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## **Business.gov – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### ***What is Business.gov?***

Business.gov helps small businesses comply with government regulations by providing tools and resources that help business owners understand:

- Which laws and regulations apply to them;
- How to comply; and
- How to stay in compliance when managing operations

Business.gov goes beyond the hype and fads of advice columns, and provides straight-talk in plain language from official government sources that are responsible for overseeing small business compliance with regulations.

### ***Why is Business.gov needed?***

Through research and feedback from small businesses, Business.gov recognized a need for a one-stop resource to help small business owners comply with government regulations. Small businesses spend far more per employee to stay in compliance than larger companies. Reducing this burden on small businesses is an important government effort because small businesses are critical to the U.S. economy. Research sponsored by the U.S. Small Business Administration states that small businesses with less than 500 employees make up 99.7% of the 24.7 million businesses in the U.S., employ half of all private sector employees and pay 45% of total U.S. payrolls. Small business has generated 60-80% of net new jobs annually for the last decade. Additionally, small business makes up 97% of all identified exporters.<sup>1</sup>

### ***How does Business.gov help small businesses?***

Instead of navigating through multiple government websites for compliance information from various federal, state, and local agencies, businesses can search for information through one site, Business.gov. This will reduce time and money spent on complying with government regulations and it allows businesses to focus on running their business.

### ***How does a small business find compliance information?***

Business.gov has produced Small Business Guides which provide resources and feature articles covering all areas of business operations. These guides help business owners understand laws and regulations that apply to operational areas within their business (e.g. hiring and managing employees, advertising, taxes, etc.). In addition, Business.gov provides guides for specific types of industries and audiences. State and

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<sup>1</sup> Source: U.S. Small Business Administration, Office of Advocacy, "FAQ" Website: <http://www.sba.gov/advo/stats/sbfaq.pdf>.

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Local guides provide a gateway for doing business in local areas. Finally, Business.gov’s start-of-the-art, Google-based search engine is customized to return results specific to the needs of small businesses, and includes a comprehensive index of information from federal, state and local governments.

***How advanced is the search technology?***

Business.gov’s search service is a “mashup” – a unique service created by combining content from separate web applications – of Google’s Custom Search Service, geographic databases, and publicly available compliance information culled from federal, state and local government websites.

The service improves upon general search services by delivering results directly aligned with doing business in a specific geographic area, saving business owners’ time by getting to the right information more quickly. For examples, if a user types in “business license Richmond, VA” the relevant results on licenses will be returned from the City of Richmond and State of Virginia website.

***What are the next steps for Business.gov?***

Business.gov will continue to expand the coverage of its content to make government even more transparent to the small business owner. Planned enhancements include:

- Featured content focused on “Green Business” and energy efficiency
- Guides targeted to specific business types (e.g. restaurants, cleaning businesses, etc.)
- Enhanced search features, including suggested/recommended searches