

## Assistance Centers

SBA works with a number of local partners to counsel, mentor, and train small business owners from across industries located around the country. Each of these partners offers a specialized, unique set of services, experience, and connections to help small business owners answer their most important questions.

### U.S. Export Assistance Centers

Exporting can enable small businesses to increase sales and profit, reduce dependence on the domestic market and stabilize seasonal fluctuations. If a business is ready to explore exporting, Export Assistance Centers located in major metropolitan areas throughout the United States can help.

Each U.S. Export Assistance Center is staffed by professionals from one or more of the following: SBA, Department of Commerce, Export-Import Bank and other public and private organizations. Together, their mission is to help small and medium sized businesses compete in today's global marketplace by providing export assistance.

*These U.S. Export Assistance Centers have SBA representatives who are available to help you with all of your SBA export financing needs:*

- Arlington, VA
- Atlanta, GA
- Boston, MA
- Charlotte, NC
- Chicago, IL
- Cleveland, OH
- Dallas/Fort Worth, TX
- Denver, CO
- Detroit, MI
- Irvine, CA
- Los Angeles, CA
- Miami, FL
- Minneapolis, MN
- New Orleans, LA
- New York, NY
- Philadelphia, PA
- Portland, OR
- San Francisco, CA
- Seattle, WA

 **PRO TIP:** Find an assistance center near you at [sba.gov/local-assistance](http://sba.gov/local-assistance)

### Veterans Business Outreach Centers (VBOC)

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). [www.sba.gov/vboc](http://www.sba.gov/vboc)

#### Services Provided:

- Pre-Business Plan Workshops - VBOCs conduct entrepreneurial development workshops dealing specifically with the major issues of self-employment.
- Concept Assessments - VBOCs assist clients in assessing their entrepreneurial needs and requirements.
- Business Plan Preparations - VBOCs assist clients in developing and maintaining a five-year business plan.
- Comprehensive Feasibility Analysis - VBOCs provide assistance in identifying and analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the business plan to increase the probability of success.
- Entrepreneurial Training & Counseling - VBOCs, working with other SBA resource partners, target entrepreneurial training projects and counseling sessions tailored specifically to address the needs and concerns of the service-disabled veteran entrepreneur.
- Mentorship - VBOCs conduct, as appropriate, on-site visits with clients to ensure adherence to their business plans.

### Procurement & Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)

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.

#### Services Provided:

- 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 to handle a contract. A PTAC representative can sit with you one-on-one and determine if your business is ready, and help position you for success.
- Help you register in the proper places. There are numerous databases to register with to get involved with the government marketplace, including the Department of Defense's System for Award Management (SAM), GSA Schedules, and other government vendor sites. A PTAC representative can help you determine where and how to register.
- See if you are eligible in any small business certifications. Some government contracts are set aside for certain businesses with special certifications, such as woman-owned, small disadvantaged businesses and HUBZone. A PTAC representative can help you obtain these certifications.
- Research past contract opportunities. A PTAC representative can look into past contracts to see what types of contracts have been awarded to businesses like yours.
- In addition, a PTAC can help you identify and bid on a contract, and if you are awarded the contract, measure your performance and help with contract audits.

#### SBA Answer Desk

**By Mail:**  
US Small Business Administration  
409 3rd St, SW  
Washington DC 20416

**By Phone:** 800-827-5722

**By Email:** [answerdesk@sba.gov](mailto:answerdesk@sba.gov)