

AN ACT concerning State government.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Law of the Civil Administrative Code of Illinois is amended by adding Section 605-1032 as follows:

(20 ILCS 605/605-1032 new)

Sec. 605-1032. Office of Economic Equity and Empowerment.

(a) As used in this Section:

"Eligible not-for-profit corporation" means a not-for-profit corporation, as defined in Section 101.80 of the General Not For Profit Corporation Act of 1986, that primarily serves minorities, women, veterans, or persons with a disability.

"Office" means the Office of Economic Equity and Empowerment.

(b) The Office of Economic Equity and Empowerment is hereby created within the Department. The Office shall assist minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses, veteran-owned businesses, businesses owned by persons with disabilities, eligible not-for-profit corporations, and other underserved communities and constituencies through targeted programs, resources, and outreach and promotional activities.

The Office may engage in or conduct the following activities:

(1) promoting and conducting outreach efforts to ensure access to State and federal funding opportunities, and assisting minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses, veteran-owned businesses, businesses owned by persons with disabilities, eligible not-for-profit corporations, and other underserved communities and constituencies in applying for and receiving loan funds in the State;

(2) providing and hosting workshops and public forums and engaging in outreach efforts for minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses, veteran-owned businesses, businesses owned by persons with disabilities, and other underserved communities and constituencies to encourage participation in programs under the Business Enterprise for Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities Act, and assisting those businesses in becoming designated under that Act and under similar certification programs;

(3) providing and hosting workshops and public forums and engaging in outreach efforts that assist and educate minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses, veteran-owned businesses, businesses owned by persons with disabilities, eligible not-for-profit corporations, and other underserved communities and constituencies on the process of applying for and becoming certified to apply

for State grant funds under the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act;

(4) providing and hosting workshops and public forums and engaging in outreach efforts that assist and educate aspiring and existing minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses, veteran-owned businesses, businesses owned by persons with disabilities, eligible not-for-profit corporations, and other underserved communities and constituencies with understanding concepts including, but not limited to, business formation and not-for-profit incorporation, business planning, capital access, and marketing a business or not-for-profit corporation;

(5) administering programs established by the Department or the General Assembly to provide grants to minority-owned businesses, woman-owned businesses, veteran-owned businesses, businesses owned by persons with disabilities, eligible not-for-profit corporations, and other underserved communities and constituencies;

(6) coordinating assistance for minority-owned businesses, woman-owned businesses, veteran-owned businesses, businesses owned by persons with disabilities, eligible not-for-profit corporations, and other underserved communities and constituencies with other State agencies;

(7) providing staff, administration, and related

support required to administer this Section; and

(8) establishing applications, notifications, contracts, and other forms and procedures, and adopting rules deemed necessary and appropriate.

(c) The Office may use vendors or enter into contracts to carry out the purposes of this Section.