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Assistance Available to New and Expanding Businesses through the

## **NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

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The Department of Commerce (DOC), according to state century code, seeks to increase the state's standard of living through successful primary-sector investments. A primary-sector business is a value-added business<sup>1</sup> that creates new wealth by bringing in money from outside the state through sales of goods and services. This emphasis not only exists for DOC, but for many of the state's business incentives and tools.

Primary-sector businesses *typically* include manufacturing, food processing, and technology-based services where a vast majority of revenue is generated from clients outside of North Dakota. It can also include other industries such as destination tourism, wholesale distribution and e-commerce where the new wealth qualification is met.

DOC has a formal primary-sector certification process for businesses seeking state incentives. While this certification does not guarantee the receipt of any North Dakota business incentive, it is the critical first step. There may be additional qualification criteria for each incentive.

To request the form needed to certify your company as a primary-sector business, call the ND DOC at (701) 328-5300 or go to [www.growingnd.com](http://www.growingnd.com) and select "Primary Sector Certification" from the drop-down list in the Quick Links section.

### **FUNDING PROGRAMS**

**Community Development Block Grant Program:** The CDBG program assists economic development projects by providing financial assistance to cities and counties. These funds are either in the form of a low interest loan or a grant for infrastructure, which provides assistance to businesses that will create jobs for low and moderate-income persons. To access the program you must contact the Regional Council in your area.

**North Dakota Agricultural Products Utilization Commission:** APUC funding develops new and expanded uses of North Dakota's agricultural products by administering four grant programs: basic and applied research, marketing and utilization, farm diversification and agricultural prototype development.

**North Dakota Development Fund:** This fund was created to provide flexible "gap" financing through loans and equity investments. Funding is available to any primary-sector business, but does not include production agriculture except for investor-owned dairies and feedlots, which are detached from a farming operation and managed by a full-time professional manager.

**Regional Rural Revolving Loan Fund:** These funds are allocated equally among the eight regions of the state. Eligible business projects must be located more than five miles outside the limits of a city with a population of 8,000 or more.

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<sup>1</sup> Manufacturing is a good example of a value-added business because it transforms raw materials and natural resources into goods that have greater value. Farm equipment manufacturers, for example, transform metal and other components into farm equipment.

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

**Business Development:** The Economic Development & Finance Division employs business development professionals to assist primary-sector businesses in achieving their start-up, expansion and recruitment goals. Call (701) 328-5300 or go to [www.growingnd.com](http://www.growingnd.com) for assistance.

**Center for Technology & Business:** The Center certifies women-owned businesses and provides training to individuals interested in learning how to use a computer. They write simplified curriculum for government websites and create learning materials for statewide technology classes. Call (701) 223-0707 or go to [www.trainingnd.com](http://www.trainingnd.com) for assistance.

**International Trade:** The North Dakota Trade Office is a public-private partnership between the North Dakota Department of Commerce and Export ND, a private, nonprofit organization sponsored by the North Dakota District Export Council. Its mission is to expand export-related businesses in the state through advocacy, education, expertise and incentives. Call (701) 319-2275 or go to [www.ndto.com](http://www.ndto.com) for assistance.

**Manufacturing Extension Partnership:** The Dakota Manufacturing Extension Partnership helps new and existing manufacturers develop plans for their future. Staff members identify ways to add value to products while eliminating waste from the manufacturing process. The MEP assists with process development, business plans, marketing, strategic planning, staff training and other customized service offerings to help manufacturers build a quality product in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

The Dakota MEP is the region's resource for providing assistance to companies committed to becoming more competitive, productive and profitable. To learn more, call (701) 328-5378 or go to [www.ndmep.com](http://www.ndmep.com).

**Workforce Development Division:** Labor availability and skill assessment information is needed to support business retention, expansion and recruitment. Because of the low unemployment rates in North Dakota, documentation of available labor is critical. This documentation is provided through Community Labor Availability Studies. The Workforce Development Division coordinates standardized Community Labor Availability Studies with Local Economic Development Corporations and communities every two years. The most recent Community Labor Availability Studies can be accessed by going to [www.ndcommerce.com/wfd/labor-avail/index.html](http://www.ndcommerce.com/wfd/labor-avail/index.html) or by calling (701) 328-5345.



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