

Small Business Resource Center

This Chamber web page is dedicated to increasing small business owners' awareness of the information and resources that are available locally and through the internet. This page will be updated on a regular basis as new information and resources are identified.

SCORE

SCORE "Counselors to America's Small Business" is a nonprofit association dedicated to educating entrepreneurs and the formation, growth and success of small business nationwide. SCORE is a resource partner with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). SCORE volunteers are real-world professionals with time-tested knowledge who donate thousands of hours annually to help small businesses succeed. Counselors are experts in such areas as accounting, law, finance, marketing, management and business plan preparation.

<http://www.scorebr.org> This website provides information about regional SCORE support.

Mandeville SCORE operates out of the St. Tammany Parish Library Business Support Office at the K-Mart Plaza, Rt. 190, Mandeville. Appointments can be made by calling 1-877-381-7130.

MEPOL

MEPOL (Manufacturing Extension Partnership of Louisiana) is part of the nationwide Manufacturing Extension Partnership of the National Institute of Standards and Technology. MEPOL provides each client with a thorough assessment of their business practices - from top management to production floor - to determine the best way for their company to transform into a more productive and cost effective unit.

For more information as to whether or not MEPOL can be a benefit to your business, go to their website at www.mepol.org.

NFIB

The National Federation of Independent Business is the leading small business association representing small and independent businesses. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization founded in 1943, NFIB represents the consensus views of its members in Washington and all 50 state capitals.

NFIB's mission is to promote and protect the right of its members to own, operate, and grow their businesses. By pooling the purchasing power of its members, NIFB gives members access to many business products and services – including healthcare and insurance – at discounted costs. For additional information about NFIB, go to their website at www.nfib.com.

TechAssistLA

TechAssistLA helps small businesses, entrepreneurs, and non-profits in the Katrina/Rita damaged zones of LA utilize technology to expand their markets, streamline business processes, improve their networks, and learn standard business software. TechAssistLA is a community project directed by the LA Technology Council. Businesses needing technology assistance are matched with a LTC member company that specializes in the area of technology they need. See their website for additional information at www.techassistla.com.

Retirement Plan Decision Making

Need assistance choosing a retirement solution for your small business? This DOL website provides retirement program assistance to small employers and accountants. www.dol.gov/ebsa/compliance_assistance.html#section7.

Workforce Development

Are you aware of the valuable workforce development initiatives currently operating in LA? One of these programs is called **WorkReady**. Employers can apply the program to their existing workforce or can use its results to target hiring standards. This program initially measures fundamental workplace skill levels using the Workkeys tool, by testing an individual's application on: Reading for Information; Applied Mathematics; Locating (graphical) Information; Applied Technology; Writing; Listening; Observation; and Teamwork. To learn more about Workforce Development programs, go to www.laworkforce.net.

LAWorks

Need training for your employees? Need help with workers' compensation? Need help with unemployment taxes? Need to find an employee? Check out the LA Works website as it has very helpful information at www.laworks.net/Businesses.asp.

US DOL Resources

Visit www.dol.gov/odep/programs/workforc.htm for information on the US Department of Labor's 2008 Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP), providing a searchable database showing qualifications of "highly motivated postsecondary students with disabilities who are eager to prove their abilities in the workplace through summer or permanent jobs" across the country.

IRS Support for Small Businesses

To get the latest information about events and new products and services for small businesses offered by the IRS, go to www.irs.gov/businesses/small/index.html.

To subscribe to the free subscription of e-News for Small Businesses, go to www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=154825,00.html.

L.R.S. Vocational Services

Employment Services

Pre-screening of applicants based on essential job requirements
On-site job trainer and support services
Job restructuring/work site adjustment
Accessibility survey of complete work site
Assistive technology; devices and specialized equipment to assist in job success
Follow-up services
Personnel Assistance
Recruiting
Affirmative action planning
Work force diversity consultation
Reasonable accommodation support
Employee assistance and/or advisory program
Financial Incentives
Job Retention

Minimize the cost of training new employees by maintaining valued workers who have become disabled through work-related injuries.

Business Tax Incentives

If you own or operate a business, you should be aware of two tax incentives for hiring workers with disabilities:

Deduction for Removal of Barriers (IRS Code Section 190)

You may deduct expenses for making a facility or vehicle used in your business more accessible to persons with disabilities.

Accessibility Credit (IRS Code Section 44)

An eligible small business which pays or incurs expenses for providing access to persons with disabilities is allowed a tax credit.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit

On-The-Job Training Grant

To contact L.R.S. Vocational Services visit: www.dss.state.la.us or Shane Boucher at sboucher@dss.state.la.us

Other websites of helpful information:

www.sba.gov/smallbusinessplanner/manage/technology/index.html

Internet and e-commerce resources

An online how-to guide on internet and e-commerce basics.

www.work.com

Technology resources by the non-profit California Small Business Education Foundation.
www.techforsmallbusiness.org

Intuit's online information and resources for small business owners.
<http://jumpup.intuit.com>

Microsoft's online, marketing and e-commerce tools.
www.smallbusiness.officelive.com