



Small Business Friendly

An initiative of the Small Business
Development Corporation



Is **your** local government small business friendly?

smallbusiness.wa.gov.au



Small Business
Development Corporation

GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

SBDC working with local government to support small business

Accounting for 97 per cent of all businesses in Western Australia, small business has a significant impact on our economy – small business is big business!

Small business owners (and operators) create local employment, provide essential goods and services and help create attractive, liveable communities. The right mix of small businesses can create a sense of vibrancy and attract people to live, work and visit.

Local governments can have a significant influence over how attractive their area is for businesses to set up, and established enterprises to grow. They also play a key role in the lifecycle of a small business; in fact most of the interactions business owners have with government are at a local level.

To help build stronger, more productive relationships between small business and local government, the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) has developed the Small Business Friendly Local Governments initiative. The initiative aims to recognise local governments that are working to support their small business communities.

IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

97%

of businesses employ fewer than 20 staff

There are more than **218,000** small businesses

45%

of employees in the private sector are employed by small business



Build your economy through local enterprise

How you can be involved

To participate in the initiative, we're asking you to sign a Charter – to formally commit to the initiative and to your small business community.

Taking part in the initiative means you have committed through the Charter to work with, and support, small businesses by adopting three 'standard' activities and at least three 'flexible' activities (ones that suit your particular organisation and community).

Standard activities

In response to some of the most common issues small business owners face in dealing with their local government the initiative involves engaging in standard activities that include:

- adopting a policy to pay invoices from small business suppliers within 30 days
- regularly meeting with and consulting members of the local small business community to improve our understanding of their needs
- introducing and promoting a timely and cost effective process to manage any disputes arising between your organisation and small business clients

Additional activities

We understand that each local government area differs in size, demographics and geography, so you can choose at least three additional activities that best suit your circumstances. These may include, but are not limited to:

- surveying local small businesses to assess their needs
- accepting online payments
- introducing deemed approvals
- simplifying processes and forms
- providing more small business information on your website
- improving communication and customer service
- encouraging 'buy local' shopping campaigns
- supporting business incubators or start-up spaces
- offering contracts to local small business suppliers
- introducing an economic development team
- facilitating small business forums and events

Your selected activities need not necessarily impose an additional burden on your resources. We can help you to develop ideas that will work best for your organisation.

Reporting

We understand there are many demands on your time, so reporting involves nothing more onerous than completing a simple report card twice a year.

Promoting

After committing to the initiative, it's your opportunity to let everyone know that you are 'small business friendly'. You'll be able to use the Small Business Friendly Local Governments logo on your print and online publications, and display a one page overview of the Small Business Charter, personalised for your organisation. We'll also list your organisation on our website and in other marketing material associated with the initiative.

Being small business friendly doesn't have to be onerous or expensive - little changes can often have a big impact.

Why you need to be involved

Being small business friendly can bring many benefits for your organisation and your community, including:

- creating a desirable location to live and to establish a business
- supporting your local economy, including providing employment opportunities
- building vibrancy in your community
- meeting the needs of ratepayers for local goods and services
- collaborating and sharing with other small business friendly local governments

For some business owners it's their interaction with local government, not compliance with regulations, that can create problems.

Your next steps

Our Small Business Friendly Local Governments Project Manager can help you sign up to the Small Business Friendly Local Governments initiative and answer any questions.

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A key role for the Small Business Development Corporation is advocating on behalf of small business at all tiers of government. We value our relationship with local governments and are keen to strengthen our engagement with this important sector. ””

DAVID EATON,
SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSIONER, CEO OF THE SBDC



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