEE CONSIDERATIONS

Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury
The Office of Small Business Advocate (SBA) serves as a point of contact to state government for owners of businesses with fifty (50) or fewer employees. The Office provides information and answers questions for Tennesseans who are starting a small business or who already own a small business. The Office assists in the resolution of issues concerning small businesses and state departments and agencies.

Richard Wilson
Small Business Advocate
Comptroller of the Treasury
James K. Polk State Office Building
505 Deaderick St., Ste. 1700
Nashville, TN 37243-1402
866-831-3750 Toll Free or 615-401-7806
615-741-1551 Fax
smallbusiness.advocate@cot.tn.gov

BUSINESS ORGANIZATION: Choosing Your Business Structure

There are many forms of legal structure you may choose for your business. Each legal structure offers organizational options with different tax and liability issues. We suggest you research each legal structure thoroughly and consult a tax accountant and/or attorney prior to making your decision.

The most common organizational structures are sole proprietorships, general and limited partnerships and limited liability companies.

Each structure offers unique tax and liability benefits. If you’re uncertain which business format is right for you, you may want to discuss options with a business counselor or attorney.

Sole Proprietorship

One person operating a business as an individual is a sole proprietorship. It’s the most common form of business organization. Profits are taxed as income to the owner personally. The personal tax rate is usually lower than the corporate tax rate. The owner has complete control of the business, but faces unlimited liability for its debts. There is very little government regulation or reporting required with this business structure.

General Partnership

A partnership exists when two or more persons join together in the operation and management of a business. Partnerships are subject to relatively little regulation and are fairly easy to establish. A formal partnership agreement is recommended to address potential conflicts such as: who will be responsible for performing each task; what, if any, consultation is needed between partners before major decisions, and what happens when a partner dies. Under a general partnership each partner is liable for all debts of the business. Profits are taxed as income to the partners based on their ownership percentage.

Limited Partnership

Like a general partnership, a limited partnership is established by an agreement between two or more persons. However, there are two types of partners:

• A general partner has greater control in some aspects of the partnership. For example, only a general partner can decide to dissolve the partnership. General partners have no limits on the dividends they can receive from profit so they incur unlimited liability.

• Limited partners can only receive a share of profits based on the proportional amount of their investment, and liability is similarly limited in proportion to their investment.

LLCs and LLPs

The limited liability company or partnership is a relatively new business form. It combines selected corporate and partnership characteristics while still maintaining status as a legal entity distinct from its owners. As a separate entity it can acquire assets, incur liabilities and conduct business. It limits liability for the owners. The limited liability partnership is similar to the LLC, but it is for professional organizations.

Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development
220 French Landing Way
Nashville, TN 37243
615-741-6642
www.tn.gov/labor-wfd

Health Insurance
Compare plans in your area at
www.healthcare.gov.

Employee Insurance
If you hire employees you may be required to provide unemployment or workers’ compensation insurance.

Federal Withholding
U.S. Internal Revenue Service
800-829-1040
www.irs.gov

Social Security’s Business Services Online
The Social Security Administration now provides free electronic services online at www.socialsecurity.gov/employer. Once registered for Business Services Online, business owners or their authorized representative can:
• file W-2s online; and
• verify Social Security numbers through the Social Security Number Verification Service, used for all employees prior to preparing and submitting Forms W-2.

Employers play an important role in the enforcement process whenever their employees are required to pay child support. As valuable, essential partners with the program, employers account for about 75 percent of child and medical support collections enforced through payroll deductions.

WORKPLACE DISABILITY PROGRAMS

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): For assistance with the ADA, call 800-669-3362 or visit www.ada.gov.

U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES

The Federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 requires employers to verify employment eligibility of new employees. The law obligates an employer to process Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Office of Business Liaison offers a selection of information bulletins and live assistance through the Employer Hotline. For forms call 800-870-3676, for the Employer Hotline. For forms call 800-870-3676, for the Employer Hotline. For forms call 800-870-3676, for the Employer Hotline.

E-Verify: Employment Eligibility Verification

E-Verify, operated by the Department of Homeland Security in partnership with the Social Security Administration, is the best — and quickest — way for employers to determine the employment eligibility of new hires. It is a safe, simple, and secure Internet-based system that electronically verifies the Social Security number and employment eligibility information reported on Form I-9. E-Verify is voluntary in most states and there is no charge to use it.

If you are an employer or employee and would like more information about the E-Verify program, please visit www.dhs.gov/E-Verify or contact Customer Support staff: 1-888-464-4218 Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
E-mail: e-verify@dhs.gov

SAFETY AND HEALTH REGULATIONS

All businesses with employees are required to comply with state and federal regulations regarding the protection of employees. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration provides information on the specific health and safety standards adopted by the U.S. Department of Labor. Call 1-800-321-6742 or visit www.osha.gov.

Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Occupational Safety and Health Division 220 French Landing Dr. Nashville, TN 37243 615-741-2793 • 615-741-3325 Fax 800-249-8510

Occupational Safety & Health Administration
Nashville Area Office 51 Century Blvd., Ste. 340 Nashville, TN 37214 615-232-3803 • 615-232-3827 Fax

Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation
Small Business Environment Assistance Program
The Small Business Environmental Assistance Program provides assistance to help Tennessee small businesses understand and comply with environmental regulations. Staff are not regulators and do not have regulatory authority. Therefore, small businesses will not be penalized for reporting relevant environmental information to staff when requesting assistance.

Small Business Environmental Assistance Program
312 Rosa L. Parks Ave., 2nd Fl. Nashville, TN 37243 800-734-3619

BAR CODING

Many stores require bar coding on packaged products. Many industrial and manufacturing companies use bar coding to identify items they receive and ship. There are several companies that can assist businesses with bar-coding needs. You may want to talk with an SBDC, SCORE or WBC counselor for more information.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Use of hazardous substances in businesses is highly regulated and there are heavy fines for non-compliance.

Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste
Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation

Division of Water Pollution Control
Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation
312 Rosa L. Parks Ave. Tennessee Tower, 2nd Fl. Nashville, TN 37243 615-532-0554 or 888-891-8332

Division of Air Pollution Control
Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation
312 Rosa L. Parks Ave., 15th Fl. Nashville, TN 37243 615-532-0554 or 888-891-8332
https://tn.gov/environment/section/air

Note: Knox, Hamilton, Davidson and Shelby counties have their own local air pollution programs. Visit www.state.tn.gov/environment/partners/ for more information and contact number.

Environmental Field Offices
Chattanooga 423-634-5745
Columbia 931-380-3371
Cookeville 931-432-4015
Jackson 731-512-1300
Johnson City 423-854-5400
Knoxville 865-594-6035
Memphis 901-371-3370
Nashville 615-687-7000

BUILDING CODES, PERMITS AND ZONING

It is important to consider zoning regulations when choosing a site for your business. You may not be permitted to conduct business out of your home or engage in industrial activity in a retail district. Contact the business license office in the city or town where the business is located.
Federal Registration of Trademarks and Copyrights

Trademarks or service marks are words, phrases, symbols, designs or combinations thereof that identify and distinguish the source of goods. Trademarks may be registered at both the state and federal level. To register a federal trademark, contact:

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450
800-786-9199
www.uspto.gov

Trademark Information Hotline
703-308-9000

STATE REGISTRATION OF A TRADEMARK

Trademarks and service marks may be registered in a state. Caution: Federally registered trademarks may conflict with and supersede state registered business and product names.

Patents

A patent is the grant of a property right to the inventor by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. It provides the owner with the right to exclude others from making, using, offering for sale or selling the patented item in the United States.

Additional information is provided in the publications, General Information Concerning Patents and other publications distributed through the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. For more information, contact the:

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
800-786-9199 • www.uspto.gov

Copyrights

Copyrights protect original works of authorship including literary, dramatic, musical and artistic, and certain other intellectual works. Copyrights do not protect facts, ideas and systems, although it may protect the way these things are expressed. For general information contact:

U.S. Copyright Office
U.S. Library of Congress
James Madison Memorial Building
Washington, DC 20559
202-707-9100 – Order Line
202-707-3000 – Information Line
www.copyright.gov

C-CORP, S-CORP, AND LLC

Tennessee Secretary of State
State of Tennessee
Department of State
Division of Business Services
312 Eight Ave. N., 6th Fl.
Nashville, TN 37243-0306
615-741-2286
http://sos.tn.gov
&
http://tnbear.tn.gov/Ecommerce/NameAvailability.aspx

RESOURCES OF ASSISTANCE

BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PARTNERS

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE CENTER FOR INDUSTRIAL SERVICES PROCUREMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
https://cis.tennessee.edu/connecting/ptac

EAST TENNESSEE
Paul Middlebrooks, PTAC Field Consultant
744 McCallie Ave., Ste. 502, Doctors Bldg.
Chattanooga, TN 37402
423-634-0848
paul.middlebrooks@tennessee.edu

MIDDLE TENNESSEE
Debbie Barber, PTAC Field Consultant
193 Polk Ave., Ste. C
Nashville, TN 37210
615-532-8885 ext. 111
debbie.barber@tennessee.edu

WEST TENNESSEE
Russell Toone, PTAC Field Consultant
605 Airways Blvd, Ste. 109
Jackson, TN 38301
731-425-4777
russell.toone@tennessee.edu

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
www.tn.gov/ecd

STATE OFFICE
Commissioner Randy Boyd
312 Rosa L. Parks Ave., 11th Fl.
Nashville, TN 37243
615-741-1888 or 800-872-7201 Toll Free
615-741-5829 Fax

DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS

NORTHEAST TENNESSEE
Blake Swaggart
731-437-9443
Blake.Swaggart@tn.gov

NORTHERN MIDDLE TENNESSEE
Reggie Mudd
615-253-1905
reggie.mudd@tn.gov

UPPER CUMBERLAND
Rebecca Smith
931-252-8088
rebecca.smith@tn.gov

EAST TENNESSEE
Gary Human
865-210-1333
gary.human@tn.gov

NORTWEST TENNESSEE
Blake Swaggart
731-437-9443
Blake.Swaggart@tn.gov

SOUTHWEST TENNESSEE
Tracey Exum
731-414-4463
tracey.exum@tn.gov

SOUTHERN MIDDLE TENNESSEE
Clay Banks
731-803-3301
clay.banks@tn.gov

GREATER MEMPHIS
Gwyn R. Fisher
901-206-9020
gwyn.fisher@tn.gov

SOUTHEAST TENNESSEE
Iliff McMahan
423-290-1520
Iliff.mcmahan@tn.gov

NORTHWEST TENNESSEE
Blake Swaggart
731-437-9443
Blake.Swaggart@tn.gov

GREATER MEMPHIS
Gwyn R. Fisher
901-206-9020
gwyn.fisher@tn.gov

SOUTHWEST TENNESSEE
Tracey Exum
731-414-4463
tracey.exum@tn.gov

SOUTHERN MIDDLE TENNESSEE
Clay Banks
731-803-3301
clay.banks@tn.gov
Doing Business in Tennessee
www.tn.gov/main/section/business
https://apps.tn.gov/bizreg/

Disadvantaged Business Certification
GO – DBE
312 Rosa L. Parks Ave., 3rd Fl.
Nashville, TN 37243
615-253-4657

Tennessee Business Incubation Center
CUMBERLAND EMERGING TECHNOLOGY LIFE SCIENCES CENTER
111 10th Ave. S., Ste. 110
Nashville, TN 37203
615-255-6270

CLEVELAND-BRADLEY BUSINESS INCUBATOR
3505 Adkisson Dr., Ste. 102
Cleveland, TN 37312
423-478-6476

CUMBERLAND BUSINESS INCUBATOR
2568 Cook Rd.
Crossover, TN 38571
931-456-4910

CUMBERLAND UNIV. CULINARY CENTER
One Cumberland Sq.
Lebanon, TN 37087
615-547-1290

NASHVILLE ENTREPRENEUR CENTER
41 Peabody St.
Nashville, TN 37210
615-873-1257

EMERGE MEMPHIS
516 Tennessee St.
Memphis, TN 38103
901-312-7700

ETSU INNOVATION LABORATORY
2109 W. Market St., Ste. 120
Johnson City, TN 37604
423-439-8500

DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION-KNOX COUNTY
17 Market Sq., #201
Knoxville, TN 37902
865-546-5887

FOUR LAKE AUTHORITY
702 McMurry Blvd.
Hartville, TN 37074
615-374-4607

HOLSTON BUSINESS DEV. CENTER
2005 Venture Park
Kingsport, TN 37660
423-578-6235

THE INCUBATOR
811 Broad St.
Chattanooga, TN 37402
423-756-2121

MEMPHIS BIOWORKS
20 S. Dudley, Ste. 900
Memphis, TN 38103
901-866-1400

490 BIOTECH
2450 E J. Chapman Dr.
Knoxville, TN 37996-0001
865-974-4607

TECH 20/20
1020 Commerce Park Dr.
Oak Ridge, TN 37830
865-220-2020

Visit us online: www.sba.gov/tn
To identify which SBA Participating Lender would best serve your business needs, use SBA LINC. SBA LINC is a simple way for you to connect with prospective SBA lenders based on your business needs. To get started, simply register and fill out the online form. In order to access and connect with SBA Approved Lenders follow the LINC [https://www.sba.gov/tools/linc?ms-rr](https://www.sba.gov/tools/linc?ms-rr)

### Active Tennessee Lenders for the past 3 years as of 8/25/16:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1ST BANK &amp; TRUST COMPANY</th>
<th>CAPITAL BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION</th>
<th>CRF SMALL BUS. LOAN COMPANY LLC</th>
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<tr>
<td>ALTERRA BANK</td>
<td>CAPITALSPRING SBLC, LLC</td>
<td>CROSSROADS SMALL BUSINESS SOLUTION</td>
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<td>ALTRA FCU</td>
<td>CBC NATIONAL BANK</td>
<td>ELECTRIC SERVICE CREDIT UNION</td>
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<td>AMERICAN BUSINESS LENDING, INC.</td>
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<td>EMBASSY NATIONAL BANK</td>
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<td>AMERICAN PATRIOT BANK</td>
<td>CELTIC BANK CORPORATION</td>
<td>EVOLVE BANK &amp; TRUST</td>
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<td>CENTURY BANK OF GEORGIA</td>
<td>FIFTH THIRD BANK</td>
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<td>AMERIS BANK</td>
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<td>FIRST BANK OF DALTON</td>
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<td>BANCORPSOUTH BANK</td>
<td>CITIZENS TRI-COUNTY BANK</td>
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<td>BANK OF AMERICA NATL ASSOC</td>
<td>COLORADO NATIONAL BANK</td>
<td>FIRST CHATHAM BANK</td>
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<td>BANK OF BARTLETT</td>
<td>COMMERCIAL BANK</td>
<td>FIRST COMMERCIAL BANK</td>
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<td>BANK OF GEORGE</td>
<td>COMMERCIAL BANK &amp; TRUST CO.</td>
<td>FIRST FARMERS AND MERCHANTS BANK</td>
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<td>BANK OF TENNESSEE</td>
<td>COMMUNITY &amp; SOUTHERN BANK</td>
<td>FIRST FINANCIAL BANK</td>
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<td>BANK OF RHODE ISLAND</td>
<td>COMMUNITY BANK</td>
<td>FIRST HOME BANK</td>
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<td>BANKPLUS</td>
<td>NO. MISSISSIPPI</td>
<td>FIRST INTERCONTINENTAL BANK</td>
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<td>BANKUNITED, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION</td>
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<td>FIRST OKLAHOMA BANK</td>
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<td>BRANCH BANKING AND TRUST COMPANY</td>
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<td>FIRST PARTNERS BANK</td>
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<td>BRIGHTBRIDGE, INC.</td>
<td>MILLENNIUM BANK</td>
<td>FIRST SECURITY BANK OF NEVADA</td>
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<td>BRIGHTON BANK</td>
<td>COMMUNITY TRUST BANK, INC</td>
<td>FIRST SOUTH BANK</td>
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<td>BUSINESS CORP OF SOUTH CAROLINA</td>
<td>COMPASS BANK</td>
<td>FIRST UTAH BANK</td>
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<td>CONESTOGA BANK</td>
<td>FIRST VISION BANK OF TENNESSEE</td>
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<td>FIRST VOLUNTEER BANK</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### SBA Participating Lenders

- **First Western SBLC, Inc**
- **First-Citizens BK & TR Co**
- **First-Citizens National Bank**
- **Firsttrust Savings Bank**
- **Florida Bus. Devel Corp**
- **FNB Bank**
- **Foothills Community Bank**
- **Fortera Credit Union**
- **Franklin Synergy Bank**
- **Golden Pacific Bank**
  - **Natl Assoc**
- **Grow America Fund, Inc.**
- **HANMI Bank**
- **Heritage Bank USA, Inc**
- **Heritage First Bank**
- **HomeBanc National Association**
- **HomeTrust Bank**
- **Hope FCU**
- **Independence Bank**
- **Independent Bank**
- **JP Morgan Chase Natl Assoc**
- **Keyworth Bank**
- **Legence Bank**
- **Legends Bank**
- **LiftFund, Inc.**
- **Live Oak Banking Company**
- **Local Initiatives Support Corp.**
- **Macon Bank**
- **Metro Bank**
- **Metro City Bank**
- **Metropolitan Bank**
- **Mid-Cumberland Area Development Corp.**
- **Mountain Commerce Bank**
- **New Peoples Bank, Inc**
- **Newtek Small Bus. Finance Inc.**
- **NOA Bank**
- **Northeast Bank**
- **Pacific City Bank**
- **Pacific Premier Bank**
- **Paragon Bank**
- **Pinnacle Bank**
- **Platinum Bank**
- **PNC Bank, National Association**
- **Private Bank & Trust Co**
- **Quantum National Bank**
- **Redstone FCU**
- **Regions Bank**
- **Renasant Bank**
- **Republic Bank & Trust Company**
- **Ridgeline Bank**
- **River Valley Ag Credit**
- **Royal Business Bank**
- **Simmons Bank**
- **Six Bridges Capital Corp.**
- **SmartBank**
- **South Cent. Tennessee Bus. Dev.**
- **Southern Heritage Bank**
- **Spirit of Texas Bank, SSB**
- **Square 1 Bank**
- **State Bank and Trust Company**
- **Stearns BK Natl Assoc.**
- **SunTrust Bank**
- **Synovus Bank**
- **Tennessee Business Development Corp.**
- **Tennessee Bus. Devel Corp**
- **Texas Champion Bank**
- **The Bancorp Bank**
- **The First Bank and Trust Company**
- **The Peoples Bank**
- **The Peoples Bank**
- **Third Coast Bank, SSB**
- **Titan Bank, National Association**
- **Touchmark National Bank**
- **Tower Community Bank**
- **Triumph Bank**
- **Trustmark National Bank**
- **U T Federal Credit Union**
- **U.S. Bank National Association**
- **Umpqua Bank**
- **United Community Bank**
- **United Cumberland Bank**
- **United Midwest Savings Bank**
- **United Midwest Savings Bank**
- **Utah Community Bank**
- **Volunteer State Bank**
- **Wayne County Bank**
- **Wells Fargo Bank Natl Assoc**
- **West Town Bank & Trust**
- **Yadkin Bank**
Hot Dogs El Unico began as a mobile unit in El Centro, CA in February 2002. Julio and Veronica Cervantes catered private parties and corporate events for many years, providing customers the unique experience of consuming a Mexicali style hot dog in California. During that time, Julio was able to secure a rent-free permanent location for the cart on weekdays in front of a local meat market on one of the city’s busiest thoroughfares.

Julio and Veronica soon built a regular customer base consisting of meat market shoppers and passersby. They added two more carts to handle catering events so that they could spend more time in front of the meat market. Between all three carts, they were generating more than $100,000 in annual revenues. For more than three years the mobile business boomed, but the Cervantes’ still dreamed of having a brick and mortar location.

When a prospective location became available on El Centro’s busy Imperial Avenue, Julio and Veronica realized they would need financing to make building modifications and to purchase furniture and equipment. They sought the assistance of the Imperial Valley Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to help them develop a plan. The SBDC Director, Carlos Figari, helped them complete a business plan, a cash flow analysis, and sales projections. The process was especially challenging because all bookkeeping for the business had been done by hand for several years.

Once all of the paperwork was completed, Carlos referred Julio to loan officer Gregorio Velasquez at Community Valley Bank to apply for an SBA guaranteed 7(a) business loan. On February 21, 2014, the bank approved a business loan in the amount of $62,800.00 to move El Unico to the new Imperial Avenue location. Julio and Veronica Cervantes opened their new location in late August 2014.

The two report that they are working long hours, but they are now living their dream.
### PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT

Estimated Projection Of Income And Expense For Three Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YEAR 1</th>
<th>YEAR 2</th>
<th>YEAR 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Net Sales</td>
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<td>Cost of Goods Sold</td>
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<td>Gross Profit</td>
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**OPERATING EXPENSES**

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<tr>
<th>Expense Description</th>
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<th>YEAR 3</th>
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<td>Depreciation &amp; Amortization</td>
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Total Operating Expense

Operating Profit (before tax)

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<th></th>
<th>YEAR 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interest Expense</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
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<td>Est. Income Taxes (Corporate only)</td>
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Net Profit

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# TWELVE-Month Cash Flow Statement

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<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
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## Cash Receipts (CR)

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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cash Available</strong> (before cash out)</td>
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## Cash Paid Out

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## Essential Operating Data (non-cash flow information)

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</table>
Funding Dreams. Creating Opportunity.

LiftFund helps entrepreneurs achieve their dreams through loans, education and other resources they need to succeed.

We offer fixed rate financing and flexible terms for small business loans up to $250,000.

Loans To:
- New and Existing Businesses
- Customers with Less-Than-Perfect Credit
- Individuals Holding ITINs

Loans For:
- Equipment/Inventory Financing
- Working Capital
- Startup Funds
- Real Estate
- And more...

Lisa Riley  
Vice President, Delta Region  
205.266.9639  
lriley@liftfund.com

Jerome Gentry  
Cell: 901.831.9754

6675 Stage Road  
Bartlett, TN 38134

Call Toll Free Today:  
888.215.2373  
Or Apply Online at:  
www.liftfund.com

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