

# Economic Development Resource Guide

**OKLAHOMA**  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

2010 | [OKcommerce.gov](http://OKcommerce.gov)



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# Change is constant, and Oklahoma is all about positive change.

In today's competitive environment, Oklahoma continues adapting to shifts in the economic climate. The Oklahoma Department of Commerce is here to keep you ahead of the curve. Inside, you'll find anything and everything you need as an economic developer or community leader in Oklahoma.

- Business Funding and Incentives
- Rural Economic Development
- New and Small Business Support
- Workforce and Community Development

Included here are important names and contact information for each area of interest. As you go through this resource guide, you'll see our website ([OKcommerce.gov](http://OKcommerce.gov)) posted on almost every page. [OKcommerce.gov](http://OKcommerce.gov) will give you access to detailed items that can only be delivered on an interactive platform... things like our Service Provider Database and our Site Certification Program.

We believe the Oklahoma Department of Commerce can help your community attract, develop and retain businesses that improve the quality of life in Oklahoma.



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Despite the popularity of late-night infomercials promoting grant money for start-up businesses, the Oklahoma Department of Commerce is not aware of such funding for businesses. Typically, grant money is only available to assist non-profit organizations. Non-profit, organizations should start with [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

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# Business Funding

## Overview

Every day, hundreds of Oklahoma small businesses are paying salaries, providing services, creating products, buying and selling — across the street and around the globe. Small businesses survive based on access to appropriate financing. And, while there are many resources for financing available to small businesses in Oklahoma, the process can be complex and resources can be potentially difficult to access.

The references represented here provide an introduction and an overview for a wide variety of financial resources.

# Small Business Administration

## **SBA 7(A) Guaranty Loan Program**

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The Small Business Administration 7(a) loan is the most basic and most used type of loan in SBA business loan programs. Its name comes from section 7(a) of the Small Business Act, which authorizes the agency to provide business loans to American small businesses.

These loans are only available on a guaranty basis. This means they are provided by lenders who choose to structure their own loans by SBA requirements and who apply and receive a guaranty from SBA on a portion of this loan.

## **SBA Microloan Program**

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The SBA Microloan Program combines the resources and experience of the U.S. Small Business Administration with those of locally based nonprofit organizations to provide small loans and technical assistance to small businesses.

Under the Microloan Program, the SBA makes funds available to qualified nonprofit organizations, which act as intermediary lenders. Lenders use these funds to make loans of up to \$35,000 to new and existing small businesses. Intermediaries also provide management and technical assistance to help ensure success.

## **SBA Export Working Capital Guarantee Program**

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Under the program, the SBA backs up a business loan request with its repayment guaranty. The SBA guarantees up to \$1 million or 90 percent of the loan amount, whichever is less; offers exporters preliminary commitments that encourage lenders to provide credit; and offers a simplified application.

## **U.S. Small Business Administration Community Express Loan Program**

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This program is offered to pre-designated geographic areas serving mostly low and moderate income areas and new market small businesses. The program also includes technical and management assistance, which is designed to help increase the loan applicant's chances of success.

### ***Eligibility and application information:***

U.S. Small Business Administration  
Oklahoma City District Office  
Federal Building  
301 NW 6th St, Ste. 116  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102  
405-609-8000  
[www.sba.gov/ok](http://www.sba.gov/ok)

## **Oklahoma Small Business Development Centers**

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With a network of 15 centers located across the state, the Oklahoma Small Business Development centers (OSBDCs) provide high-quality, one-to-one business counseling, economic development assistance, and training to small business and entrepreneurs. Potential benefits from working with the OSBDC's:

- Business plan development and implementation assistance
- Increased profitability
- Management support
- Innovation advancement
- Government contract procurement assistance

Contact your local OSBDC: [www.osbdc.org](http://www.osbdc.org)

# U.S. Department of Agriculture Programs

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## **Intermediary Relending Program**

The Intermediary Re-lending Program (IRP) finances business facilities and community development projects in rural areas. To do this, the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) loans money to intermediaries. Intermediaries then re-lend funds for business and community development. Intermediaries establish revolving loan funds, with repayment creating more opportunity for more loans.

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## **Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants**

The Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants (REDLG) program makes direct zero-interest loans and grants to Rural Utilities Service (RUS) electric and telecommunication utilities that use the funds to provide financing for business and community development projects. Zero-interest loans are provided to finance a broad array of projects, including for-profit businesses.

Grants are provided to the RUS utility to establish a revolving loan fund to finance such purposes as community development assistance, education and training for economic development, medical care, telecommunications for education, job training or medical services, business incubators and technical assistance. Program funds can be used for value-added projects.

### **Contact**

Business and Community Programs  
100 USDA, Suite 108  
Stillwater, OK 74074  
Phone 405-742-1000  
Fax 405-742-1005  
[www.rurdev.usa.gov/ok](http://www.rurdev.usa.gov/ok)

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For a list of Intermediary Re-lending Program Lenders go to [www.OKcommerce.gov/bizfunds](http://www.OKcommerce.gov/bizfunds) and then click on U.S. Department of Agriculture Programs.

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# Rural Enterprises of Oklahoma, Inc.

## Small Business Lending

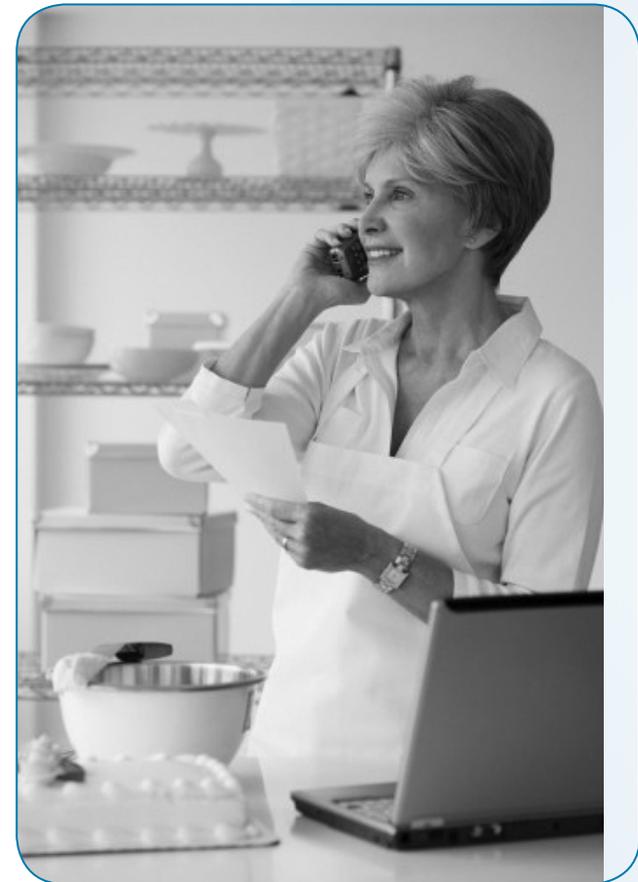
Rural Enterprises of Oklahoma, Inc. (REI) has evolved from the small business lending arena into a multi-faceted economic development organization. REI has become the model of study for effective economic development services.

- REI has offices in Alva, Durant, Oklahoma City and Tulsa.
- REI manages business incubators in 10 Oklahoma communities.
- Offers affordable housing opportunities for Oklahoma working families
- Provides international trade assistance to Oklahoma businesses
- Offers a variety of business lending programs
- Targets Oklahoma's women-owned businesses with services of the Women's Business Center from two locations, Durant and Oklahoma City.
- Offers an equipment lease/purchase program designed to assist small, rural manufacturers
- REI New Markets Investment, LLC administers the New Markets Tax Credit and Oklahoma State Tax Credit Programs to bring new investments into low-income communities

REI has a team of 36 economic development professionals who have been expanding Oklahoma's economy since 1982 through effective economic development services. REI has a statewide network of partners to help deliver its programs.

### Contact

REI Corporate Headquarters  
2912 Enterprise Blvd.  
Durant, OK 74701  
Phone 800-658-2823  
[www.ruralenterprises.com](http://www.ruralenterprises.com)



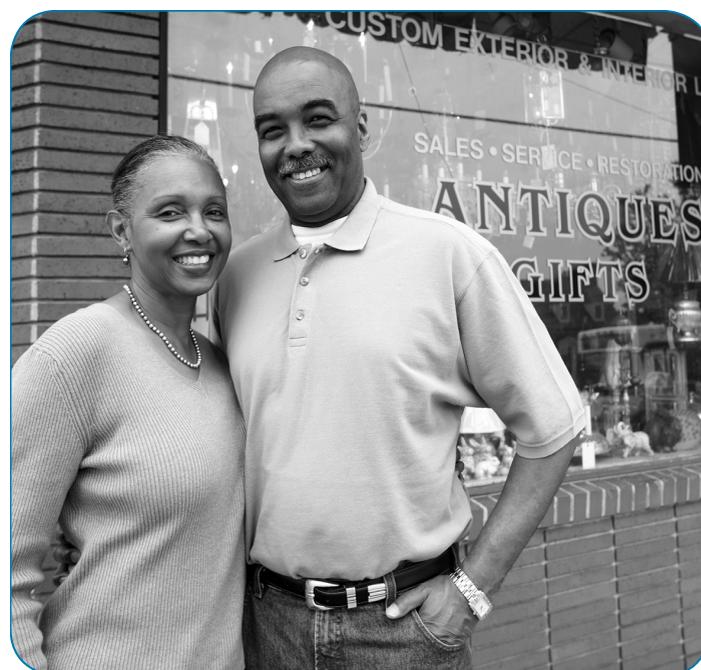
## Research & Development/ Venture Capital

### **Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology**

Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology (OCAST) works to grow Oklahoma's knowledge-based economy by building the infrastructure of expertise and equipment needed to conduct nationally competitive research and development in Oklahoma and stimulate Oklahoma firms applying and producing technology. OCAST implements programs and initiatives to impact the entire technology development pipeline from basic research through commercialization and application.

#### **Contact**

Oklahoma Center for the  
Advancement of Science & Technology  
755 Research Parkway, Suite 110  
Oklahoma City, OK 73104  
(866) 265-2215 or (405) 524-1357  
[www.ocast.state.ok.us](http://www.ocast.state.ok.us)



### **Innovation to Enterprise**

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Innovation to Enterprise, Inc. (i2E) is a private, not-for-profit Oklahoma corporation focused on wealth creation in Oklahoma by growing the technology-based entrepreneurial economy in Oklahoma. i2E was founded in 1997 and operates the following programs for OCAST.

- Oklahoma Technology Commercialization Center
- Seed Capital Fund
- Oklahoma Investment Forum
- Enterprise Oklahoma Venture Fund

#### **Contact**

i2E  
840 Research Parkway, Suite 250  
Oklahoma City, OK 73104  
800-337-6822  
[www.i2E.org](http://www.i2E.org)

### **Oklahoma Venture Forum**

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The Oklahoma Venture Forum is a non-profit group organized in Oklahoma City to encourage and promote economic and small business development through private enterprise. For membership details, use contact information below.

#### **Contact**

Oklahoma Venture Forum  
P.O. Box 20209  
Oklahoma City, OK 73156  
405-341-6545  
[www.ovf.org](http://www.ovf.org)

### **The Southwest Capital Conference**

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This conference has been one of the leading capital conferences in the nation. The SWCC offers a robust educational program for the entrepreneurial, private equity and service provider communities focused on the development of high growth companies. Additionally, companies are showcased to investors and business professionals from across the nation.

#### **Contact**

Oklahoma Investment Forum  
415 S Boston, Ste 800  
Tulsa, OK 74103  
918-584-8884  
[www.i2E.org](http://www.i2E.org)

### **Oklahoma Capital Investment Board**

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The Oklahoma Capital Investment Board (OCIB) supports investments in venture capital firms who will, in turn, make venture capital investments in Oklahoma businesses.

OCIB supports investment in funds ranging from early stage venture capital to subordinated debt. The Oklahoma Capital Investment Board is an instrumentality of the State of Oklahoma. The Board manages a \$100 million resource.

#### **Contact**

Oklahoma Capital Investment Board  
301 NW 63rd, Suite 520  
Oklahoma City, OK 73116  
405-848-9456  
[www.ocib.org](http://www.ocib.org)

### **Small Corporate Offering Registration**

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The Small Corporate Offering Registration (SCOR) is a securities offering program available to small corporations and limited liability companies. The program contemplates offerings that are exempt from federal registration under (1) Rule 504 of Regulation D, (2) Regulation A, or (3) Rule 147 of the Securities Act of 1933. Oklahoma is one of 42 states that allow SCOR offerings and the Pacific Stock Exchange lists SCOR securities under certain conditions.

#### **Contact**

Oklahoma Department of Securities  
First National Center, Suite 860  
120 North Robinson  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102  
405-280-7700  
[www.securities.state.ok.us](http://www.securities.state.ok.us)

### **U.S. Small Business Administration – Small Business Investment Companies**

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The Small Business Investment Company (SBIC) program is designed to fill the gap between the availability of venture capital and the needs of small businesses that are either starting or growing.

#### **Contact**

Chisolm Private Capital Partners  
211 North Robinson, Suite 1910  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102  
405-605-1111  
[www.ChisolmVC.com](http://www.ChisolmVC.com)

Council Oak Investment Corporation  
101 North Broadway, Suite 400  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102  
405-218-4696

First United Venture Capital Corporation  
1400 West Main Street  
Durant, OK 74701  
580-920-4907

U.S. Small Business Administration - Oklahoma City  
District Office  
Federal Building  
301 NW 6th St, Ste. 116  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102  
405-609-8000  
[www.sba.gov/ok](http://www.sba.gov/ok)

# Import/Export Resources

## **Overseas Private Investment Corporation**

Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) helps U.S. businesses invest overseas, fosters economic development in new and emerging markets, complements the private sector in managing the risks associated with foreign direct investment, and supports U.S. foreign policy. OPIC provides financing to ventures involving significant equity and/or management participation by U.S. businesses. Loans to qualifying businesses can be tailored to meet the specific needs of overseas operations.

### ***Overseas Private Investment Corporation Political Risk Insurance***

OPIC Political Risk Insurance provides the peace of mind necessary to pursue opportunities in emerging markets.

### **Contact**

Overseas Private Investment Corporation  
Attn: Small Business Center  
1100 New York Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20527  
800-225-5722  
[www.opic.gov](http://www.opic.gov)

## **Export-Import Bank of the United States Export Credit Insurance**

The insurance covers commercial losses due to insolvency, bankruptcy and default at 95 percent; and political losses due to war, revolution, cancellation of an import or export license, currency inconvertibility at 100 percent. There is no first-loss deductible.

### ***Fixed-Rate Term Financing for International Buyers***

Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank assists exporters by guaranteeing term financing to creditworthy international buyers, both private and public sector, for purchases of U.S. goods and services. With Ex-Im Bank's loan guarantee, international buyers are able to obtain competitive term financing from lenders when financing is not available or there are no economically viable interest rates on terms over one to two years.

### ***Working Capital Guarantees***

Ex-Im Bank's working capital financing enables U.S. exporters to obtain loans to produce or buy goods or services for export. These working capital loans, made by commercial lenders and backed by the Ex-Im guarantee, provide exporters with the liquidity to accept new business, grow international sales and compete more effectively in the international marketplace.

### **Contact**

Houston Regional Office  
Export-Import Bank  
1880 South Dairy Ashford II, Suite 585  
Houston, TX 77077  
281-721-0470  
[www.exim.gov](http://www.exim.gov)

### **SBA Export Working Capital Guarantee Program**

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Under the program, the SBA backs up a business loan request with its repayment guaranty. The SBA guarantees up to \$1 million or 90 percent of the loan amount, whichever is less; offers exporters preliminary commitments that encourage lenders to provide credit; and offers a simplified application.

#### **Contact**

U.S. Small Business Administration  
Oklahoma City District Office  
Federal Building  
301 NW 6th St. Ste. 116  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102  
405-609-8000  
[www.sba.gov/ok](http://www.sba.gov/ok)

## Unsecured Financing

### **Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development Infrastructure Financing**

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The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) federal program administered by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce uses publicly owned and maintained infrastructure.

Eligible projects to be financed by this program are publicly owned and maintained improvements that will provide basic infrastructure services to a new or expanding business. At least 51 percent of the new jobs must be made available to low and moderate income individuals.

Such improvements may include, but are not limited to, water, wastewater, transportation improvements, and rehabilitation and new construction of publicly owned industrial buildings.

Communities fall under one of two financing options. Infrastructure that supports an existing business can qualify up to a \$500,000 grant maximum. Infrastructure that supports a new business to the State of Oklahoma can qualify up to a \$1 million grant maximum.

#### **Contact**

Scott Myers  
Oklahoma Department of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[scott\\_myers@OKcommerce.gov](mailto:scott_myers@OKcommerce.gov)



## U.S. Small Business Administration 504 Loan Program

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The federal government, through the Small Business Administration (SBA), provides permanent financing for companies with its 504 loan program. Certified Development Companies (CDCs), authorized by the SBA, administer the program. The 504 loan program is a long-term financing tool for economic development within a community. The program provides growing businesses with long-term, fixed-rate financing for major fixed assets, such as land and buildings. A CDC works with the SBA and private sector lenders to provide financing to small businesses within its specific geographic area.

Proceeds from 504 loans must be used for fixed asset projects such as purchasing land and improvements, including existing buildings; grading; street improvements; utilities; parking lots and landscaping; construction of new facilities; or modernizing, renovating or converting existing facilities; or purchasing machinery and equipment. The 504 program cannot be used for working capital or inventory, consolidating or repaying debt, or refinancing.

### Contact

U.S. Small Business Administration (or your local Certified Development Company)  
Oklahoma City District Office  
Federal Building, Ste. 116  
301 NW 6th St  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102  
405-609-8000

[www.sba.gov/ok/financing](http://www.sba.gov/ok/financing)

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## SBA's 504 Certified Development Companies

### Metro Area Development Corporation

6412 N Santa Fe, Suite C  
Oklahoma City, OK 73116  
405-424-5181

### Rural Enterprises of Oklahoma, Inc.

P.O. Box 1335  
Durant, OK 74702  
580-924-5094

### SWODA Development Corporation

P. O. Box 569  
Burns Flat, OK 73624  
580-562-4882

### Small Business Capital Corporation

15 W Sixth St., Suite 1300  
Tulsa, OK 74119-5406  
918-584-7888

### Tulsa Economic Development Corporation

907 South Detroit Avenue, Suite 1001  
Tulsa, OK 74120  
918-585-8332

### Verd-Ark-Ca Development Corporation

1700 W Broadway  
Muskogee, OK 74401  
918-683-4634

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## Secured Financing

### **Bureau of Indian Affairs Loan Guaranty Fund**

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) provides guaranteed/insured loans to Federally Recognized Indian Tribal Governments, Native American Organizations, and individual American Indians in obtaining financing from private sources to promote business development initiatives on or near Federally Recognized Indian Reservations.

Loans may be used to finance commercial, industrial, agricultural, or business activities organized for profit. Loan guarantees to private lenders will only be provided if funds otherwise would be unavailable to the borrower. Funds may not be used for speculation. The financial assistance must be used on or near an Indian Reservation.

#### **Contact**

Bureau of Indian Affairs Area Credit Office  
P.O. Box 8002  
Muskogee, OK 74402-8002  
Phone 918-781-4622

### **Oklahoma Agriculture Enhancement & Diversification Program**

Oklahoma Agriculture Enhancement & Diversification Program (OAEDP) is a program designed to develop or improve uses for agricultural products, expand the state's production of value-added products and to encourage diversified farming. Interest free loans and grants are available through four program areas: Marketing Utilization Loan, Cooperative Marketing Loan, Basic and Applied Research Loan/Grant and Farm Diversification Grant.

#### **Marketing Utilization Loan**

Can be used to assist in the development or implementation of sound domestic or foreign marketing plans for Oklahoma agricultural products, by-products, or new or better uses for existing agricultural products by the financing of marketing feasibility studies, business plans and test marketing.

#### **Cooperative Marketing Loan**

Are available to entities or individuals wishing to work together to develop or establish production, processing or marketing of agricultural products. The purpose of this category is to provide funding for promoting productivity, providing added value to agricultural products stimulating and fostering agricultural diversification and encouraging processing innovations.

#### **Basic & Applied Research Loan/Grant**

For business creation, expansion or research which shall likely lead to a marketable product. Proposals should focus research efforts on use and processing of agricultural products and by-products in Oklahoma.

#### **Farm Diversification Grant**

Can be used for projects dealing with the diversification of existing family farms or ranches to nontraditional crops, livestock, or on-farm value-added processing of agricultural commodities.

#### **Contact**

Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food & Forestry  
Market Development Services  
P.O. Box 528804  
Oklahoma City, OK 73152  
405-522-5563  
[www.oda.state.ok.us](http://www.oda.state.ok.us)

## Economic Development Administration

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) oversees multiple programs offering development assistance to targeted communities that meet specific criteria for economic distress. These programs include the Planning and Assistance Program, the Economic Adjustment Assistance Title IX Revolving Loan Fund, and grants for Public Works and Development Facilities, Planning Assistance, Technology Assistance, and Trade Adjustment Assistance.

### Contact

Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG)

21 E. Main Street, Suite 100

Oklahoma City, OK 73104-2405

John G. Johnson, Executive Director  
(405) 234-2264

Counties: Canadian, Cleveland, Logan, Oklahoma

Association of South Central Oklahoma Governments (ASCOG)

802 Main Street

Duncan, OK

Blaine Smith, Executive Director

(580) 252-0595

Counties: Caddo, Comanche, Cotton, Grady, Jefferson, McClain, Stephens, Tillman

Central Oklahoma Economic Development District (COEDD)

400 N Bell

Shawnee, OK 74801

Gregory Clifton, Executive Director

(405) 273-6410

Counties: Hughes, Lincoln, Okfuskee, Pawnee, Payne, Pottawatomie, Seminole

Eastern Oklahoma Development District (EODD)

1012 North 38th Street

Muskogee, OK 74402

(918) 682-7891

Counties: Adair, Cherokee, McIntosh, Muskogee, Okmulgee, Sequoyah, Wagoner

Grand Gateway Economic Development Association (GGEDA)

P.O. Drawer B

Big Cabin, OK 74332-0502

Ed Crone, Executive Director

(918) 783-5793

Counties: Craig, Delaware, Mayes, Nowata, Ottawa, Rogers, Washington

Indian Nations Council of Governments (INCOG)

200 West Fifth Street, Suite 800

Tulsa, OK 74103-4236

Rich Briere, Executive Director

(918) 584-7526

Counties: Creek, Osage, Tulsa, Wagoner

Kiamichi Economic Development Organization (KEDDO)

P.O. Box 638

Wilburton, OK 74578-0638

(918) 465-2367

Chester Dennis, Executive Director

Counties: Choctaw, Haskell, Latimer, Leflore,

McCurtain, Pittsburg, Pushmataha

Northern Oklahoma Development Association (NODA)

2901 North Van Buren

Enid, OK 73701

(580) 237-4810

Larry Tipps, Executive Director

Counties: Alfalfa, Blaine, Garfield, Grant, Kay,

Kingfisher, Major, Noble,

Oklahoma Economic Development Association (OEDA)

P.O. Box 668

Beaver, OK 73932-0668

(580) 625-4531

Mike Bostic, Executive Director

Counties: Beaver, Cimarron, Dewey, Ellis, Harper,

Texas, Woods, Woodward

Southern Oklahoma Development Association (SODA)

224 West Evergreen, Suite 202

Durant, OK 74702

(580) 920-1388

Wes Bowman, Executive Director

Counties: Atoka, Bryan, Carter, Coal, Garvin,

Johnston, Love, Marshall, Murray, Pontotoc

South West Oklahoma Development Association (SWODA)

Sooner Drive, Building 420

Burns Flat, OK 73624

(580) 562-4882

Gary Gorshing, Executive Director

Counties: Beckham, Custer, Greer, Harmon, Jackson,

Kiowa, Roger Mills, Washita

### **Oklahoma Capital Access Program**

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The Oklahoma Capital Investment Board supports investments that catalyze new sources of equity and near-equity capital for Oklahoma business. The board manages a \$100 million resource. Through its venture capital program, the board supports investments in private, professionally managed venture capital firms that will commit to building an enduring presence within the state.

Through its Oklahoma Capital Access Program (CAP), the board provides credit insurance to banks to help them stretch to make loans to Oklahoma businesses that might not otherwise be made.

#### **Contact**

Oklahoma Capital Investment Board  
301 NW 63rd St., Ste. 520  
Oklahoma City, OK 73116  
405-848-9456  
[www.ocib.org](http://www.ocib.org)

### **Oklahoma Industrial Finance Authority**

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The Oklahoma Industrial Finance Authority (OIFA) provides financing for real estate and equipment. Its primary purpose is to assist industrial development in the state by increasing employment. Businesses may contact the Oklahoma Industrial Finance Authority to explore financing available to them under these guidelines:

- \$5 million limit
- Fixed asset collateral (land, buildings and equipment)
- Up to 15-year term
- Fixed rate terms
- Loan recipient can be private or public entity
- Expansions or relocations
- Bank participation encouraged
- Below market rates for tax-exempt qualified projects

#### **Contact**

Oklahoma Finance Authorities  
5900 N Classen Ct.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73118  
405-842-1145

### **Oklahoma Linked Deposit Loan Programs**

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The Oklahoma Treasurer administers the Linked Deposit Loan Programs, created in 1987 to provide special, low-interest loans to eligible family farmers and small businesses.

This is an economic development tool that reduces debt service costs to Oklahoma small businesses. The program helps preserve existing jobs as well as helping create jobs and business expansion. It can be used for a broad range of business and types of industry.

### **Oklahoma Agriculture Linked Deposit Loan Programs**

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This economic development program is aimed at reducing debt service costs to Oklahoma farmers and ranchers. The linked deposit loans are available to at-risk farm or ranch operations or to alternative agricultural product operations who are residents of Oklahoma and whose business operation is located in this state.

#### **Contact**

State Treasurer's Office  
2300 N Lincoln Blvd, Room 217  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105  
405-522-4235  
[www.ok.gov/treasurer](http://www.ok.gov/treasurer)



# Development Bonds

## General Obligation Limited Tax Bonds

Many Oklahoma counties and cities have voted approval of General Obligation Limited Tax Bonds (GOLTBs) for industrial development. These units of government are limited to the amount that could be retired by a special tax levy of not more than five mills on the assessed dollar valuation of all taxable real and personal property in that county or city.

The proceeds for GOLTBs are generally used to acquire or build a facility for manufacturing and industrial projects. Lease income from the facility is used to amortize the bonds.

### Contact

Local Industrial Development Authority, or  
Oklahoma Department of Commerce  
Business Division  
900 N. Stiles  
Oklahoma City, OK 73104  
800-879-6552

## Conduit Program

The Oklahoma Development Finance Authority's Conduit Program was established to provide any entity (public or private) an avenue to issue revenue bonds, rates, certificates of participation or other evidence of indebtedness. Funds generated by such sale are then available for loans to qualified borrowers. In most instances the Conduit Program provides an entity with more favorable rates than they normally could obtain on their own. The program utilizes ODFA's market presence to provide access to Wall Street, has no limits on dollar amount and can be for tax-exempt or taxable obligations.

### Contact

Oklahoma Finance Authorities  
5900 N Classen Court  
Oklahoma City, OK 73118  
405-842-1145

## Private Activity Bond Allocation Program

Private activity bonds are available to state and local finance authorities for allocation to manufacturers and farmers in addition to housing authorities, student loan programs and other programs. These types of bonds are defined in two ways: Private activity bonds are any bonds of which more than 10 percent of the proceeds is to be used in a trade or business of anyone other than a governmental unit, and which is to be directly or indirectly repaid, or secured by revenues from, a private trade or business. Also, private activity bonds are any bonds in which an amount exceeding 5 percent or \$5 million – whichever is less – of the proceeds is to be used for loans to any person or persons other than a governmental unit.

### Contact

State Bond Advisor  
5900 N Classen Court  
Oklahoma City, OK 73118  
405-602-3100  
[www.ok-bonds.state.ok.us](http://www.ok-bonds.state.ok.us)

# Business Incentives



## Overview

The State of Oklahoma has been recognized nationally for its outstanding business location and job growth incentives. **Qualifying businesses can choose between two primary business incentive options for newly locating or expanding companies — outlined as Option 1 or Option 2.** Additionally, a wide range of tax credits, refunds, and workforce training benefits are available to help a company succeed. A comprehensive overview of Oklahoma's business incentives can be found in the Oklahoma Business Incentives and Tax Guide [www.OKcommerce.gov/incentives](http://www.OKcommerce.gov/incentives).

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For a customized incentive analysis, call 800-879-6552 and ask for Martin Roberts.

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## Quality Jobs

### **Option 1:**

Oklahoma's Quality Jobs incentive targets manufacturers and certain service industries that have a new payroll investment of \$2.5 million or more to receive a quarterly cash payment of up to 5 percent of new taxable payroll for up to 10 years. A lower payroll threshold is available for certain food processing and research and development projects or as a result of locating in targeted areas. Qualifying average wage requirements will vary among counties.

Effective with new legislation on July 1, 2009, a Prime Contractor with a Federal Contract is eligible to participate in the Quality Jobs Program receiving benefits not only from jobs and wages created at the Prime, but also in locations where work is passed from the Prime to a subcontractor. The Prime is paid at the fully reimbursable labor rate specified in the Federal Contract, up to 2% of the new wages created. Other Quality Jobs Program performance requirements apply.

### ***Small Employer Quality Jobs Seven-Year - Cash Incentive***

The Small Employer Quality Jobs incentive allows qualifying small businesses (90 or fewer employees) that are creating new direct jobs within one year to receive up to a 5 percent cash-back incentive (for up to seven years) to locate or expand in Oklahoma. The qualifying average wage requirement will vary among counties.

### ***Option 2: Investment/New Jobs Tax Credit***

Targeted primarily to manufacturing companies, the Investment/New Jobs Tax Credit incentive allows a five-year tax credit on the greater of 1 percent per year of investment in qualified new depreciable property or a credit of \$500 per new job. These incentives double in an enterprise zone to 2 percent of new investment or \$1,000 per new job. Additional sales tax refunds and/or income tax exemptions/credits may apply.

### ***Additional Incentives Available with Options 1 and 2***

For comprehensive details on the following incentives, go to [OKcommerce.gov/incentives](http://OKcommerce.gov/incentives) or follow the individual links for more information.

- Five-year ad valorem tax exemption
- No-cost or low-cost customized employee training
- Sales tax exemptions
- Freeport inventory benefits
- Industrial access road assistance (limited under Option 1)
- Foreign Trade Zones
- American Indian Land tax credits
- Opportunity and enterprise zones
- Opportunity fund
- State and local financing programs

### ***Option 3: Quality Jobs Program & Investment Tax Credit***

Beginning January 1, 2010, a company may pursue participation in both the Quality Jobs Program and the Investment Tax Credit. The qualifying investment must be \$40 million or more, and wages paid in the Quality Jobs Program must be at \$35,131 or higher. The credit equals 2% of the qualifying investment in Capital Expenditures.

### ***Disclaimer***

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Don't pay someone to help you with your Quality Jobs application; the Oklahoma Department of Commerce provides assistance for FREE!

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### **Quality Jobs Application Deadline**

Applications accepted throughout the year, anytime prior to new hires.

### ***A Simple and Easy Application Process***

- 1) Contact an Oklahoma Quality Jobs representative at the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, 800-879-6552, to request a preliminary cost-benefit analysis. This analysis estimates the payments that a project may be eligible to obtain.
- 2) If your company wishes to pursue application for the program, you then submit a formal application to the Oklahoma Department of Commerce. Commerce determines eligibility for the initial contract and makes the formal contract offer to qualifying companies.

### ***For Assistance***

Technical assistance regarding program concepts, eligible companies, application guidelines and other information pertaining to the Quality Jobs Program is available upon request and encouraged.

### ***Contact***

Martin Roberts  
Oklahoma Department of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[martin\\_roberts@OKcommerce.gov](mailto:martin_roberts@OKcommerce.gov)



# Opportunity And Enterprise Zones

Businesses located in one of Oklahoma's Opportunity or Enterprise Zones may receive enhanced financial incentives for stimulating economic expansion in rural and disadvantaged communities.

## What are Opportunity and Enterprise Zones?

**Opportunity Zones** are those census tracts in which, according to the most recent federal decennial census, at least 30 percent of the residents have an annual gross household income from all sources below the poverty guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Opportunity Zones are generally the only areas in Oklahoma, Tulsa, and Cleveland counties where companies may qualify to use the Small Employer Quality Jobs Incentive Act.

If a company is locating in an Opportunity Zone and meets the other requirements to qualify for the Oklahoma Quality Jobs Program Act, then it does not have to also meet the new wage threshold introduced in 2003. This legislation requires, in general, that salaries of the new direct jobs must equal the average county wage or the cap which renews annually, whichever is lower (Refer to the Quality Jobs Guidelines for the latest figures). As well, these companies receive an automatic 5 percent benefit level.

**Enterprise Zones** can be designated in disadvantaged counties, cities or portions of cities. The Oklahoma Department of Commerce designates Enterprise Zones and publishes lists of eligible counties, cities and census tracts.

## Bottom-Line Benefits

Businesses locating in an Opportunity Zone are not subject to the annualized average wage requirement in the standard Quality Jobs Program. Within the Small Employer Quality Jobs Program, only businesses in Oklahoma and Tulsa counties located within an Opportunity Zone are eligible to apply.

Businesses located in an Enterprise Zone are eligible to receive double the Investment/New Jobs

Tax Credit. Additionally, companies obtaining ad valorem exemptions from local taxing entities may be exempted for up to six years, rather than five.

### Contact

Steve Barker  
Oklahoma Department  
of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[steve\\_barker@OKcommerce.gov](mailto:steve_barker@OKcommerce.gov)



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To see maps of all Opportunity and Enterprise Zones, go to:  
[www.OKcommerce.gov/incentives](http://www.OKcommerce.gov/incentives)

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## New Market Tax Credits

Three Oklahoma organizations have been selected as eligible Community Development Entities (CDEs) for purposes of the New Markets Tax Credits on behalf of the U.S. Department of Treasury. The CDEs are the REI New Markets Investment, LLC; Meta Fund, Inc.; and New Markets Redevelopment LP.

Eligible investors in these organizations may qualify for federal income tax credits when the organizations invest in underserved low-income communities. The credits are 5 percent of investment for the first three years of the credit and 6 percent for the last four years of the credit, for a total of 39 percent of investment over the seven years of credit period.

**Contact:**

Cherokee Nation Businesses Economic  
Development Company  
777 West Cherokee Street  
Catoosa, OK 74105  
918-384-7774

Meta Fund, Inc.  
2225 N May Avenue  
Oklahoma City, OK 73107  
405-949-0001  
[info@metafund.org](mailto:info@metafund.org),

New Markets Redevelopment LP  
5801 N Broadway Extension, Suite 120  
Oklahoma City, OK 73118  
405-842-0100



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# Training For Industry Program

Consistently ranked as one of the nation's leading workforce training incentives, Oklahoma's Training for Industry Program (TIP) is a low- or no-cost way for new or growing qualifying companies that create jobs to get a skilled, focused, and motivated workforce.

Highly trained professionals deliver customized technical, managerial, and general workplace skills through a network of technology centers across the state.

## **Totally Customized**

Every business is different. That's why flexibility is key to meeting your specific start-up requirements. This program offers the freedom and flexibility to deliver the training you need to ensure a skilled workforce.

## **World-Class System**

TIP can be delivered at your site or one of 56 technology center campuses across the state. These are modern, state-of-the-art facilities with up-to-date equipment and knowledgeable, business-savvy instructors.

## **Technical Skills and More**

Employees need much more than basic technical skills to ensure your success. That's why Career Tech also covers everything from company orientation to customer service, software expertise to inventory management, supervisory development to ISO, SPC and process improvement, team and interpersonal skills to safety.

## **Long-Term Relationship**

TIP is just the beginning of a long-term relationship. Career Tech also provides no cost/low cost ongoing upgrade training to keep your employees on the leading edge. Each year, nearly 3,000 Oklahoma employers take advantage of this resource.

## **Example programs include:**

- LEAN practices
- Six Sigma
- Supply chain management
- High-performance work systems
- Strategic planning
- Team training
- Project management

## **Contact**

Scott Smith  
CareerTech  
800-879-6552  
[scott\\_smith@OKcommerce.gov](mailto:scott_smith@OKcommerce.gov)



## **Disclaimer**

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# Foreign Trade Zones

If you conduct International business, locating your business in one of Oklahoma's four Foreign Trade Zones will help you save money and take advantage of efficiencies in customs procedures. In addition to our strategic location in the geographic center of the U.S., Oklahoma offers an expansive transportation system and state-of-the-art industrial parks ideal for businesses importing and warehousing, manufacturing, or assembling with imported goods.

## Oklahoma's Four Foreign Trade Zones

### FTZ 164

The Port of Muskogee, located on the McClellan Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System, provides high-capacity barge, rail, and truck services. The Port is currently constructing the largest state-of-the-art marina providing in part, docking facilities for both domestic and international vessels.

For Port of Muskogee Assistance: Scott Robinson, 918-682-7886, [www.muskogeeport.com](http://www.muskogeeport.com).

### FTZ 53

The Tulsa Port of Catoosa, also on the McClellan Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System, provides rail, barge and truck transportation services from Oklahoma to ports through out the world.

For Tulsa Port of Catoosa Assistance: Bob Portiss, 918-266-2291, [www.tulsaport.com](http://www.tulsaport.com).

### FTZ 106

The Port Authority at Will Rogers International Airport of the Greater Oklahoma City Area is the governing board and Oklahoma's largest Foreign Trade Zone, having responsibility for a 42-county service area in central and western Oklahoma. For Greater Oklahoma City Area Zone Assistance: Matthew S. Weaver, 405-623-5335, [foreigntradezone106.org](http://foreigntradezone106.org)

### FTZ 227

The International Business Park in Durant is a thriving 320-acre park, serving southern and southeastern Oklahoma and Texas. Interstate Hwy 35, the primary trunk of the NAFTA Super Highway Systems, lies just 45 miles west of the zone.

For International Business Park in Durant Assistance: Joy C. Rambo, 800-658-2823.

## Foreign Trade Zones



# American Indian Land Tax Credits

Two-thirds of Oklahoma, because of its unique Native American heritage, qualifies for special federal tax treatment. Businesses locating or expanding in these areas benefit by accelerated depreciation of investment and by employment tax credits when employing tribal members or their spouses.

## Benefits

- Accelerated Federal Property Depreciation Schedule
- Federal Employment Tax Credits of up to \$4,000 per qualifying employee per year
- Savings of up to 35 percent to 40 percent in depreciation of equipment

## Contact:

Martin Roberts  
Oklahoma Department  
of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[martin\\_roberts@OKcommerce.gov](mailto:martin_roberts@OKcommerce.gov)



## Disclaimer:

This incentive is approved annually by the U.S. Congress. Please check [OKcommerce.gov/incentives](http://OKcommerce.gov/incentives) for availability.

# Rural Economic Development

## Overview

Developing the economies of our rural communities represents a crucial part of raising the overall standard of living and economic viability of our state. The Oklahoma Department of Commerce offers a wide range of programs, services, and resources for our rural businesses and communities. Through the Rural Action Partnership Program, the Commerce Rural Development Team can help communities recruit, retain, and expand businesses; help entrepreneurs and innovators turn ideas into marketable products and services; secure funds for community development projects such as a new senior center or water treatment plant, and much more.



# Rural Action Partnership Program

The Rural Action Partnership Program (RAPP) fosters healthy and sustainable rural communities through small business retention and expansion, business recruitment, entrepreneurial development, and the development of regional economic development partnerships.

As the facilitator of this effort, the Oklahoma Department of Commerce is able to offer a wide range of programs and services to help rural communities grow:

- Business retention and expansion programs
- Entrepreneurial education
- Value-added production opportunities
- Strategic planning and community development programs
- Site location and business recruitment analysis
- Workforce development programs
- Regional economic development partnerships

## Rural Action Partnership Program Partners

- Governor's Council for Workforce & Economic Development
- Oklahoma Employment Security Commission
- Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Department
- Oklahoma Department of Transportation
- Oklahoma Department of Agriculture
- Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality
- Oklahoma Resource Conservation and Development
- Oklahoma Association of Regional Councils
- Oklahoma State University Extension
- USDA Rural Development
- Higher Education
- Oklahoma CareerTech
- Rural Enterprises of Oklahoma, Inc.
- U.S. Small Business Administration
- Oklahoma Small Business Development Centers
- State Chamber

- Oklahoma Business Roundtable
- Oklahoma Rural Development Council
- Oklahoma Center for Science and Technology
- i2E
- Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance

## Rural Development Specialists

The Oklahoma Department of Commerce Rural Development Specialists coordinate the various programs and services that comprise the Rural Action Partnership Program. The specialists are regionally located across the state and work closely with our partners to facilitate the formation of regional economic development partnerships throughout the state.

Rural Development Specialists provide a wide variety of expertise and assistance to communities, including:

- Business retention and expansion programs
- Entrepreneur development
- Asset and natural resource mapping
- Industry and workforce support
- Industry targeting
- Help with business incentives
- Community and economic development

Contact the Rural Development Specialist in your area today to learn how we can help.

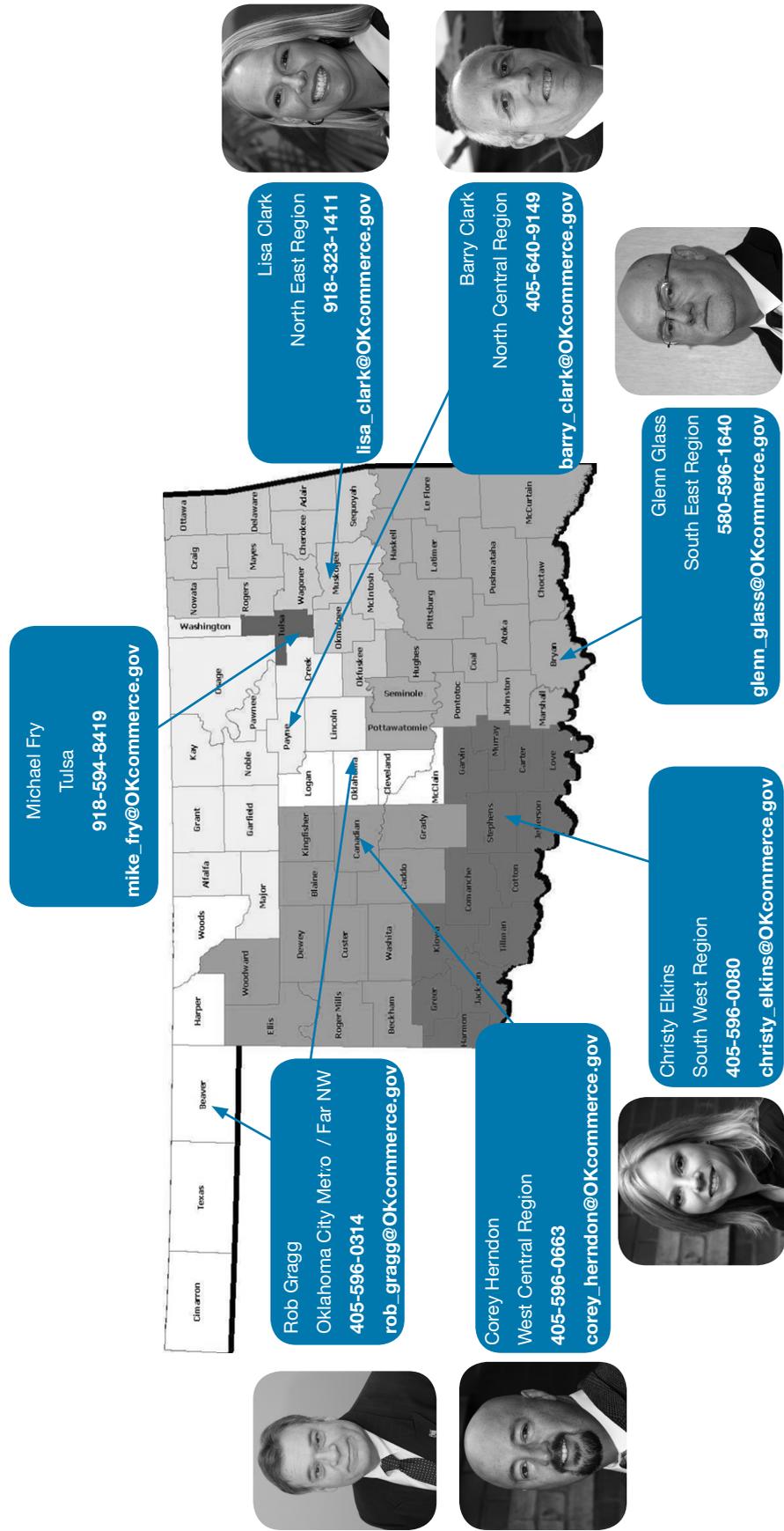
[www.OKcommerce.gov/rural](http://www.OKcommerce.gov/rural)

### Contact:

Rob Gragg,  
Oklahoma Department  
of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[rob\\_gragg@OKcommerce.gov](mailto:rob_gragg@OKcommerce.gov)



# Rural Development Specialists



## Regional Partnerships

When communities and/or counties come together for a common economic development effort, all will gain much more than if they went at it alone. Many Oklahoma communities are starting to recognize the value of regional partnerships.

Rural Development Specialists will help communities that are not currently in a regional partnership identify potential partners and facilitate the formation of those alliances by leveraging existing resources and providing incentives for regional economic development initiatives.

### Advantages of Regional Partnerships

- More efficient use of pooled resources
- More effective marketing of larger workforce, site locations, financial incentives, and capital formation
- Broader array of experience, contacts, skill sets to draw upon
- Expanded tourism attractions to promote

For more information, go to [OKcommerce.gov/rural](http://OKcommerce.gov/rural).

### Executive Pulse Business Intelligence/Retention System

This system facilitates the retention of existing businesses and jobs by encouraging economic, community and workforce development organizations to work together.

### Service Provider Database [OKcommerce.gov/spd](http://OKcommerce.gov/spd)

This online database gives communities, individuals, and businesses the ability to search and find local government and public sector service providers in the areas of business financing; training and education; general business services, start-up and entrepreneur assistance; government and licensing agencies; community development resources; information resources; economic development organizations; and association and membership groups. Users can search based on category, keyword, or geographical service area.

**Contact:**

Rob Gragg,  
Oklahoma Department  
of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[rob\\_gragg@OKcommerce.gov](mailto:rob_gragg@OKcommerce.gov)



# Business Recruiting

The Oklahoma Department of Commerce promotes businesses wanting to relocate or expand operations. Through the Fast Forward team, Commerce helps coordinate with state and federal agencies and local communities to reduce red tape and bring site selection projects in on-time and within budget. If your community needs assistance with business recruiting, the Oklahoma Fast Forward economic development team can help with the following:

- Recruitment and expansion assistance
- Connect with site consultants
- Site location and business recruitment analysis

## Industry Targets

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- Aerospace
- Energy
- Weather
- Biotechnology
- Logistics
- Manufacturing
- Business Services
- Value-Added Agriculture

## Find It FAST!

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Check out [OKcommerce.gov](http://OKcommerce.gov) to find the information you need or call the Fast Forward Team at 800-879-6552 for personal assistance.

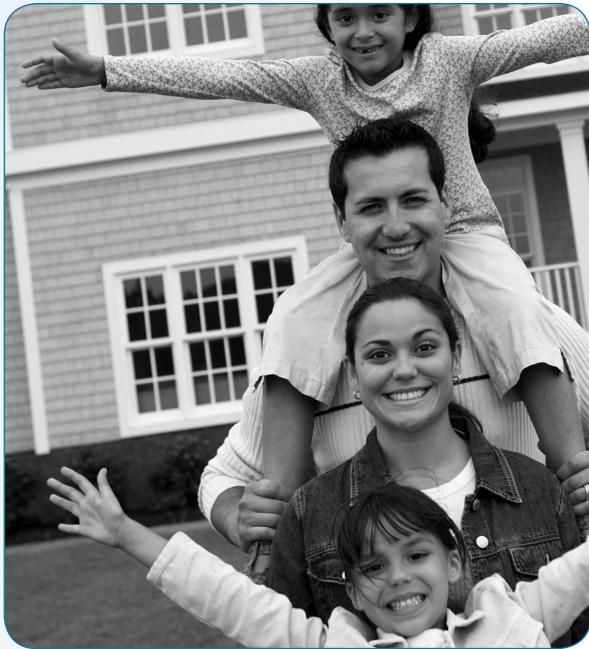
- Incentives
- Buildings & Sites
- Demographic Data
- Workforce Data
- Target Industries
- Community Profiles
- Workforce Training
- Major Employers
- State Chambers and ED Organizations
- Recent News
- Sooner ED News



### **Contact:**

Fast Forward Team  
Oklahoma Department of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[OklahomaFastForward@OKcommerce.gov](mailto:OklahomaFastForward@OKcommerce.gov)

# Community Resources



## Overview

The Oklahoma Department of Commerce is responsible for numerous programs that help communities raise the per capita income and improve the quality of life for local residents. Community Development Block Grants assist with vital infrastructure issues. Funding for programs that improve the lives of low-income residents is provided to Community Action Agencies throughout the state. The State Energy Office supports renewable energy and energy efficiency programs across the state. Contact the Community Development division today at 800-879-6552 or [info@OKcommerce.gov](mailto:info@OKcommerce.gov) to learn how we can help your community.

# Oklahoma's Site Certification Program

The Oklahoma Department of Commerce, in partnership with PSO and OG&E launched Site Ready, Oklahoma's site certification program for new investment and retention of expanding industry in the State of Oklahoma.

As businesses attempt to minimize risk, locations with shovel-ready sites emerge as the top choices. A statewide site certification program that assures a quality site available in minimal time not only provides site selectors with the information they need to make appropriate decisions, it also places Oklahoma in a position to maximize economic development opportunities.

The purpose of Site Ready is to place Oklahoma in a position to further capitalize on economic development opportunities. With an inventory of sites that are certified for immediate investment and development, Oklahoma will proactively serve the needs of businesses.

In addition, Site Ready helps prepare Oklahoma communities to accommodate new business prospect inquiries. By going through the application process, communities will have the opportunity to learn what the relevant needs for various projects are and how to strategically plan to address those needs.

**Contact:**

Jeremy Zeller  
Oklahoma Department  
of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[jeremy\\_zeller@OKcommerce.gov](mailto:jeremy_zeller@OKcommerce.gov)



## Grants & Funding

Through a variety of funding and technical assistance programs, the Oklahoma Department of Commerce is working to make an impact on Oklahoma's future. Federal and state funding programs administered through Commerce provide \$50 million annually to address critical economic, infrastructure and human development needs and help build and improve Oklahoma communities.

For a list of grant-related websites go to [www.OKcommerce.gov/funding](http://www.OKcommerce.gov/funding)

### Community Development Block Grants

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program enables rural Oklahoma communities to finance a variety of public infrastructure and economic improvements and helps promote job growth as a result of these improvements. CDBG funds are provided by the federal government and managed by Oklahoma Commerce to help ensure Oklahoma's most critical needs are addressed.

**Contact:**

Scott Myers  
Oklahoma Department  
of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[scott\\_myers@  
OKcommerce.gov](mailto:scott_myers@OKcommerce.gov)



### Energy-Related Funding

The Oklahoma State Energy Office receives congressionally appropriated funding from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to operate the State Energy Program (SEP).

**Contact:**

Carolyn Sullivan  
Oklahoma Department  
of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[carolyn\\_sullivan@  
OKcommerce.gov](mailto:carolyn_sullivan@OKcommerce.gov)



### Human Development Funding

Human Development programs are designed to assist low-income individuals and families make healthy transitions in their lives and consequently achieve and sustain a better life. In total, more than \$20 million is appropriated to support programs that help empower Oklahoma's neediest families to overcome hardship and move toward self-sufficiency.

**Contact:**

Kathy McLaughlin  
Oklahoma Department  
of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[kathy\\_mclaughlin@  
OKcommerce.gov](mailto:kathy_mclaughlin@OKcommerce.gov)



# Oklahoma Century Communities

Each participant community is served based on their current level of economic preparedness. With self assessment tools, level appropriate goals and achievement based incentives, Oklahoma Century Communities encourages locally driven, community wide strategic planning and leadership development in Oklahoma communities possessing the desire to develop local capacity.

## Participate At Your Community's Level

Oklahoma Century Communities is designed to help communities, whether they are just coming to realize a need for change or they've been actively pursuing a better future for some time.

Communities are invited to self-evaluate their level from one of the following:

**Designing Plans** — A general interest in planning and implementation has become apparent.

**Laying Foundations** — A strategic plan has been created and now is the time to turn dreams into realities.

**Under Construction** — Things are happening, goals are being reached, ideas and plans are turning into actions.

**Grand Opening** — The community is positioned to help existing businesses expand and grow to attract new businesses, to bolster the local economy and to improve the overall quality of life.

## Opportunities

- CDBG Competitive Planning Grants
- Conference Scholarships
- Leadership Class Assistance
- Support Workshops
- Award Recognition and Networking events
- OCC CDBG Project Funds
- CDBG Bonus Points

## Community Development Resource Kit

For communities not eligible to participate in Oklahoma Century Communities, the Community Development Resource Kit is available.

The Resource Kit has been created to provide communities with tools in which to conduct community assessments and create a community strategic plan. The tools help a community identify where they are today and visualize where they want to be in the future.

### Contact:

Kathy Gain  
Oklahoma Department  
of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[kathy\\_gain@OKcommerce.gov](mailto:kathy_gain@OKcommerce.gov)



### RELATED WEBSITES:

Oklahoma Community Institute  
[www.ocionline.org](http://www.ocionline.org)

Oklahoma Association of Regional Councils  
[www.oarcok.org](http://www.oarcok.org)

# Oklahoma Main Street

For 24 years, Oklahoma's Main Street program has been pumping new life back into the heart of communities across the state. Combining historic preservation and downtown revitalization efforts with powerful economic stimulation, Main Street restores the core assets of our communities and enhances the quality of life for our citizens.

## What We Do

The Oklahoma Main Street Center provides training, resources, and technical assistance for preservation-based commercial district revitalization. Based on the National Main Street Center's guiding principles and nationally recognized Four-Point Approach, the program offers a practical strategy scaled for each local community. Main Street promotes public and private partnership and local leadership, commitment, and synergy while delivering tangible and intangible benefits to communities.

## Results

Main Street Impact (since Inception)

Public/Private Reinvestment:	\$616,152,580
Building Rehabilitations:	3,250
Net Gain in New Business Expansions:	3,652
Net Gain in New Jobs:	11,422
Volunteers Hours:	583,798

## To Apply

Prospective communities interested in participating in the Main Street Program are required to send two representatives to the annual Main Street Application Workshop held every September.

Formal applications are accepted from workshop attendees and are due in January for review and selection by a panel of judges.

## Contact:

Linda Barnett  
Oklahoma Department of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[www.OKcommerce.gov/mainstreet](http://www.OKcommerce.gov/mainstreet)



Restore  
Restructure  
Revitalize  
Results

# Workforce

## Overview

Having a well-trained, hard-working, professional and diverse workforce is critical to Oklahoma's economic success. The Oklahoma Department of Commerce, in conjunction with the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development, helps coordinate workforce-related services, strategy and referrals for businesses and communities. We partner with education and businesses to analyze workforce availability and needs in industry clusters and connect employers, job seekers and workforce professionals.



# Workforce for Business

## Oklahoma Career Readiness/WorkKeys

Designed by ACT, the company that developed the ACT college entrance exam, CareerReady measures communication, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills valuable to any occupation — skilled or professional — and at any level of education.

When fully implemented, assessment sites will be set up across the state on college campuses, One-Stop sites, CareerTech centers, and other strategic locations. Individuals' assessments and scores will be recorded and housed in a secure database. Depending on their scores, potential or incumbent employees will be awarded a gold, silver or bronze Oklahoma Career Readiness Certificate.

These portable skills credentials, which are easily and nationally recognized, can be used to facilitate job placement, retention, and advancement.

**Contact:**

Susan Kuzmic  
CareerTech  
405-809-3582  
susan\_kuzmic@  
okcareertech.org



## Workforce Expansions

No matter the size of your business, finding and hiring qualified employees represents one of the most important parts of any long-term growth strategy. When you hire people, you're investing time, money, training and trust. If done properly, business booms. If done incorrectly, you lose your investment and potentially much more. Workforce Services can assist you with:

- Recruiting and hiring
- Finding qualified employees
- Business tools for recruiting and hiring
- Workers' Compensation: Avoiding legal pitfalls
- Tax credits, incentives, and services
- Business tools for new hire tax reporting
- Hiring foreign workers
- Business tools for verifying employment eligibility

**Contact:**

Oklahoma Employment Securities Commission  
888-980-work (9675)  
OESC.state.ok.us

## Workforce Reductions

Because layoffs are often part of weathering a lack-luster economy and aren't necessarily permanent, employers who manage their workforce reductions well can expect to improve their organization's image, productivity, profits, and staff morale. Workforce services can help manage workforce reductions, regulations and tax issues

**Contact:**

Lynda Baird  
Oklahoma Employment Securities Commission  
888-980-work (9675)  
lynda.baird@oesc.state.ok.us

## Industry Training

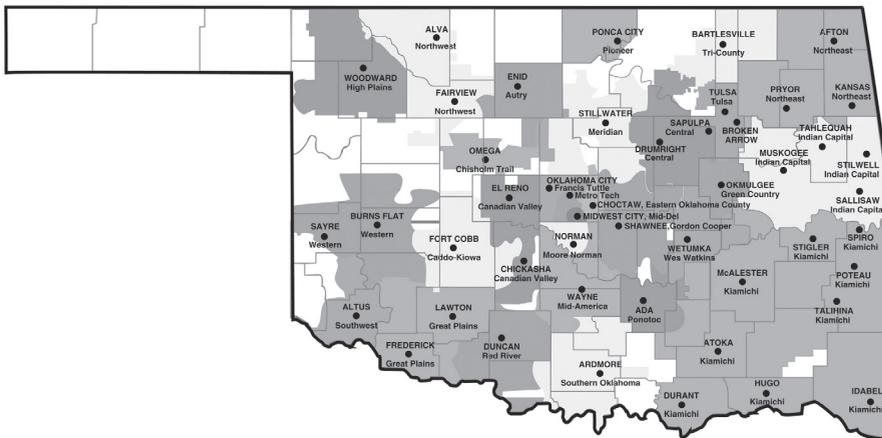
Oklahoma's community colleges, universities, technology centers, apprenticeships, technical institutes, nonprofits, businesses, and state agencies work hand-in-hand to deliver companies 3 key benefits.

**Save money:** Save thousands of dollars in expenses for job analysis, training assessment, consultation, curriculum development, instructors, facilities, equipment, materials, and day-to-day training program administration.

**Train anywhere:** Your employees can receive start-up training or skills upgrade onsite or take advantage of universities, community colleges, and technology centers in every part of the state.

**Make one call:** Tapping into this vast network of workforce training and education options takes one call — Oklahoma Commerce.

[www.OKcommerce.gov/train](http://www.OKcommerce.gov/train)



Oklahoma's system of 29 technology center districts with 56 campuses provides a wide variety of programs, services and resources for businesses across the state.

**Contact**  
Scott Smith  
CareerTech  
800-879-6552  
[scott\\_smith@OKcommerce.gov](mailto:scott_smith@OKcommerce.gov)





# New and Small Business Support

## Overview

The Oklahoma Department of Commerce makes it a priority to provide you the information and connection to resources you need to help new and small businesses in your area. Please use the information and resources detailed in this section to build and sustain businesses in your community. And when you need personal, one-to-one assistance, contact the Business Solutions Division at Commerce, 405-815-5143 or [info@OKcommerce.gov](mailto:info@OKcommerce.gov).



## Entrepreneurs

The Oklahoma Department of Commerce created OKstartup.com, and this virtual center provides a central point of access for entrepreneurs to access resources they need for new or expanding business.

### **OKSTARTUP.com**

#### **Starting a Business?**

- Get a Federal Employer Identification Number
- Register with state agencies
- Determine which state licenses and permits are needed
- Look into Business incubators

#### **Expanding a Business?**

- Business financing
- Business incentives
- Export assistance
- Workforce assistance
- Small business health insurance
- Case studies

#### **Contact:**

Shelli Todd  
Oklahoma Department  
of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[shelli\\_todd@  
OKcommerce.gov](mailto:shelli_todd@OKcommerce.gov)



#### **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)**

The SBA provides certification to eligible small business that want to do business with agencies of the federal government.

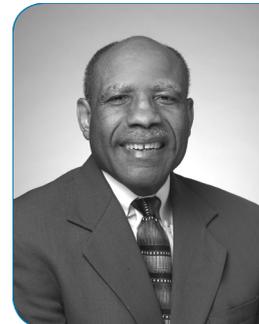
#### **Oklahoma Department of Transportation**

Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) provides a "Disadvantaged Business Enterprise" (DBE) certification for qualified minority and women-owned businesses in Oklahoma. The qualify for DBE certification, the minority or female owner:

- must have full operational control of the business and 51percent or more of the ownership
- must provide a service, product or needed item that is involved with transportation projects

#### **Contact:**

Ken Talley  
Oklahoma Department  
of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[ken\\_talley@  
OKcommerce.gov](mailto:ken_talley@OKcommerce.gov)



#### **Women-Owned Business Certifications**

Commerce provides a Women-Owned Business certification. When purchasing or procurement officials are specifically seeking women-owned businesses, this certification may be particularly beneficial to minority female business owners.

To qualify for certification in general, the female applicant must be in full operations control of the business and have 51percent or more ownership.

#### **Contact:**

Rana Steeds  
Oklahoma Department  
of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[rana\\_steeds@  
OKcommerce.gov](mailto:rana_steeds@OKcommerce.gov)



## Minority and Women-Owned Businesses

#### **Oklahoma Minority Supplier Development Council (OMSDC)**

Provides a Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) certification for minority-owned business in Oklahoma. In turn, it solicits major corporations and private entities to increase their amount of purchasing and procurement with its certified MBEs.

## Small Business Advocacy

If you are an Oklahoma small business owner and you believe an existing or proposed state agency rule will adversely affect your business, you now have the means to make your concerns known.

The Small Business Advocacy Committee (SBAC) includes 13 business owners and the chairs of the Oklahoma House and Senate Small Business Committees.

SBAC reviews new rules which may adversely impact small businesses and suggests less restrictive alternatives and/or creative, flexible means for business to comply to the agencies wherever possible. The committee can also assist businesses with concerns about existing rules.

If you're facing a problem with a state agency rule, please write explaining your difficulty with the rule and suggestions you have to improve the situation.

### Contact

Rana Steeds  
Oklahoma Department  
of Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[rana\\_steeds@  
OKcommerce.gov](mailto:rana_steeds@OKcommerce.gov)



## Small Business Health Insurance

Insure Oklahoma, formerly known as the Oklahoma Employer/Employee Partnership for Insurance Coverage (O-EPIC), is the first program of its kind in the nation to assist small business owners, employees and their spouses with health insurance premiums.

Insure Oklahoma will pay part of the health plan premiums for eligible employees working for qualified Oklahoma small businesses (with 99 or fewer employees). Participation in this program is voluntary.

### Insure Oklahoma

To participate in the Insure Oklahoma program for small employers, a business must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- The business must be located within Oklahoma
- The business must have 99 or fewer full-time and part-time employees
- The small employer must contribute at minimum 25 percent of eligible employees' premium costs
- The employer must offer an Insure Oklahoma qualified health plan

### Insure Oklahoma Individual Plan

The Insure Oklahoma individual Plan is available to Oklahomans not otherwise eligible to participate in an Insure Oklahoma employer-sponsored Qualified Health Plan. Eligibility details are available on the Insure Oklahoma website.

The Insure Oklahoma website features eligibility wizards to help you determine you or your company's eligibility. You'll also find forms, health plan descriptions, answers to frequently asked questions, and more. And while you're there, be sure to sign up for the monthly Insure Oklahoma newsletter to stay on top of enhancements to the program.

### Other Insurance Options Available to Businesses and Individuals:

- Oklahoma Chamber Blue Small Business Health Insurance Plan
- HumanaOne Individual Health Plan for Oklahoma
- Manufacturer's Insurance Program

### Contact:

Insure Oklahoma  
888-365-3742  
[www.oepic.ok.gov](http://www.oepic.ok.gov)

## Export Assistance

In the age of globalization, exporting represents a crucial component to the long-term economic health of the United States and to Oklahoma. As the world gets smaller, markets for products and services continue to expand, representing a variety of opportunities for Oklahoma businesses and communities to increase profits, create jobs and raise employment levels, fund sustainable economic development initiatives, and attract foreign direct investment (FDI) dollars.

Designed to ensure that Oklahoma's small- to medium-sized businesses and large corporations can access the resources and services they need to succeed in the international marketplace. Our export assistance provides:

- Exporting basics
- Exporting FAQs
- Exporting step-by-step
- Workshops, seminars, & networking
- Financing
- Commerce export services
- Market research

**Contact:**

Dessie Apostolova  
Oklahoma Commerce  
800-879-6552  
[dessie\\_apostolova@OKcommerce.gov](mailto:dessie_apostolova@OKcommerce.gov)

## Business Incubators

Incubators are an effective and popular technique to help entrepreneurs and start-up business firms survive and prosper during their early years -- when they are most vulnerable.

There are 49 business incubators now in Oklahoma. According to the National Business Incubation Association, the overall success rate for businesses that begin in an incubator is 80 percent.

When it comes to the subject of business incubators, we're just getting warm. Business incubators also:

- Provide a physical location in which a new business can commence, coupled with support services such as shared facilities and business advice;
- Are designed to produce healthy firms that create jobs and wealth, strengthen the economy, commercialize new technologies and revitalize communities;
- Are sponsored by local governments, economic development agencies, universities, community colleges and vocational schools, private sector firms, and combinations of these groups.

### Oklahoma Certified Incubators

Sponsors of a certified incubator may be exempt from Oklahoma income taxes on income derived from services provided to the tenants, or for providing funding for an incubator site. This exemption is for 10 years from the date of the tenant's occupancy within an incubator.

The tenant of a certified incubator is exempt from state tax liability on income earned as a result of activities conducted as an occupant in an incubator for up to 10 years from the occupancy date in an incubator site in accordance with rules of the Oklahoma Tax Commission. The exemption remains in effect after the date the tenant is no longer an occupant in an incubator, but not to exceed a total of 10 years. In order to qualify for the income tax exemption for the sixth through 10th year, the tenant must make at least 75 percent of its gross sales to buyers located outside the state or to the federal government.

### How To Apply for Certification

Certification of business incubators may be obtained through Oklahoma Commerce. Details regarding the operation and range of services are required to be presented in a business plan.

**Contact:**

Rana Steeds  
Oklahoma Department  
of Commerce  
[rana\\_steeds@OKcommerce.gov](mailto:rana_steeds@OKcommerce.gov)  
800-879-6552



# OKcommerce.gov

Need to find something on the Commerce website in a hurry? Need to tell someone outside of Commerce how to get to a specific piece of content? There may be a shorter version of the URL available to help you - we call them redirects.

The list below shows the redirects available on the Commerce website. Use them yourself or tell others about them. They're a great convenience.

BidWatch Service

**OKcommerce.gov/bidwatch**

Biotech/Nanotech Industry

**OKcommerce.gov/bio**

Business Incentives and Tax Guide

**OKcommerce.gov/incentives**

Business Licensing Program

**OKcommerce.gov/licensing**

Business Retention and Expansion Strategies

**OKcommerce.gov/bre**

Business Start-Up Frequently Asked Questions

**OKcommerce.gov/startup**

CDBG Funding Guidelines and Applications

**OKcommerce.gov/cdbg**

Oklahoma's Career Readiness Program

**OKcommerce.gov/careerready**

Oklahoma Century Communities

**OKcommerce.gov/century**

Commerce News and Publications

**OKcommerce.gov/news**

Commerce Staff Directory

**OKcommerce.gov/contacts**

Communities overview page

**OKcommerce.gov/communities**

Community Developer Newsletter

**OKcommerce.gov/developer**

Cost of Doing Business

**okcommerce.gov/lowcost**

Data and Research overview page

**OKcommerce.gov/data**

Email newsletter subscriptions page

**OKcommerce.gov/subscribe**

Events Calendar

**OKcommerce.gov/events**

Fast Forward Team

**OKcommerce.gov/fastforward**

Financial Resources for Businesses

**OKcommerce.gov/bizfunds**

GIS Mapping Program (includes Site Ready and Buildings & Sites database)

**OKcommerce.gov/locateok**

Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development

**OKcommerce.gov/council**

Grants and Funding for Communities

**OKcommerce.gov/funding**

Hot Jobs for Job Seekers

**OKcommerce.gov/jobs**

International Trade Tools and Resources

**OKcommerce.gov/trade**

Multimedia Library

**OKcommerce.gov/media**

New and Existing Business overview page

**OKcommerce.gov/business**

New and Small Business Support

**OKcommerce.gov/smallbiz**

Oklahoma Main Street Program

**OKcommerce.gov/mainstreet**

Oklahoma's Weather Industry

**OKcommerce.gov/weather**

Quality Jobs Program

**OKcommerce.gov/qualityjobs**

Quality of Life in Oklahoma

**OKcommerce.gov/goodlife**

Rural Economic Development

**OKcommerce.gov/rural**

Service Provider Database

**OKcommerce.gov/spd**

Oklahoma's Site Certification Program

**[OKcommerce.gov/sites](http://OKcommerce.gov/sites)**

Site Ready Properties

**[okcommerce.gov/siteready](http://okcommerce.gov/siteready)**

Site Selection overview page

**[OKcommerce.gov/chooseok](http://OKcommerce.gov/chooseok)**

Sooner Economic Development News

**[OKcommerce.gov/soonernews](http://OKcommerce.gov/soonernews)**

State Energy Office

**[OKcommerce.gov/energy](http://OKcommerce.gov/energy)**

Workforce overview page

**[OKcommerce.gov/workforce](http://OKcommerce.gov/workforce)**

Workforce Training

**[OKcommerce.gov/train](http://OKcommerce.gov/train)**

#### **Disclaimer**

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