

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- BUSINESS FAST-START  
OFFICE

Introduced By: Senator Roger Picard

Date Introduced: March 24, 2022

Referred To: Senate Commerce

(Secretary of State)

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 42-132-3 of the General Laws in Chapter 42-132 entitled "Business  
2 Fast-Start Office" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **42-132-3. Organization and responsibilities.**

4 (a) There is hereby established, within the secretary of state's first stop business information  
5 center, a business fast-start office ("Fast-Start Office") which shall be under the direction of the  
6 director or other full-time state employee as appointed by the secretary of state. Additional staff  
7 sufficient to perform the duties of the fast-start office shall be provided under the direction of the  
8 secretary of state from the personnel currently assigned to the office of the secretary of state.  
9 Nothing in this section shall be construed to explicitly or implicitly permit the hiring of any  
10 additional personnel to perform the duties and responsibilities designated in this section. As a  
11 clearing house for state business licensing, the fast-start office will:

12 (1) Work in conjunction with the office to establish a license information service detailing  
13 requirements for establishing and engaging in business in this state, including state licensing and  
14 regulatory requirements. The fast-start office in later phases of its program will, to the extent  
15 feasible, extend its service to include local and federal requirements.

16 (2) ~~Develop recommendations~~ Regularly convene business owners in this state to gather  
17 recommendations for the elimination, consolidation, simplification and/or expediting of business  
18 licenses, or otherwise improving licensing procedures affecting business undertakings. These

1 recommendations, with the approval of the secretary of state, will be submitted to the general  
2 assembly for approval;

3 (3) Promulgate and adopt rules and regulations necessary to carry out the purposes of this  
4 chapter;

5 (4) Develop an operating plan for an automated master application system;

6 (5) Determine the software and hardware needs of the system;

7 (6) Determine staffing levels and space required for the system.

8 (b) State agencies that issue business licenses shall assist and cooperate in the development  
9 and implementation of the plan as required by the fast-start office. In making the determination and  
10 developing an operating plan for an automated master application system, the fast-start office shall  
11 identify the business licenses appropriate for inclusion in a master application system and shall  
12 develop a master application form that consolidates the information needed for the various state  
13 agencies to issue the licenses.

14 (c) Each state agency that issues licenses shall cooperate fully with the fast-start office in  
15 providing information on the licenses and regulatory requirements of the agency and in developing  
16 a plan for an automated master application system.

17 (d) Each state agency shall designate a business license coordinator. The coordinator shall  
18 have the following responsibilities:

19 (1) Provide to the fast-start office the most recent application and supplemental forms  
20 required for each license issued by the agency, the most recent information available on existing  
21 and proposed changes in license requirements or agency rules and how those changes will affect  
22 the business community, and agency publications that would be of aid or interest to the business  
23 community, within thirty (30) days of publishing the supplemental forms, updated license  
24 requirements, or agency rule;

25 (2) Receive and respond to communications from the fast-start office; and

26 (3) Review state agency regulatory and license requirements and provide a written report  
27 to the fast-start office no later than January 1, 2002, and every two (2) years thereafter that:

28 (i) Identifies the regulatory and licensing requirements that affect the business community;

29 (ii) Indicates which, if any, requirements should be eliminated, modified, or consolidated  
30 with other requirements; and

31 (iii) Explains the need for continuing those requirements not recommended for elimination.

32 (e) The fast-start office, with the approval of the secretary of state, shall submit a report  
33 annually to the governor and general assembly identifying state agencies which have failed to  
34 perform their duties as outlined by this chapter.

1 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- BUSINESS FAST-START  
OFFICE

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1           This act would require the fast-start office to regularly convene business owners in the state  
2 to gather recommendations to improve business licensing procedures and would require an annual  
3 report to the governor and general assembly regarding state agencies who fail to perform duties  
4 pursuant to this chapter.

5           This act would take effect upon passage.

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