



# Small Business Liaison Team Annual Report

**2015**

### Questions or Comments

#### **Governor's Office for Regulatory Innovation and Assistance**

*Information Center*

800-917-0043 / 360-725-0628

[help@oria.wa.gov](mailto:help@oria.wa.gov)

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## Executive Summary

The Small Business Liaison Team (SBLT) consists of representatives from 26 state agencies. Our role is to listen to businesses, then drive action to make it easier to do business in Washington state. A primary goal of the SBLT is to have an informed small business community capable of understanding and ultimately complying with the State's licensing and regulatory requirements.

Our team's work is aligned with two Governor's Executive Orders; [10-05](#)<sup>1</sup> which resulted in the creation of the [Small Business Guide](#)<sup>2</sup> and [12-01](#)<sup>3</sup> which formally established the SBLT. The SBLT is led by the Governor's Office for Regulatory Innovation and Assistance (ORIA) and meets once per month to discuss small business topics (e.g., small business events, agency legislative rule or law changes and updates, Small Business Guide updates and agency presentations). Working to streamline regulations, especially those that impact multiple agencies, is also an important objective of the SBLT. Some of the early work done by the team was focused on this as directed by [RCW 43.330.440](#)<sup>4</sup>.

In 2015, the SBLT accomplishments included updating and maintaining the Small Business Guide, creating a [Calendar of Events](#)<sup>5</sup>, hosting eighteen presentations from outside sources and from within agencies that provide services in support of small businesses, and continued support for [RestaurantSuccess](#)<sup>6</sup> and [Washington BusinessHub](#)<sup>7</sup>.

A few of the past SBLT accomplishments include creating a [Business Application Roadmap](#)<sup>8</sup>, PDF and online versions of the Small Business Guide, translations of the Small Business Guide into Spanish, Chinese, and Korean, and participation in statewide business forums. Additionally, the team has collaborated with local and regional small business assistance centers and invited business owners to provide direct feedback to the SBLT on their experience working with state agencies.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe\\_order/eo\\_10-05.pdf](http://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/eo_10-05.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.oria.wa.gov/site/alias\\_oria/345/our\\_business\\_services.aspx](http://www.oria.wa.gov/site/alias_oria/345/our_business_services.aspx)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe\\_order/eo\\_12-01.pdf](http://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/eo_12-01.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=43.330.440>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.oria.wa.gov/site/alias\\_oria/734/calendar\\_of\\_events.aspx](http://www.oria.wa.gov/site/alias_oria/734/calendar_of_events.aspx)

<sup>6</sup> <http://growseattle.com/restaurant>

<sup>7</sup> <http://bizhub-dev.aws.ocio.wa.gov/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://dor.wa.gov/Docs/Pubs/BusReg/Roadmap.pdf>

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## **Background**

### **Mission**

We listen to businesses, then drive action to make it easier to do business in Washington state.

### **Vision**

Making Washington state the best place to do business.

### **Small Business Liaison Team Members**

Currently 26 agencies have small business liaisons:

1. Commission on African American Affairs
2. Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs
3. Commission on Hispanic Affairs
4. Department of Agriculture
5. Department of Commerce
6. Department of Ecology
7. Department of Emergency Management
8. Department of Enterprise Services
9. Department of Fish and Wildlife
10. Department of Health
11. Department of Labor and Industries
12. Department of Licensing
13. Department of Natural Resources
14. Department of Revenue
15. Department of Social and Health Services
16. Department of Veterans' Affairs
17. Employment Security Department
18. Internal Revenue Service
19. Liquor and Cannabis Board
20. Office of Minority & Women's Business Enterprises
21. Office of the Insurance Commissioner
22. Office of the Secretary of State
23. Washington State Department of Transportation
24. Washington State Lottery
25. Washington Technology Solutions
26. Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

## Background and Purpose

Our team's work is aligned with two Governor's Executive Orders; [10-05](#)<sup>1</sup> and [12-01](#)<sup>2</sup> which formally established the Small Business Liaison Team (SBLT). Working to streamline regulations, especially those that impact multiple agencies, is also an important objective of the SBLT. Some of the early work done by the team was focused on this as directed by [RCW 43.330.440](#)<sup>3</sup>.

In 2006, the Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) started a successful Small Business Liaison program to provide personal attention to inquiries. Small business owners attending the 2007 small business roundtable requested that other agencies copy L&I's liaison program. By the summer of 2008 the Departments of Revenue, Employment Security, Community, Trade & Economic Development (now Department of Commerce), Department of Licensing, Office of the Secretary of State, and the Office of Women & Minority Business Enterprises each identified a Small Business Liaison.

In January of 2012, Governor Gregoire formalized the SBLT through her Executive Order 12-01. Now the SBLT is led by the Governor's Office for Regulatory Innovation and Assistance (ORIA) and consists of 26 state agencies whose role is to listen to businesses, then drive action to make it easier to do business in Washington State.

The purpose of the SBLT is to support the small business community so they have the information they need to make complying with the State's licensing and regulatory requirements a reasonable and straightforward process.

To achieve this, the SBLT is directed to do the following:

- 1) Improve regulatory processes that are duplicative or have conflicting requirements, decisions or inspections across state and/or local government agencies.
- 2) Coordinate with agency technology departments to improve websites and online assistance for small businesses.
- 3) Maintain a consolidated online [Small Business Guide](#)<sup>4</sup> that provides direction to prospective and existing businesses.
- 4) Plan and collaborate on small business outreach.
- 5) Provide routine and consistent responses to questions and requests from small business owners.
- 6) Map current processes and find ways to reduce steps required for regulatory processes without compromising the environment and maintaining health and safety.
- 7) Collaborate to streamline regulatory processes when possible.

## Desired Outcomes

- Developing resources and support tools.
- Agency collaboration to streamline regulatory processes.
- Increase effective outreach to small businesses and non-profit organizations with 50 or fewer employees and \$7 million or less in gross revenue.
- Stronger collaboration with industry associations and Small Business Development Centers across Washington.
- Small business owners receive information they need because SBLT uses a “No wrong door” approach which encourages referrals to right resources.
- Make customer service to small business owners more relevant, informed, and empathetic.

## Responsibilities of the SBLT members

- Understand your agency's regulatory requirements and processes that affect businesses so you can provide or coordinate consistent responses to small business owners.
- Act as single point of contact for businesses with questions about your agency.
- Engage agency experts to maintain highly-responsive and effective customer service to small business customers.
- Educate agency customer service staff about tools and resources to assist small business owners (e.g., online Small Business Guide, tax and audit videos, etc.).
- Develop relationships with leaders of business organizations.
- Learn about other agencies' regulatory requirements and know who to contact with questions for each agency.
- Be a resource for other liaisons when they receive questions about your agency. Collaborate with other Small Business Liaisons to coordinate answers so small business owners experience integrated assistance that helps them understand and complete their regulatory requirements.
- Plan and deliver outreach to small businesses statewide.
- Through outreach, learn about pain points for small businesses and develop ways to reduce challenges.
- Coordinate agency materials for outreach activities.
- Monitor recurring questions and issues and find ways to eliminate or reduce these questions and issues (e.g., plain-talked guidance, training, etc.).
- Participate in regulatory Lean process improvements that are focused on small businesses and invite your agency experts to become involved with process and technology changes.
- Be committed to keeping the Small Business Guide up to date and accurate by working closely with your agency subject matter experts to review the Small Business Guide in support of regular updates.
- Market the services and tools provided by the SBLT member agencies in support of small businesses (e.g., links to relevant resources on your agency website, hand out materials such as the Small Business Guide at outreach events, etc.).
- Have a representative attend each of the SBLT meetings.

## Highlights of Accomplishments in 2015

General benefits of this group are being a multiplied cross agency capacity to help small businesses through the teamwork of the small business liaisons and a central point for small business to come and have a multi-agency impact through presentations to the small business liaison team members. Listed below are some specific accomplishments of things the Small Business Liaison Team has done.

### Small Business Guide

- The Small Business Guide is updated and maintained on a quarterly basis.
- The Small Business Guide is available on the ORIA website in both HTML and PDF formats; the Small Business Guide HTML pages were viewed and the PDF version was downloaded a combined total of 169,816 times in 2015. (See the [2015 Web Traffic Report](#) located in the [Appendix](#) for details)

### Calendar of Events

- [The Calendar of Events](#)<sup>5</sup> lists upcoming events (e.g. trainings, workshops, etc.) hosted by state agencies for small businesses and allows state agencies to coordinate their outreach efforts to avoid duplication of effort.
- Made available to the public on June 16, 2015, and continues to be discussed during the monthly SBLT meetings.

### Agency Presentations

At our monthly meetings, the SBLT hosts presentations from outside sources and from within agencies that provide services in support of small businesses. These presentations help to keep the SBLT informed about resources that are available to small businesses. This information can then be passed on to the business community when they contact the SBLT member agencies for assistance. These presentations also help the SBLT member agencies to better understand the needs of the small business community that they serve.

#### January

- Alex Mondau, Community Sourced Capital – Presented on how Community Sourced Capital:
  - Helps Customers secure \$5,000-\$50,000 loans
  - Crowdfunding Loans
  - CSC based on \$50 units called “square” no interest to loan

#### February

- Tom Sandoval, North Central and Northeast Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce – Presented on the Survey of Latino Business Owners conducted by the Eastern Washington University for Public Policy and Economic Analysis

### March

- Rick Stedman, Department of Revenue; Patrick Reed, Secretary of State; and Kim Sauer, Liquor Control Board – Presented on “What our agency is now doing for the Hispanic Community and other minority communities”
- Ben Vaught, Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) – Presented on the new [Washington BusinessHub<sup>6</sup>](#) website
- Rick Stedman, Department of Revenue – Presented on Webinar Training Information

### April

- Cheryl Smith, Department of Commerce – Presented on the Needs of Minority Small Business Owners and Commerce Efforts
- Grant Pfeifer, Department of Ecology – Presented on Shared Learning
- Kari Gilje, Internal Revenue Service – Presented on the information available for small businesses on the Internal Revenue Service’s website

### May

- Victoria Wortberg and Liz Jamieson, Thurston County Economic Development Council – Presented on the new model for the Washington Center for Women in Business

### June

- Edwina Martin-Arnold, Office of Minority & Women’s Business Enterprise (OMWBE) – Presented on topics that OMWBE are currently working on: Education, Certification, and Outreach
- Tricia, Kovacs, Department of Agriculture – Presented on Small Farms and Direct Marketing

### July

- Heidi Audette, Washington State Department of Veteran Affairs (WSDVA) – Presented on what the WSDVA offers veteran business owners
- Una Wiley, Employment Security Department (ESD) – Presented on what ESD offers to employers and employees

### August

- Debbie Robinson, Washington State Lottery – Presented on the types of services that Lottery offers to businesses
- Servando Patlan, Department of Enterprise Services Agency Presentations – Presented on the state procurement process and contracting with businesses

### September

- Jennifer Tam, City of Seattle – Office of Economic Development Restaurant Success – Presented updates on the Restaurant Success

### October/November

- No SBLT Meeting

## December

- Patrick Reed, Secretary of State – Presented on the 2014 legislative session's HUB bill and Limited Liability Companies Law Changes
- Carolyn McKinnon, Department of Commerce – Presented on the Small Business Retirement Marketplace

## Support for Other Programs

- [RestaurantSuccess](#)<sup>7</sup>: The SBLT continues to partner with the City of Seattle, Office of Economic Development to ensure the Restaurant Guide remains updated regarding state related details.
- Washington BusinessHub: The SBLT provided support for the Washington BusinessHub. Explored different ways of working with the Washington BusinessHub and now links to the Small Business Guide.

## Highlights of Accomplishments Prior to 2015

- Small Business Liaison Team members have helped with development testing and research to create the multi-agency online one-stop business portal (forerunner to today's Washington BusinessHub) and involved with ongoing continuous process improvement activities.
- Creation of a [Business Application Roadmap](#)<sup>8</sup> to show the simplest pathway to getting state licenses.
- Online publication of the Small Business Guide.
- Translation of the Small Business Guide into Chinese, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese.
- Participation in statewide business forums attended by agency leaders.
- Streamlining processes impacting the restaurant industry.
- Collaboration with local and regional small business assistance centers and inviting business owners to provide direct feedback on their experience working with state agencies.

## Acknowledgements

We recognize not all member agencies have the resources or the time to participate at the same level so we would like to thank the agencies and other organizations that were able to participate at the meetings in 2015, they are:

- Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs
- Commission on Hispanic Affairs
- Community Services Capital
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Ecology
- Department of Enterprise Services
- Department of Health
- Department of Labor and Industries
- Department of Licensing
- Department of Revenue
- Department of Social and Health Services
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Veterans' Affairs
- Employment Security Department
- Internal Revenue Service
- Liquor and Cannabis Board
- North Central and Northeast Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Office of Insurance Commissioner
- Office of Minority & Women's Business Enterprises
- Office of the Chief Information Officer
- Office of the Secretary of State
- Public Health Seattle - King County
- Seattle Office of Economic Development
- Seattle Hotel Association
- Seattle Restaurant Alliance
- Thurston County Economic Development Council – Washington Center for Women in Business
- Washington Restaurant Association
- Washington State Lottery
- Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

## Appendix

### 2015 Web Traffic Report: Small Business Guide

**Table 1 - Chapters Visited**

Web Page Visits	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Landing	8,383	7,015	8,025	7,518	6,637	6,671	7,813	6,123	5,312	6,457	5,264	5,187	80,405
Plan	1,542	1,345	1,638	1,524	1,329	1,426	1,511	1,494	1,454	1,555	1,335	1,391	17,544
Start	2,562	2,292	2,648	2,415	2,238	2,278	2,412	2,256	2,149	2,531	2,065	2,042	27,888
Payroll	1,119	796	953	1,094	813	796	1,141	1,109	857	1,166	1,083	1,489	12,416
Open	707	613	733	643	506	629	688	749	759	754	629	618	8,028
Run	861	700	734	761	606	634	728	678	693	839	600	640	8,474
Grow	281	197	280	245	161	209	192	195	231	241	210	198	2,640
Close	192	103	181	123	127	126	220	158	139	165	142	211	1,887
Loan Programs *						1	186	235	216	233	233	212	1,316
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,647</b>	<b>13,061</b>	<b>15,192</b>	<b>14,323</b>	<b>12,417</b>	<b>12,770</b>	<b>14,891</b>	<b>12,997</b>	<b>11,810</b>	<b>13,941</b>	<b>11,561</b>	<b>11,988</b>	<b>160,598</b>

**Table 2 - Guides Downloaded**

PDF Version Downloads	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
English	883	642	743	664	597	650	695	551	451	530	304	240	6,950
Spanish	46	83	57	57	54	31	57	41	33	40	34	44	577
Korean	15	18	6	16	12	11	16	13	7	5	7	17	143
Vietnamese	11	3	7	5	7	7	11	6	3	6	5	2	73
Chinese	33	25	30	22	42	30	30	43	33	21	18	15	342
Loan Programs *							2	4	6	5	2	2	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,119</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>965</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>905</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>9,218</b>

\*This chapter was added to the Small Business Guide in June of 2015.

## Referenced Hyperlinks

- <sup>1</sup> [http://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe\\_order/eo\\_10-05.pdf](http://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/eo_10-05.pdf)
- <sup>2</sup> [http://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe\\_order/eo\\_12-01.pdf](http://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/eo_12-01.pdf)
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- <sup>6</sup> <http://bizhub-dev.aws.ocio.wa.gov/>
- <sup>7</sup> <http://growseattle.com/restaurant>
- <sup>8</sup> <http://dor.wa.gov/Docs/Pubs/BusReg/Roadmap.pdf>