

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA  
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH LEGISLATURE  
SECOND SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE BILL 1215**

Introduced by Geist, 25.

Read first time January 20, 2022

Committee:

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to economic development; to adopt the Small
- 2 Business Assistance Act.
- 3 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1           Section 1. Sections 1 to 6 of this act shall be known and may be  
2 cited as the Small Business Assistance Act.

3           Sec. 2. For purposes of the Small Business Assistance Act:

4           (1) Department means the Department of Economic Development; and

5           (2) Small business means a business with five or fewer employees.

6           Sec. 3. (1) The department shall create and administer a grant  
7 program to:

8           (a) Provide grants of up to twenty-five thousand dollars to  
9 individuals looking to start a small business. An individual shall be  
10 eligible for a grant under this subdivision if the following requirements  
11 are met:

12           (i) The individual earned no more than fifty-five thousand dollars  
13 in the most recently completed calendar year;

14           (ii) The individual has a personal net worth of no more than two  
15 hundred thousand dollars, excluding the individual's primary residence;  
16 and

17           (iii) The individual does not have an ownership interest in any  
18 other business; and

19           (b) Provide grants of up to twelve thousand five hundred dollars to  
20 individuals who own a small business that has been in existence for no  
21 more than five years. An individual shall be eligible for a grant under  
22 this subdivision if the following requirements are met:

23           (i) The gross revenue of the small business has grown by no more  
24 than twenty-five percent over the most recently completed calendar year;

25           (ii) The individual has a personal net worth of no more than two  
26 hundred thousand dollars, excluding the individual's primary residence;  
27 and

28           (iii) The individual does not have an ownership interest in any  
29 other business.

30           (2) The department shall contract with a private entity to provide  
31 professional counseling services to individuals who are looking to start

1 a small business or who have started a small business within the previous  
2 five years. Such counseling services shall be in the following areas:

3 (i) Accounting and budgeting;

4 (ii) Tax return preparation;

5 (iii) Human resources;

6 (iv) How to write a business plan;

7 (v) Payroll processes;

8 (vi) Financial planning and investments;

9 (vii) Debt management;

10 (viii) Strategic planning;

11 (ix) Technology coaching; and

12 (x) Financial statement review.

13 (3) The private entity with which the department contracts under  
14 subsection (2) of this section shall not have any other contracts with  
15 the state that involve the provision of services described in subsection  
16 (2) of this section.

17 Sec. 4. (1) On or before October 1, 2024, and on or before October  
18 1 of each even-numbered year thereafter, the department shall submit a  
19 report to the Governor and the Legislature that includes, but is not  
20 limited to:

21 (a) A description of the demand for grants and counseling services  
22 under the Small Business Assistance Act from all geographic regions in  
23 Nebraska;

24 (b) A listing of the grant recipients and the amounts of grants  
25 awarded pursuant to the act in the previous two fiscal years;

26 (c) A listing of the recipients of counseling services under the act  
27 in the previous two fiscal years;

28 (d) The impact of the grants provided under the act, including  
29 information on:

30 (i) The number of jobs created;

31 (ii) The economic impact on the area where the grant recipient is

1 located;

2 (iii) The impact on state and local tax revenues; and

3 (iv) The types of businesses created, listed by industry.

4 (2) The report submitted to the Legislature shall be submitted

5 electronically.

6 (3) The department may require the private entity described in

7 section 3 of this act and any recipients of grants or counseling services

8 to provide periodic reports and information to enable the department to

9 fulfill the requirements of this section.

10 (4) The report shall contain no information that is protected by

11 state or federal confidentiality laws.

12 Sec. 5. The department may adopt and promulgate rules and

13 regulations to carry out the Small Business Assistance Act.

14 Sec. 6. It is the intent of the Legislature to appropriate five

15 million dollars to the department each fiscal year to carry out the Small

16 Business Assistance Act.