



General Assembly

February Session, 2022

***Raised Bill No. 5375***

LCO No. 2276



Referred to Committee on COMMERCE

Introduced by:

(CE)

***AN ACT CONCERNING SMALL BUSINESS GUIDANCE REGARDING  
INFECTIOUS DISEASE MITIGATION STRATEGIES AND BEST  
PRACTICES FOR OPERATING DURING A PUBLIC HEALTH  
EMERGENCY OR CIVIL PREPAREDNESS EMERGENCY.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 32-1v of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2022*):

3 Not later than October 1, 2017, the Commissioner of Economic and  
4 Community Development shall establish and operate a state-wide small  
5 business hotline to provide prospective and existing small business  
6 owners with individualized information and guidance regarding (1)  
7 business formation and development, (2) networking resources, [and]  
8 (3) technical and financial assistance from the state and quasi-public  
9 agencies, (4) infectious disease mitigation strategies, including, but not  
10 limited to, strategies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, and (5) best  
11 practices for operating during a declared public health emergency,  
12 pursuant to section 19a-131a, or civil preparedness emergency,  
13 pursuant to section 28-9. The commissioner shall, within available  
14 appropriations, operate and staff such hotline during normal business

15 hours. The commissioner may partner with a nonprofit organization to  
16 carry out the provisions of this section. As used in this section, "COVID-  
17 19" means the respiratory disease designated by the World Health  
18 Organization on February 11, 2020, as coronavirus 2019, and any related  
19 mutation thereof recognized by said organization as a communicable  
20 respiratory disease.

21 Sec. 2. Section 32-9n of the general statutes is repealed and the  
22 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2022*):

23 (a) There is established within the Department of Economic and  
24 Community Development an Office of Small Business Affairs. Such  
25 office shall aid and encourage small business enterprises, particularly  
26 those owned and operated by minorities and other socially or  
27 economically disadvantaged individuals in Connecticut. As used in this  
28 section, "minority" means: (1) Black Americans, including all persons  
29 having origins in any of the Black African racial groups not of Hispanic  
30 origin; (2) Hispanic Americans, including all persons of Mexican, Puerto  
31 Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or  
32 origin, regardless of race; (3) all persons having origins in the Iberian  
33 Peninsula, including Portugal, regardless of race; (4) women; (5) Asian  
34 Pacific Americans and Pacific islanders; or (6) American Indians and  
35 persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North America  
36 and maintaining identifiable tribal affiliations through membership and  
37 participation or community identification.

38 (b) Said Office of Small Business Affairs shall: (1) Administer at least  
39 one regional office of the small business development center program  
40 within the Department of Economic and Community Development; (2)  
41 coordinate, with the director of the small business development center  
42 program, the flow of information within the technical and management  
43 assistance program within the Department of Economic and  
44 Community Development; (3) encourage Connecticut Innovations,  
45 Incorporated to grant loans to small businesses, particularly those  
46 owned and operated by minorities and other socially or economically  
47 disadvantaged individuals; (4) coordinate and serve as a liaison

48 between all federal, state, regional and municipal agencies and  
 49 programs affecting small business affairs; (5) administer any business  
 50 management training program established under section 32-352 or  
 51 section 32-355 as the Commissioner of Economic and Community  
 52 Development may determine; (6) provide a single point of contact for  
 53 small businesses seeking financial and technical assistance from the  
 54 state and quasi-public agencies; (7) coordinate all state funded revolving  
 55 loan funds used to assist small businesses; [and] (8) establish, in  
 56 cooperation with the Commissioner of Economic and Community  
 57 Development, and within available appropriations, an informational  
 58 web page with a list and links to all small business resources available  
 59 and post them in a conspicuous place on the department's web site; (9)  
 60 provide guidance to small businesses regarding infectious disease  
 61 mitigation strategies, including, but not limited to, strategies to mitigate  
 62 the spread of COVID-19; and (10) provide guidance to small businesses  
 63 regarding best practices for operating during a declared public health  
 64 emergency, pursuant to section 19a-131a, or civil preparedness  
 65 emergency, pursuant to section 28-9. The office shall update [this  
 66 information on its web site] the informational web page established  
 67 pursuant to subdivision (8) of this subsection on at least a quarterly  
 68 basis. As used in this subsection, "COVID-19" means the respiratory  
 69 disease designated by the World Health Organization on February 11,  
 70 2020, as coronavirus 2019, and any related mutation thereof recognized  
 71 by said organization as a communicable respiratory disease.

72 (c) On or after February 1, 2011, the Office of Small Business Affairs  
 73 shall compile a summary of all small business activities and programs  
 74 available and incorporate such summary into the report required  
 75 pursuant to section 32-1m.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2022	32-1v
Sec. 2	October 1, 2022	32-9n

***Statement of Purpose:***

To require the state-wide small business hotline and the Office of Small Business Affairs to provide guidance to small businesses regarding COVID-19 mitigation strategies and best practices for operating during a declared public health emergency or civil preparedness emergency.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*