

Client Rights and Responsibilities

As an SBDC client you have the right to expect:

1. **Consulting Assistance Provided at No Charge** - Because the SBDC program is supported by funding from the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Pennsylvania Department of Community Economic Development, Indiana University of Pennsylvania and other funders, consulting is provided at no charge to you. Fees may apply for training programs, special services, materials, and publications. You will be notified of any fees in advance. SBDC consultants agree not to accept fees or commissions developing from this consulting relationship.
2. **Confidentiality of Information Provided** - All SBDC representatives agree to abide by the Pennsylvania SBDC's Code of Professional Conduct. Any information you disclose will be held in strict confidence. No information you provide will be used to the commercial advantage of any SBDC representative, SBA or to the advantage of a third party. The SBDC will collect and report in aggregate to its funders and the general public information on you such as demographic statistics; size, location, age and industry of your business; the general nature of your engagement with the SBDC; and impact statistics such as financing obtained, sales increased or jobs created.

The information collected is to be provided by individuals and business seeking technical assistance services from the Small Business Administration (SBA) or an SBA Resource Partner, such as the SBDC. The information is collected to help SBA's continuing improvement of business counseling programs, to ensure effective oversight and management of entrepreneurial development programs and grants, and to meet Congressional and Executive Branch reporting requirements. Information is submitted at the site of service to the consultant providing the service. Resource Partners will submit information to SBA according to the terms of their notice of award.

Exceptions:

- The following data elements will be entered into the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's PREP Executive Pulse database unless you opt out of this reporting: name, contact information, company name, business type/NAICS code, demographic information, company start date, tenure of company owner, and type and outcomes of assistance provided. You will be provided with the option to opt-out of this reporting in a confirmation email you will receive after completing this form. You may also opt-out from this reporting at any time by providing us with a written request.
 - If you were referred to the SBDC, the SBDC will notify the referrer that you have sought assistance from the SBDC. The SBDC, however, will not disclose in detail the nature of the assistance you are requesting unless you provide consent to do so.
3. **Unbiased Recommendations** - SBDC representatives will not knowingly recommend the purchase of goods or services from any individual or firm with which any SBDC representative has a financial, familial or personal interest.
 4. **Non-Disclosure of Trade Secrets** - Sensitive trade secrets pertaining to unique facts of your business will not be used to benefit another client of the SBDC or any SBDC representative. You understand that sensitive trade secret information is information which is not obvious, which is unknown, or which is unique and pertains to new inventions, secret manufacturing and processing procedures or formulas, or any new innovative process. You understand that it is your responsibility to inform the SBDC of any such sensitive trade secrets both verbally and in writing.

5. **Assistance, Guidance, Recommendations and Education** - The SBDC program is an educational program. The SBDC will work with you on your specific issues to help build your management skills and knowledge. It is your responsibility to accept and implement recommendations. The SBDC will not:
- o negotiate on your behalf
 - o write your business plan
 - o act as an employee of your business

As an SBDC client you are responsible for:

1. **Participating in Surveys** - Because this program cares about the quality of services provided, and because it is primarily funded with public support, the SBDC undertakes a number of initiatives to ascertain the quality and impact of services provided to you. Your candid feedback is critical to the long-term success of this program. You agree to participate in a very short survey after your initial session with your SBDC consultant AND an annual client questionnaire sent in January. Your consultant will provide you with a copy of the short client check-in survey and/or the annual client questionnaire upon request.
2. **Informing Legislators About the Service** - Consulting services are provided at no charge to you because of the financial support of the federal government and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. To ensure the SBDC program will be available to others, we may ask you to write to your legislators to let them know about your experience with the program.
3. **Accepting Responsibility and Waiving all Claims** - In recognition that you are ultimately responsible for the success or failure of your business and that all decisions pertaining to implementing plans and operating your business are solely your responsibility, you hereby waive any claims of damages against the Pennsylvania SBDC program, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, any universities hosting a Pennsylvania SBDC program, the US Small Business Administration and its Resource Partners, and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, or any other entity that provides funding to the Pennsylvania SBDC program, based on any advice or information provided by the SBDC.

All services are extended to the public on a non-discriminatory basis. Language assistance services are available for limited English proficient individuals. Special arrangements for persons with disabilities can be made by calling at least two weeks in advance.

SBDC services are not available to individuals or entities that have been debarred or suspended by the federal government. By agreeing to receive assistance from the SBDC you are self-certifying that you are not currently federally debarred or suspended and also agree to cease using SBDC services if you become federally debarred or suspended in the future.

I request service from the Small Business Administration (SBA) or an SBA Resource Partner.

If qualified, I would like to be a client of the Southeast Pennsylvania Procurement Technical Assistance Center.

I have read and understand the above stated terms and conditions, and I authorize SBA to furnish relevant information to the assigned management consultant(s).

Print Name

Signature

Date

Reporting of Data to Pennsylvania Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance

The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) provides significant funding to the SBDC program through the Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP), which enables consulting services to be provided to you at no-fee, and there are economic development and growth programs outside of the SBDC from which you as a client may benefit.

If you wish to opt-out of having your information entered into DCED's PREP Executive Pulse database, please check the box below, print and sign your name, and date. You may opt-out from this reporting at any time.

Executive Pulse opt-out

Print Name

Signature

Date