

Charter

Commitment to this Charter is a requirement for participation in the Small Business Friendly Local Governments (SBFLG) initiative and outlines what the local government agrees to do to support small business in their area.

1. Commitment to small business

The local government agrees to:

- a) recognise that the small business community is an important stakeholder;
- b) undertake regular and targeted consultation with this group;
- b) work towards understanding how its local small business community operates, its needs and goals, and the key challenges;
- c) provide networking and other development opportunities for its local small business community; and
- d) actively engage, where appropriate, with the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) on matters affecting small business.

2. Commitment to customer service

The local government agrees to:

- a) maintain open lines of communication with small businesses through both formal and informal approaches;
- b) provide clear advice and guidance to small businesses with a focus on assisting them to understand and meet their regulatory obligations, and to work with them to achieve compliance;
- c) publish a set of clear service standards setting out what small businesses can expect from them;
- d) consider the needs of local small business owners for whom English is not a first language; and
- e) publish a link on its website to take small business owners to resources available on the SBDC website, including the Business Licence Finder.

3. Administration and regulation

The local government agrees to:

- a) take reasonable action to limit unnecessary administrative burdens on small business such as:
 - i. only asking for information that is absolutely necessary;
 - ii. not asking for the same information twice;
 - iii. working collaboratively with other local governments;
- b) undertake regular policy reviews to limit their impact on small businesses, and to test new policies and procedures for 'small business friendliness'; and
- c) ensure that its officers have the necessary knowledge and skills to apply plans and regulations in a consistent manner.

4. On-time payment policy

The local government agrees to work towards ensuring all invoices from small business suppliers are paid within 30 days.

5. Small business engagement

The local government agrees to regularly meet and consult with the small business community, including small business operators and members of representative bodies, to assist their understanding of small business needs in their local area.



6. Dispute resolution

The local government agrees to implement a timely, cost-effective and non-judicial process to manage any disputes it may have with small businesses and to publish details of this on its website. The process could include referring the dispute to an independent dispute resolution service (such as that offered by the SBDC).

7. Additional activities to support small business

In addition to items 4, 5, and 6 above, the local government agrees to implement at least three other activities to improve the operating environment for small businesses within its authority. Details of the initiatives are to be included in the local government’s bi-annual reports to the SBDC.

8. Progress reports

The local government agrees to:

- a) provide the SBDC with a biannual progress report that outlines the results achieved in relation to its small business friendly initiatives, including its policy relating to small business being paid on-time, business advisory group, and dispute resolution process; and
- b) forward success stories and case studies to the SBDC in relation to the SBFLG initiative when requested.

9. Promotion and marketing of the program

The local government:

- a) agrees that the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer will make a public statement in relation to its commitment to the SBFLG initiative, and to post this statement on its website;
- b) will be provided with a logo which it agrees to use in accordance with the SBFLG style guide supplied by the SBDC; and
- c) is encouraged to promote the SBFLG initiative by displaying the approved logo on its online and printed marketing and communication materials.

10. Contact details

The local government agrees:

- a) that the primary contact for the SBFLG initiative will be the Chief Executive Officer and that a secondary contact will also be nominated, as a delegate of the Chief Executive Officer; and
- b) to provide the SBDC with direct contact details for the nominated contacts.

	Name	Position	Phone number	Email address
Primary contact		Chief Executive Officer		
Secondary contact				

11. Acceptance

On behalf of [insert local government name], we agree to the terms outlined in this Charter and agree to implement the SBFLG initiative.

Mayor

Chief Executive Officer

Print name:

Print name:

Signature:

Signature:

Date:

Date: