



The Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

Accessibility and Disability Policy Webinar Series

October 21, 2025

Disability and Business:

A New Perspective on Entrepreneurship

presented by

Bryan Roller, Texas Economic Development & Tourist Office

Aissa Salazar, Texas Workforce Commission – VR Program

For more information: www.gov.texas.gov/disabilities • gcpd@gov.texas.gov • 512-463-5749

About GCPD

The Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities (GCPD) has a mission to further opportunities for persons with disabilities to enjoy full and equal access to lives of independence, productivity, and self-determination.

GCPD recommends changes in disability policies and programs in the areas of accessibility, communication, criminal justice, education, emergency preparedness, employment, health, housing, transportation, and veterans. The committee also supports a network of committees on people with disabilities, issues awards to promote greater awareness, and promotes compliance with disability related laws.

General Information

- Chat is disabled in Zoom Webinar Mode. Please use the Q&A tool if you have questions for our presenters. Most questions will be answered near the end of the webinar.
- After the webinar, you will get an automated email from Zoom with a link to our GCPD page to access the webinar recording and other materials. The email will also include a survey where you can give your feedback.



OFFICE OF
THE GOVERNOR

TEXAS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

ENTREPRENEURS WITH DISABILITIES

October 21, 2025

Benefits of Entrepreneurship to the Community

Small businesses are the backbone of Texas' economy. It is the driving force behind our state's job creation, economic growth, and innovation. In today's rapidly changing world, entrepreneurship has become more critical than ever.

1. Job Creation
2. Economic Growth
3. Innovation
4. Community Development
5. Diversity and Inclusion
6. Flexibility



ABOUT US: EDT

EDT: Our Mission

"To positively impact the economic prosperity of Texas"



- Market and promote Texas as a premier business location & tourist destination
- Facilitate new jobs and investment through the location, expansion and retention of national & international investment
- Administer state incentive programs for business and community development
- Provide businesses assistance exporting products & services to international markets
- Serve as a central source of economic research
- Establish strategies to address economic growth in targeted industries





EDT DIVISIONS

The Texas Economic Development & Tourism Office (EDT) promotes the state of Texas as a leading global business location and premier travel destination.



**Business
Development**

**Economic
Development
Finance**

**Texas
CHIPS
Office**

**Texas
Workforce
Investment
Council**

**Texas
Music
Office**

**Travel
Texas**

**Texas Film
Commission**

Business Development

Business Development focuses on the creation of new jobs and investment through domestic and international business recruitment, expansion and retention; increasing Texas exports; and small business development and entrepreneurship.

- Business & Industry Recruitment
- International Business
- Regional Offices
- **Small Business & Permit Assistance**
- Research & Economic Analysis
- Marketing & Promotion

Office of Small Business Assistance

The Office of Small Business Assistance serves as the principal resource for small businesses and entrepreneurs in Texas. The team provides opportunities for effective education, training, management and technical assistance to entrepreneurs and small businesses in the state.

- Governor's Small Business Summits and Webinar Series
- Research and Studies
- Technical Business Assistance



The Governor's Small Business Resource Portal

This important tool offers a customized list of useful business resources to assist you in starting or growing your business in Texas.



56,013 users as of October 1, 2025

- Federal, State and Local Resources
- Business Advice and Growth Assistance
- Funding Sources
- Additional Specific Resources
- Contact information for the Small Business Assistance Team
- Licensing and Permitting



There are 15 Governor's Small Business Summits held throughout the year in regions across the state! **View our events page by visiting the QR code below:**



Business Setup 101: Registration & Structuring for Success (Webinar)

This Governor's Small Business Webinar aims to educate existing and prospective business owners on the different business registration and classification types. During this webinar, our speakers will discuss the processes of formal registration and registering as an LLC, Corporation, Partnership or Sole Proprietorship. This webinar will also explain the concept of an assumed name certificate, also known as a DBA or "Doing Business As" trade name, and when/why it should be used.

Properly registering your business is a crucial step of business development and lays important groundwork to lead to long-term success.

When: **Wednesday, October 29, 2025**

Time: **1:00 p.m. – 2 p.m.**

Where: **Online Event**

How to Register:

<https://gov.texas.gov/business/event/business-setup-101-registration-structuring-for-success>



Small Business Team



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Small Business Advocate

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Small Business Specialist

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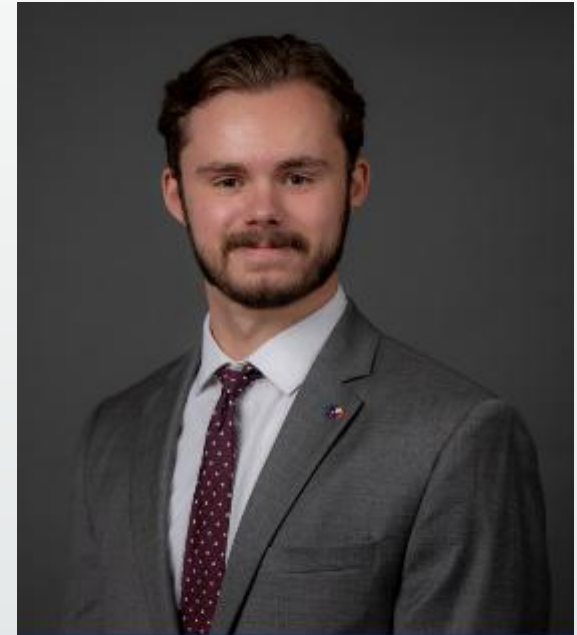


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TEXAS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT — FY 2024 — YEAR IN REVIEW



THE BUSINESS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TEAM ASSISTED WITH:

265

INVESTMENT
PROSPECTS

45

PROJECTS
ANNOUNCED

EXPECTED TO CREATE AT LEAST:

9,579

NEW JOBS



\$12.8B

IN CAPEX



738

BUSINESS
ASSISTANCES

732

PERMIT
ASSISTANCES

60

INDUSTRY
ENGAGEMENTS

601

COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENTS

13,041



The Governor's
Small Business
Resource Portal

SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE
PORTAL ENGAGEMENTS



THE OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE HOSTED

14

SMALL BUSINESS WITH **+3,224**
EVENTS & WEBINARS REGISTRANTS

MARKETING EFFORTS RESULTED IN:

453,138

TOTAL USERS

666,191

TOTAL PAGEVIEWS

79,580

FILE DOWNLOADS

AT [GOV.TEXAS.GOV/BUSINESS](https://gov.texas.gov/business)

Thank you!

Office of the Governor
Texas Economic Development & Tourism
P.O. Box 12428 | Austin, Texas 78711



512.936.0100 | gov.texas.gov/business |      @TexasEconDev



TEXAS
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS
★ ★ ★ ★ ★
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

SELF-EMPLOYMENT SERVICES



State Office Contact



Aissa Salazar

**Program Specialist for Employment Strategies
State Office SME for Self-Employment Services**

What is Self-Employment?



- Self-employment:
 - means the customer solely owns, manages, and operates the business and is not considered an employee of another individual, business, or organization;
 - exists when the service or product is actively marketed to potential customers;
 - includes home-based businesses and telecommuting businesses; and
 - includes sole-proprietorships or limited liability companies (LLCs—which must be "single-member LLCs,").

Simple Self-Employment

- for an independent contractor or subcontractor.

Comprehensive Self-Employment

- any self-employment in which the customer is not an independent contractor or subcontractor and covers customers who would not meet the criteria for Supported Employment.

Types of self-employment available to VR customers

Supported Self-Employment

- for customers who meet the definition of Most Significant Disability and qualify for Supported Employment (wage) services.

WHO CAN ASSIST WITH SELF-EMPLOYMENT CASES?

**TWC VR Field
Office Staff**

**State Office
Program
Specialist
assigned to Self-
Employment**

**Region Program
Specialists
assigned to Self-
Employment**

**Providers who are
CBTAC certified**

What is a CBTAC?

Certified Business Technical Assistance Consultants (CBTAC) are certified by Griffin Hammis to assist our TWC-VR customers with their self-employment cases.

- CBTACs undergo an intensive and comprehensive twelve-week online training course that covers all critical aspects of business research and design, including:
 - Business Concept Development & Market Research;
 - Marketing, Sales, & Operations;
 - Business Financials, Funding, & Financing;
 - Social Security Benefits Analysis;
 - Business Plan Development; and
 - Public Benefits Analysis

Self-Employment Process



How to get started with TWC-VR

- If a Customer wants to explore Self Employment services, they should contact TWC-VR and apply for VR services.
- Once a customer is determined eligible for TWC-VR services, they will meet with a VR Counselor to begin Assessing and Planning of their vocational goal.
- Once the goal is identified, a customer may be referred to a CBTAC for further Self-Employment discussion as part of the VR process.



What does the CBTAC process look like?

- CBTAC will receive a referral to meet with a customer for completion of the Customer Profile and Self-Employment Exploration to gather information on the customer's knowledge, interest, skills and abilities on the Self-Employment goal discussed.
- Once approved to move to the next step, the CBTAC will meet with the customer to complete the Concept Development and Feasibility Study. This is the same process throughout:
 - Customer Profile and Self-Employment Exploration
 - Concept Development and Feasibility Study
 - Business Plan
 - Financial Spreadsheet Projections

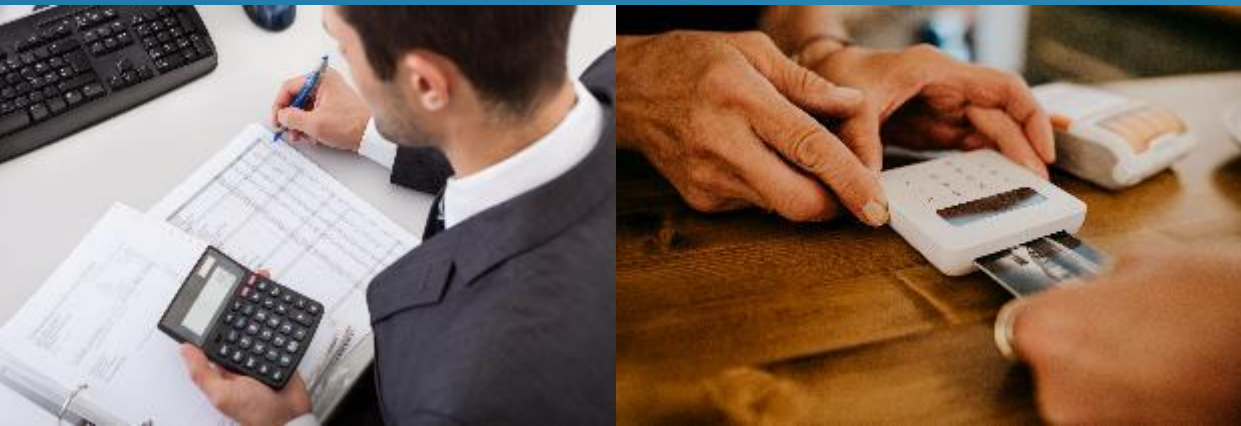
WHAT CAN TWO- VR PURCHASE UNDER GOODS AND SERVICES?

- ▶ Marketing/Advertising
- ▶ Business Plan Evaluation
- ▶ Business Planning Assistance
- ▶ Initial Inventory and Supplies
- ▶ Rent or Lease Payments
- ▶ Tools and Equipment
- ▶ Utilities



WHAT CANNOT BE PURCHASED BY TWC-VR?

- ▶ Buildings
- ▶ Bonding Fees
- ▶ Criminal or civil fines including traffic tickets
- ▶ Dues to professional associations
- ▶ Fees or rights for use of franchise names
- ▶ Firearms
- ▶ Insurance
- ▶ Real Estate
- ▶ Vehicles, boats, aircraft, or trailers



Important to note...

- Every TWC-VR case is individualized.
- No two disabilities are the same;
- No two cases are the same.
- Cases are based on the customer's individual disability needs and support.



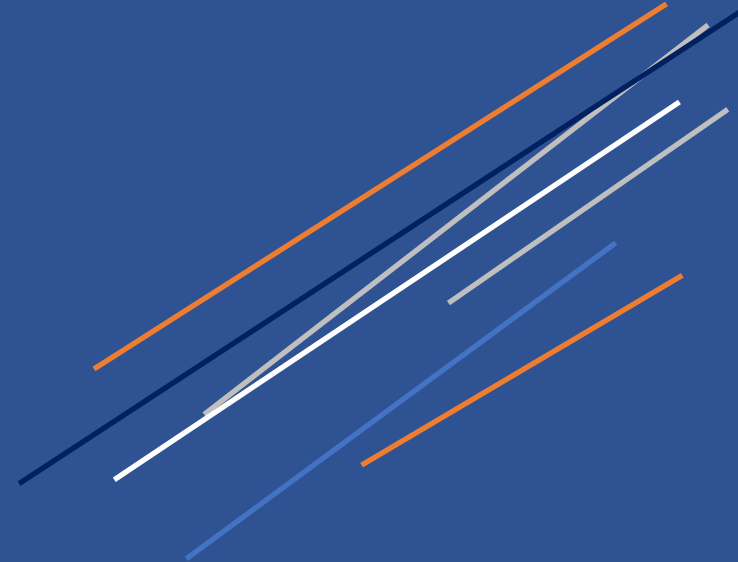
TWC-VR Supports



Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Employers:

- Disability awareness education and training
 - Worksite analysis
 - Hiring and retention assistance
 - Accommodation assessments
 - Referral of qualified applicants
- Email: vrbusinessrelations@twc.texas.gov
 - VR Business Relations Website: www.twc.texas.gov/VRemployers



Interested in applying for TWC-VR Services?

- <https://webp.twc.state.tx.us/services/VRLookup/>



TEXAS
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

¿Habla español?
Ver esta página en español.

VR Office Locator

Texas Workforce Solutions-Vocational Rehabilitation Services (TWS-VRS) is a partner within the Texas Workforce System to support job seekers with disabilities as they prepare for, obtain, maintain, or advance in competitive integrated employment.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services are available to eligible individuals with disabilities across Texas and VR staff are co-located within many Workforce Solutions Offices.

The Texas Workforce System is intended to support everyone who wants to work, with supports and services to help them get a job or keep a job or advance in a career. This includes identification and referral of workforce customers who may be eligible for VR Services.

To locate the Texas Workforce Solutions - Vocational Rehabilitation Services office nearest you that provides services for people with **Visual, Physical, or Auditory Disabilities** search by ZIP Code, County, Workforce Board Area, Program, and/or Specialized Service.

For **Unemployment Insurance (UI)** assistance, please call the tele-center at 1-800-939-6631. You can also request a UI contact through Larry the Virtual Assistant by clicking on the Chat with Us box at the bottom of the TWC home page. Type "contact me" in the question field and fill out the contact information. UI staff are researching those requests and performing outbound contacts.

For assistance in locating a VR office for vocational rehabilitation services, please email vr.office.locator@twc.texas.gov or call (512) 936-6400 to be connected to VR staff.

For best results, please enter only the zip code or a county or the Workforce Board Area.

To help find the most appropriate office for the services you need, as the program, please select:

- **VR** if you have a physical, or mental impairment, or if you have blindness or a visual impairment, deafness, or a hearing impairment, or a brain injury that affects your ability to find, keep, or advance in meaningful employment.
- **OIB** if you are 55 or older and have a significant visual impairment that substantially limits your ability to function independently in the home, family, and/or community and you are not interested in employment.

Program	<input type="text" value="Select From List"/>
Zip Code	<input type="text"/>
County	<input type="text" value="Select From List"/>
Workforce Board Area	<input type="text" value="Select From List"/>
Specialized Service	<input type="text" value="Select From List"/>
<input type="button" value="Search"/> <input type="button" value="Reset"/>	



Entrepreneurial Success Stories

TWC Vocational Rehabilitation Services

- **Sandy Crisp, Owner at Texas Teletherapy**
- **Andrea Robertson, Owner and Massage Therapist, Integrated Bodywork of Texas**

Sandy Crisp

Sandy Crisp

As a Licensed Professional Counselor and Chemical Dependency Counselor, Sandy offers compassionate client-centered approaches to care, integrating Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, mindfulness, and narrative therapy. As a person with a disability, her own experience with recovery and resilience informs her work in helping others heal and rebuild their lives. She has earned national certifications in trauma and rehabilitation therapy and serves on the Texas Medicaid Advisory Board.

Years in business: 2.5 years

Quote: *“Self-employment gave me the freedom to design a flexible, accessible workspace and maintain balance while pursuing my passion for counseling.”*

Texas Teletherapy

<https://sandycrisp.com/>

“Self-employment gave me the freedom to design a flexible, accessible workspace and maintain balance while pursuing my passion for counseling.”



“Support from Vocational Rehabilitation gave me the opportunity to build confidence and independence, making it possible for me to establish my own business. I now live my life without limits.”

Andrea Robertson

At Integrated Bodywork of Texas, Andrea takes a holistic approach to massage therapy, focusing on the mind-body connection and the healing power of touch. Licensed for 16 years and having served over 10,000 clients, she blends expertise and empathy to create a calm, inclusive space for all. Living with Stargardt’s disease, Andrea views her vision impairment as a strength that deepens her connection with clients. Guided by resilience, authenticity, and her loyal guide dog, she’s built a thriving, ADA-compliant practice that embodies balance, accessibility, and exceptional care—proving that with passion and purpose, anything is possible.

Years in business: 3 years self-employed; 18 years as a licensed professional

Quote: *“Support from Vocational Rehabilitation Services gave me the opportunity to build confidence and independence, making it possible for me to establish my own business. I live my life without limits.”*

Integrated Bodywork of Texas

<https://integratedbodyworkoftexas.com/about>

