



Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity

Diana Alfaro
Office of Minority Economic Empowerment
(OMEE)

Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)

DCEO supports statewide economic development by offering resources and services to:

Businesses

Individuals

Communities

DCEO provides financial incentives, grants, skill-based trainings and other programming.



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Office of Minority Economic Empowerment (OMEE)

DCEO's Office of Minority Economic Empowerment (OMEE) is committed to providing minority-, women-, persons with disabilities and veteran-owned small businesses and entrepreneurs across the state with equitable access to opportunities and resources.

Through dynamic partnerships, targeted outreach, and tailored programs and initiatives, OMEE aims to create an inclusive business ecosystem for communities that have traditionally faced systemic barriers to entry and growth.

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/AboutDCEO/GrantOpportunities/Pages/CommunityNavigator.aspx>

OMEE Outreach Team

OMEE Business Development Managers



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OFFICE OF MINORITY ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT
JB Pritzker, Governor

Office of Minority Economic Empowerment (OMEE)

*Serving marginalized communities
including minority, women,
persons with disabilities, and
veteran owned businesses.*

**Our office also supports
LGBTQIA+ and Arab American
owned businesses**

General Inquiries:
CEO.OMEE@Illinois.gov



Matthew Simpson
African American Business
Development Manager

Also supports Persons with
Disabilities and Veteran owned
businesses

C: 312.520.0434
matthew.simpson@illinois.gov



Diana Alfaro
Latinx Business
Development Manager

Also supports American
Indian (Native
American) owned
businesses

C: 312.919.3620
diana.alfaro@illinois.gov



Michelle Lura White
Women's Business
Development Manager

Also supports Asian, Native
Hawaiian or Other Pacific
Islander owned businesses

C: 872.272.0094
Michelle.White@Illinois.gov

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/AboutDC/EO/GrantOpportunities/Pages/CommunityNavigator.aspx>



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Overview

- Technical Assistance Resources
- Funding (Grants & Loans)
- Workforce
- Additional Resources



Technical Assistance Resources



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First Stop Business Information Center

- **Toll-free Help Line** for questions/concerns about government regulations and/or assistance programs: **Dial 1.800.252.2923**
- Questions may also be emailed directly: ceo.firststop@illinois.gov
- Para información en español por favor llamar al: 1.800.252.2923 o envíe su mensaje por medio del Correo electrónico Sonia.Gerson@illinois.gov



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Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network



SBDC	Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)	International Trade Center (ITC)
<p>Provide <u>No Cost</u> business counseling.</p> <p><u>Services Include but not limited to:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assistance with the development of business plans.• Help with accessing market information and the development of marketing plans.• Assistance with accessing business financing programs.• Assistance with financial analysis and planning.• Access to business education and training opportunities.	<p>Provide <u>No Cost</u> services to businesses looking into getting into government contracting</p> <p><u>Services include but not limited to:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Automated bid lead matching services• Guidance with quality assurance issues• Assistance with certifications• Identification of Sub-contracting opportunities• Bar Code and Packaging Information• Review of Bid Packages	<p>Provide <u>No Cost</u> services to businesses looking into international trade and exporting</p> <p><u>Services include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluation of company's readiness to export• Access to foreign market information• Documentation assistance• Automated trade leads• Linkages with trade representatives

To find a SBDC, PTAC, or ITC near you, please click [HERE](#).



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Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP)



Confused by **Environmental Regulations?**

For *FREE*, confidential help, contact
**Illinois Small Business
Environmental Assistance Program**
800.252.3998

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www.ildceo.net/enviro
Email: dceo.sbeap@illinois.gov

- Assists small businesses understand and comply with environmental obligations
- Provides fact sheets and environmental record-keeping tools

Contact Email: dceo.sbeap@illinois.gov



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Community Navigators

What do Community Navigators do?

- Target hard-to-reach or underserved businesses to raise awareness of federal or state relief programs
- Provide 1-on-1 technical assistance to small businesses
- Offer services in multiple languages
- Ensure programming is accessible and easy to use

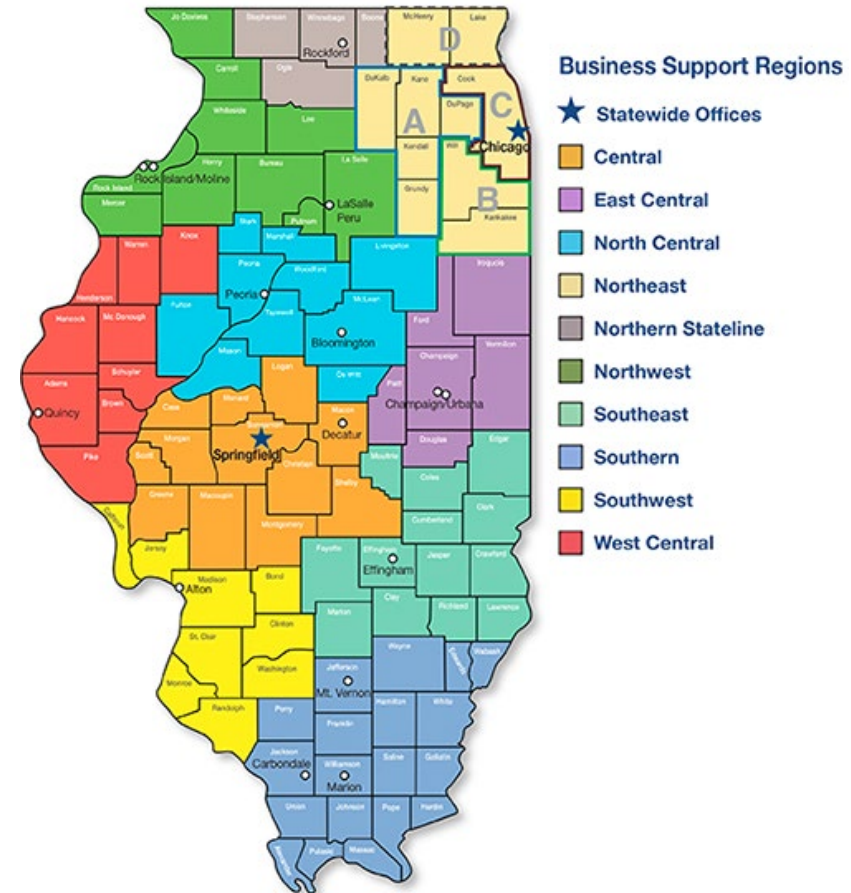
Where are Community Navigators located?

Statewide, over 100 organizations are available to provide business support and assistance.

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/AboutDCEO/GrantOpportunities/Pages/CommunityNavigator.aspx>

Regional Economic Development (RED)

RED provides targeted referrals and counseling for economic opportunities to businesses and communities based on geography.



Contact Team RED:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/RegionSpecificAssistance/Pages/default.aspx>



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Illinois Business Handbook

English -

[https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/BeginHere/Documents/Starting%20Your%20Business%20Handbook%20Final%20Version%20November%202019%20\(002\).pdf](https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/BeginHere/Documents/Starting%20Your%20Business%20Handbook%20Final%20Version%20November%202019%20(002).pdf)

Spanish -

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/BeginHere/Documents/Start%20Your%20Business%20Handbook%20Spanish%20Version%202020.pdf>



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Funding



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Advantage Illinois (AI) Participation Loan Program

DCEO partners with approved lenders to assist small businesses obtain loans at lower interest rates.

- Funding can be used for but not limited to:
 - Working Capital
 - Equipment
 - Real Estate (must be 51% or more occupied by the business)
- Job creation requirement
- Program limited to eligible businesses (for-profit)

Questions? Email at: CEO.Advantagellinois@Illinois.gov

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/Advantagellinois/Pages/default.aspx>

Open Grants and Programs

DCEO Grants

- Rebuild Illinois
- Business Attraction Prime Sites Capital Grant Program

Upcoming Programs (more information coming)

- B2B Startup COVID-19 Adaptation Grants
- B2B Reactivating Downtown Grants
- OMEE grant

Open Office Hours:

- **Online with OMEE, 1st & 3rd Wednesday of every month**

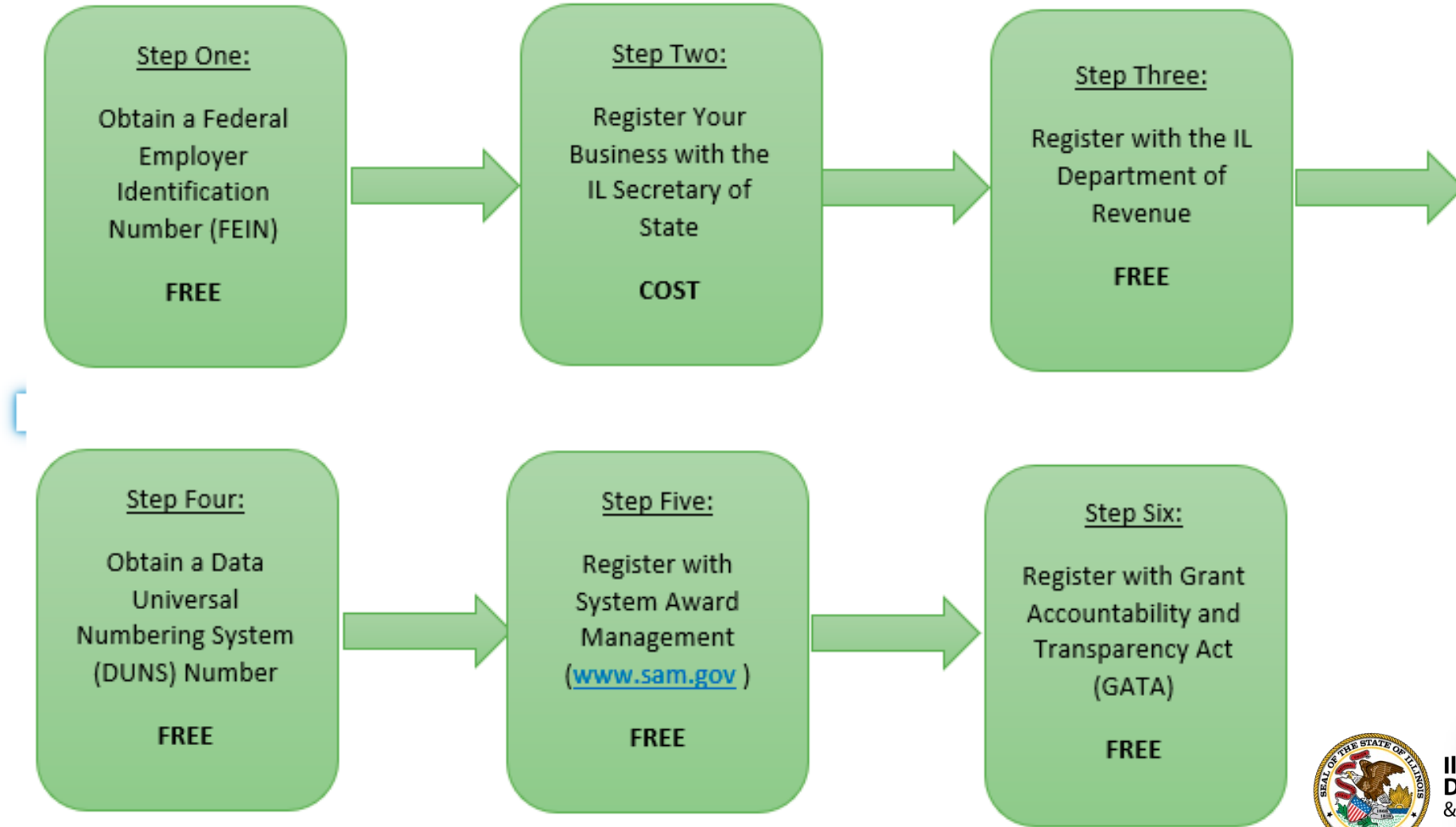
Federal

- [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/AboutDCEO/GrantOpportunities/Pages/default.aspx>

Pre-Qualification Requirements

Steps to get pre-qualified for State of Illinois programs



Incentives

EDGE: Provides an annual tax credit equal to 50% of the new full-time employees' payroll withholding tax for 10 years to companies which create new jobs and make capital investments.

Enterprise Zones: Available to companies located in specific areas, Enterprise Zones provide various benefits including building material sales tax exemptions, utility tax exemptions (natural gas and electricity), and investment tax credits.

Angel Tax Credit: Encourages investment in innovative, early-stage companies to help them obtain the working capital needed to further their growth in Illinois. Investors in certified companies can apply for a state tax credit equal to 25% of their investment.



Workforce



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Workforce



STATE OF ILLINOIS - WORKFORCE PORTAL

<https://www.illinoisworknet.com/>



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Additional Resources



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Illinois Made

Illinois Made celebrates those makers, creators, and artisans who help craft Illinois by hand, inspiring visitors and fellow Illinoisans to discover more about the state by experiencing firsthand the passion that makes it thrive.

Examples of Illinois Made makers include

- Artisans & Craftspeople (i.e., Carpenters, Potters, Glass Artists, Painters)
- Food & Beverage Artisans (i.e., Distillers, Brewers, Cheese Makers, Coffee Roasters, Farm-to-Table Restaurateurs)
- Farmers, Winemakers/Viticulturists



<https://www.enjoyillinois.com/illinois-made/illinois-made-criteria/>



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Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS): Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

- Help businesses become certified as minority-owned businesses (minorities, women, veteran and persons with disabilities).
- Process is FREE of charge.
- Eligibility
 - At least 51% owned and controlled by a minority or demographic group
 - Owner is a US citizen or permanent resident
 - Annual gross of business is under \$75 million



BEP and/or VBP Certification

Search or join our database of registered and/or certified vendors

[BEP and/or VBP Certification Directory](#)

[Apply for BEP and/or VBP Certification](#)

BEP help desk 312-814-4190 / 1-800-356-9206
e-mail BEP.CMS@illinois.gov



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Follow DCEO



General Inquiries: 1-800-252-2923



Diana Alfaro

Latinx Business Development Manager

C: 312-919-3620

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[Sign Up to receive emails/updates from OMEE, click HERE](#)

Q & A

Thank you!



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