

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S
OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS ADVOCACY

2025

BIENNIAL REPORT



Letter from the Director

The Office of Small Business Advocacy (OSBA) is proud to present our 2025 Biennial Report, highlighting our ongoing efforts to support and empower Nevada's entrepreneurial community. Over the past two years, OSBA has been on the ground, working directly with small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs across both our bustling urban centers and the rural communities that form the backbone of our state's economy.

Starting and growing a business should be an achievable goal for all Nevadans. Unfortunately, our state's regulatory environment presents significant challenges. Nevada has some of the most burdensome licensing and compliance requirements in the country. OSBA remains steadfast in our mission to help entrepreneurs navigate these obstacles, advocating for a system that fosters innovation and economic opportunity.

Through direct outreach, community forums, and one-on-one assistance, we have worked tirelessly to connect small business owners with the resources and guidance they need to succeed. Whether assisting with complex licensing processes, advocating for policy reforms, or simply providing a voice for those who too often feel unheard, our commitment to Nevada's entrepreneurs has never been stronger.

This report also explores ways to make Nevada more small business friendly by advancing reforms that support and empower contractors, interior designers, homemade food makers, barbers, and individuals who have been previously incarcerated. By reducing unnecessary barriers in these fields, we can create more opportunities for hardworking Nevadans to thrive in their chosen professions.

Looking ahead, we are hopeful and determined to continue this vital work. Small businesses are the lifeblood of Nevada's economy, and we remain dedicated to ensuring that every entrepreneur—regardless of their background or location—has a fair shot at making their business dreams a reality.

Thank you for your continued support. Together, we will make Nevada a place where small businesses can start, grow, and thrive.

Sincerely,

Sarah Reeves Johnson
Director, Office of Small Business Advocacy



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Overview



Starting a small business is often a key step up the economic ladder for minority and underserved populations. However, the burden of occupational licensing has become too high a barrier for many Nevada entrepreneurs, where more than one in four workers must obtain government permission to work. Many of Nevada's licensing requirements neither improve service quality nor protect the public, and overseeing boards and commissions are often dominated by industry insiders who act as gatekeepers, limiting competition and creating artificial scarcity to maintain higher profits.

Nevada's occupational licensing laws are among the most restrictive in the nation. On average, licenses for low- and moderate-income jobs require 883 days of education and experience, the highest in the U.S. These regulations cost Nevada's economy

\$3.62 billion annually, resulting in 34,700 fewer jobs. They disproportionately impact low-income individuals, minorities, and ex-offenders, creating additional hurdles for those seeking economic opportunity and mobility.

Nevada, like many other states, is struggling to find skilled workers.

Occupational licensing creates barriers to entering many of these skilled trades and makes these shortages worse.

These licensing requirements raise costs for consumers. Because many licensed professionals offer products or services that low-income individuals buy, licensing laws hit low-income communities twice—once in the form of limiting job opportunities and then again in the form of higher prices.



Small business owners face many issues when starting, operating, or closing their businesses. Support for entrepreneurs is particularly important for a state like Nevada. Our state is home to an enterprising population, and small, family-run businesses offer especially valuable work opportunities.

In short, small businesses are an invaluable source of economic dynamism and are oftentimes an important step up the economic ladder for many individuals, including Nevada's immigrant and minority populations.

The Office of Small Business Advocacy (OSBA) was created to help small business owners navigate hurdles related to licensing and business regulations. The Office provides a direct line of contact and personalized support for Nevada's entrepreneurs to resolve issues related to licensing, regulation, and inspection. OSBA also researches and collects data on the challenges facing Nevada's small businesses and recommends improvements to state and local government agencies and the Nevada legislature.

The Office of Small Business Advocacy:

- Resolves individual challenges faced by small business owners.
- Compiles and analyzes examples of barriers to entry.
- Provides information and makes recommendations.
- Monitors the development and implementation of federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies relating to entrepreneurship.

The Lieutenant Governor's Office of Small Business Advocacy is excited to continue serving Nevada's entrepreneurs as we make the Silver State more business friendly.



Key Takeaways

- The Office of Small Business Advocacy provides a unique service to Nevada's entrepreneurial community. No other agency or organization advocates for small business owners inside the government on a one-on-one basis like OSBA.
- OSBA serves as an impartial mediator to help resolve conflicts between small business owners and government agencies. Having the Office of Small Business Advocacy located within a neutral office like the Lieutenant Governor's Office shields OSBA from any perceived conflicts of interest that would impact the Secretary of State, the Governor's Office of Economic Development, and the Department of Business and Industry.
- The main complaints OSBA receive center around a lack of service and communication from state and local government agencies. Many state and local government departments are severely understaffed, and many tasks – such as serving small business owners – get pushed aside.



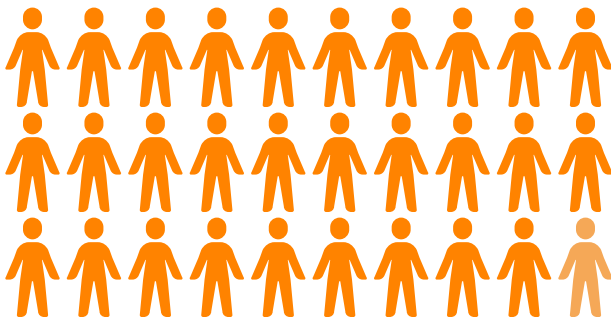
Small Business Statistics in Nevada

334,471

Small businesses in Nevada.



99.3% of all businesses in the state are small businesses.

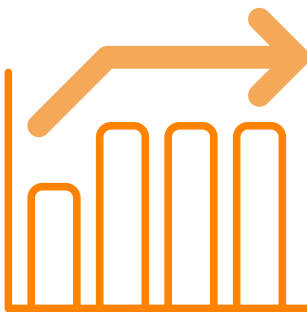


98% of businesses in the state have fewer than 20 employees.



45%

Small businesses employ over half a million people or 45% of the state's workforce.



While the number of small businesses in metropolitan counties has grown by 40%, the number in rural counties has only grown by 7%.



US Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy, Nevada, 2024 Small Business Profile



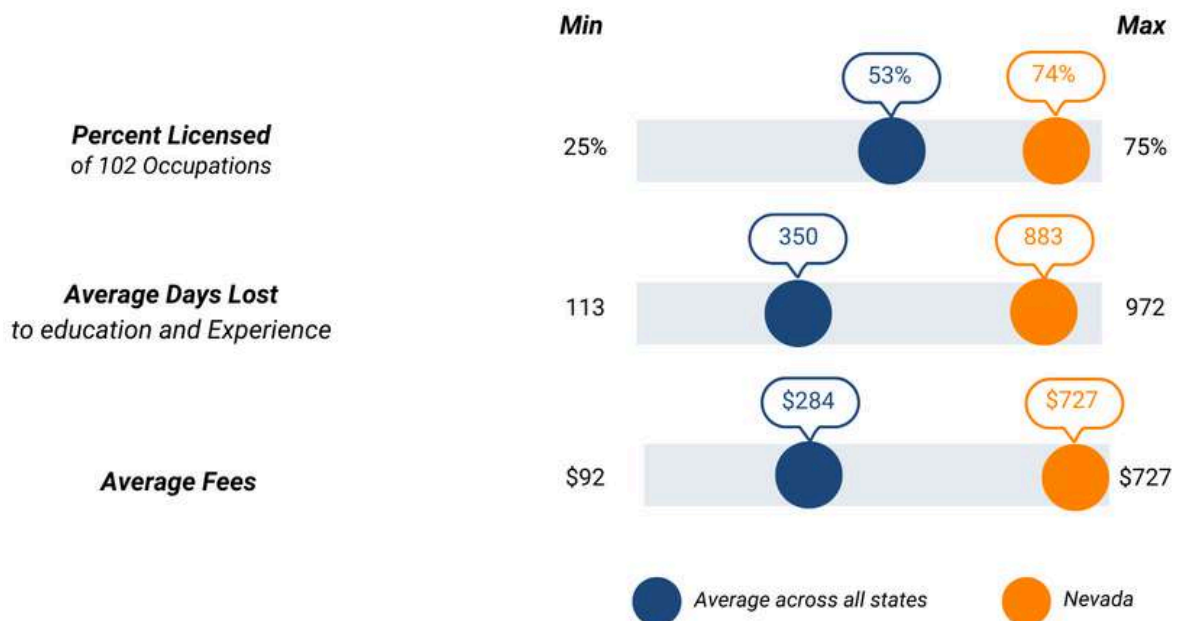
Lieutenant Governor's
Office of Small Business Advocacy
2025 Biennial Report

The Overwhelming State of Occupational Licensing Burdens in Nevada

Finding ways to make it easier to start, operate, and grow a business in Nevada should be a top priority for everyone in government. For many, owning a business is at the heart of the American Dream. Unfortunately, many small business owners in Nevada find the process of obtaining a license to be complex, expensive, and time-consuming.

These licenses impact entrepreneurs and workers. Today, more than one out of every four Nevadans must get permission from the government via an occupational license before they can legally get to work.

In Nevada, workers in 71 occupations, including all the barbering and beauty occupations, face greater than average burdens than entry-level emergency medical technicians (EMTs). The average license for low- and moderate-income jobs in Nevada takes 883 days of education and experience, which makes Nevada the worst state for licensing laws in the nation.[1]



[1] For a detailed breakdown of Nevada's occupational licensing requirements, see Knepper, et al. at [License to Work](#), Institute for Justice



Licensing laws are appropriate for professions that carry a substantial risk of physical harm. However, over the past six decades, occupational licensing has expanded rapidly in Nevada—far beyond professions that potentially endanger the public.

In 1950, just 4 percent of all workers in the United States needed a license to do their jobs.[2] Today, nearly 31 percent of the Silver State’s workforce must first obtain government approval in order to work—the second highest rate nationwide. The number of workers required to hold licenses equals the number with college degrees.

Previously, highly educated professionals such as doctors, lawyers, and engineers were the only occupations that required licensing. Today, licensing has increased most in less-skilled occupations, including carpet layers, massage therapists, agricultural inspectors, and—in Las Vegas—fortune tellers.[3] In fact, for jobs that typically require no higher education, licensing has expanded by almost 75 percent since 1983.[4]

It is not just entrepreneurs who are burdened by these onerous licenses and regulations; they also come at extreme costs to all Nevadans. It is estimated that occupational licensing costs Nevada’s economy \$3.62 billion, leading to 34,700 fewer jobs annually.[5] This amount represents higher prices for consumers who pay more than they would in more competitive markets, as well as the wages not earned by potential licensees who are effectively excluded from the market by onerous regulations.



[2] [Changes in Occupational Licensing Burdens Across States](#), Mercatus Center at George Mason University

[3] [City of Las Vegas Checklist: Psychic Arts License Checklist](#)

[4] [Borders within Borders: The Impact of Occupational Licensing on Immigrant Incorporation](#), American Sociological Association

[5] [At What Cost](#), Institute for Justice.



Nevada's Licensing Burdens: Not Commensurate With Consumer Safety

OCCUPATION	DAYS LOST (EST)	COST	# OF EXAMS REQUIRED
INTERIOR DESIGNER	2,190	\$1,485	1
PAINTER (RESIDENTIAL)	1,460	\$1,040	2
PRESCHOOL TEACHER	1,460	\$642	3
LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR (RES)	1,460	\$1,215	2
BARBER	896	\$165	4
CHILD CARE (HOME)	499	\$481	0
COSMETOLOGIST	373	\$195	3
EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN	35	\$98	2

Further Examples of Onerous Licensing and Regulation in Nevada:

- General contractors—such as painters, cabinet makers, and pipe layers—must pay a national-high \$1,030 and lose four years to an apprenticeship before Nevada permits them to work.
- An aspiring cosmetologist in Nevada must undergo 1,600 hours of training at their own expense. California, by contrast, only requires 1,000 hours of training.
- Becoming an interior designer in Nevada requires a \$250 fee and six years of education or experience. Forty-six other states rightly require no license for interior designers at all.
- While not an occupational license in the truest sense, Nevada's restrictions on selling homemade food are significant barriers for many individuals who want to start a small business but do not initially have the capital necessary to obtain a commercial space.

A research report from the Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation concluded that most licensing information and requirements were "presented in a vague and/or confusing manner." In several instances, the researchers could not find licensing requirement information on the overseeing board's website and were forced to determine requirements from statutes. This spiderweb of information—or lack thereof—is overly cumbersome and challenging, if not impossible, for a layperson to understand and adhere to.[6]

OSBA has identifies areas that, with improvement, would reduce barriers for small business owners in Nevada.

[6] [State of Occupational Licensing in Nevada](#)



883

Days lost to meeting the education
and experience license
requirements of Nevada's low- to
moderate-income jobs

\$3.62B

Cost of regulations to Nevada's
economy annually.





Chilling Effects of Occupational Licensing on Lower Income, Minority, and Immigrant Entrepreneurs

A report from the Obama administration that other research has supported found that occupational barriers disproportionately affect low-income individuals and lower-wage workers, the very people who need economic opportunity the most.[7] A survey of the literature shows that licensing disparately affects ethnic minorities in four out of five studies.[8]

Former acting chair of the Federal Trade Commission Maureen Ohlhausen stated, “I am particularly concerned that occupational licensing disproportionately affects those seeking to move up the lower and middle rungs of the economic ladder, as well as military families and veterans. Occupational licensing regulations can prevent individuals from using their vocational skills and entering new professions, as well as starting small businesses or creating new business models.”[9]

Researchers blame state-level licensing for fewer jobs, higher consumer costs, less competition, increased income inequality, and less social and economic mobility, among other negative externalities.

For lower-income Nevadans, state occupational licensing laws make finding work or opening a small business harder and more expensive, if not outright impossible.

For an example, one study found that black and Hispanic interior designers are 30 percent less likely to hold a college degree compared to their white counterparts. Occupations with licensing requirements that mandate a college degree (Nevada requires interior designers to have a four-year degree, for example) disproportionately exclude minorities from the occupation.[10]

[7] [Occupational Licensing: A Framework for Policymakers](#).

[8] Daniel Klein, Benjamin Powell, and Evgeny Vorochnikov, “Was Occupational Licensing Good for Minorities? A Critique of Marc Law and Mindy Marks,” *Econ Journal Watch* 9

[9] [The latest on Occupational Licensing Reform](#), CATO Institute.

[10] [Mercatus Policy Spotlight: Occupational Licensing and the Poor and Disadvantaged](#).



Because many licensed professionals offer products or services purchased by low-income individuals, licensing requirements hit Nevada's poor twice—once in the form of limiting job opportunities and then again in the form of higher prices.

One particularly onerous example in Nevada is child daycare.

Nevada imposes the second-highest time and education requirements to start a home daycare center in the United States. To operate a home daycare business watching more than four children—or any number of children in Washoe County or the Southern Nevada Health District (which includes all of Clark County)—a potential daycare provider must first get a childcare license. Requirements to get a childcare license can range from:

- An associate degree in early childhood education and 1,000 hours of verifiable experience in a childcare facility; to
- A current credential as a Child Development Associate with an endorsement for preschool-aged children, infants, or toddlers and 2,000 hours of experience.[11]

Daycare providers are subject to a number of regulations, including many occupational licensure laws. State regulations include prescribing maximum child-staff ratios and requiring staff members to have high school diplomas. These requirements are exceedingly burdensome for a person who, for example, is a recent immigrant without a strong command of English.

Nevada allows individuals to start small daycare businesses in their homes, known as “small childcare establishments” (SCEs). An SCE is exempted from Nevada's childcare licensing regime. It allows those caring for four or fewer children to register with Nevada's Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS) as a daycare, granted they pass a criminal background check. This carve-out is essential to ensure access to childcare and promote entrepreneurship. Unfortunately, this carve-out—while beneficial to many—excludes those living in Clark and Washoe County.



[11] For information on how to obtain a child care license, see the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services website at [Child Care Licensing - Home \(nv.gov\)](https://nvhhs.nv.gov/child-care-licensing-home).



Nevada's strict home daycare licensing laws are an outlier among neighboring states:

- In Utah, a home daycare is exempted from licensure for those caring for seven or fewer children.
- In California, applicants must watch a short orientation video to qualify to watch six to eight children at a home daycare.
- In Idaho, applicants must simply submit to a criminal background check to provide daycare for up to six children.
- In Oregon, applicants must complete a short family childcare training to open a daycare for up to ten children.

Home Child Care Licensing: Burden Rankings

	Burden Rank	State	Licensed	Fees	Est. Calendar Days Lost	Exams	Min Grade	Min Age
	2	Nevada	1	\$481	499	0	0	21
★	20	Oregon	1	\$88	2	1	0	18
★	29	California	1	\$284	4	0	0	18
★	42	Utah	1	\$0	0.4	0	0	18
★	—	Arizona	0	0	0	0	0	0
	—	Iowa	0	0	0	0	0	0
★	—	Idaho	0	0	0	0	0	0
	—	Louisiana	0	0	0	0	0	0
	—	New Jersey	0	0	0	0	0	0
	—	South Carolina	0	0	0	0	0	0
	—	South Dakota	0	0	0	0	0	0

★ Denotes neighboring states.

In 2022, seven states (Arizona, Iowa, Idaho, Louisiana, New Jersey, South Carolina, and South Dakota) required no license to operate a home daycare.

The high costs of licensing often price low-income families out of the childcare market. Moreover, regulations may deter qualified teachers from working at childcare centers.[12]

[12] Mitchell, Matthew D., [POLICY SPOTLIGHT: Occupational Licensing and the Poor and Disadvantaged](#), Mercatus Center at George Mason University.





Does Occupational Licensing Affect Reincarceration?

Earning an honest living is one of the best ways to reduce recidivism. However, strict occupational licensing requirements often make it harder for ex-offenders to find work, thwarting their chances of successful reentry. Occupational licensing hurdles are particularly burdensome to ex-offenders as many states make it impossible for those with a past conviction to obtain an occupational license.

It is estimated that more than 19 million Americans, or 8 percent of all adults have been convicted of a felony. This includes one in seven men and one in three black men.[13] But those numbers are limited to felonies. When misdemeanor convictions and arrest records are included, the number of Americans with a criminal record of some kind soars to well over 70 million.[14]

Nevada is particularly unreasonable for its occupational licensing barriers that adversely impact ex-offenders, receiving an “F” from the Institute for Justice.[15] Five states—Alabama, Alaska, Nevada, South Dakota, and Vermont—were tied for last, receiving a zero on a 100-point scale for their lack of protections for felons seeking licenses. Many licensing boards in the state disqualify applicants based on any felony, even if it is unrelated to the license sought.

Several factors went into Nevada’s failing grade:

- Nevada has not set a time limit for the elapsed period between the crime and the application date.

[13] http://users.soc.umn.edu/~uggen/Shannon_Uggen_DEM_2017.pdf

[14] <https://www.politifact.com/new-york/statements/2017/aug/18/andrew-cuomo/yes-one-three-us-adults-have-criminal-record/>

[15] [Barred From Working, Nevada Profile.](#)



- Boards can institute vague and discretionary character standards on applicants, effectively giving them carte blanche to reject any application for any reason.
 - Most of the 111 licensed occupations in Nevada stipulate “good moral character” for applicants. However, interviews with select Nevada occupational licensing board members and staff revealed a broad scope of criteria used to determine if an individual is of “good moral character.” While some boards rely on the applicant’s criminal history, others rely on character references, while for others the process is not clear.[16]
- There does not have to be a set relationship between the crime committed and the application sought.
- The ex-offender’s age when the crime was committed, testimonials, employment history, and evidence of rehabilitation are not considered.
- In 2019, lawmakers created a petition process for ex-offenders, who can ask boards to determine if their criminal record would be disqualifying before they commit to any costly training or application fees. However, the law explicitly states that licensing agencies are “not bound” by those determinations and may rescind them “at any time.”[17]
- Finally, ex-offenders have no right to appeal a board’s decision.

These licensing restrictions come with a heavy price. The Center for Economic and Policy Research estimated that employment barriers for those with felony convictions cost the nation’s economy up to \$87 billion in annual GDP.[18]

Steady employment is critical to prevent reoffending. A report from the Center for the Study of Economic Liberty at Arizona State University found that onerous licensing may worsen recidivism. Researchers found that states with more burdensome licensing laws saw their average recidivism rates jump by 9 percent.[19] By comparison, states with fewer licensing restrictions and no “good character” provisions saw a 2.5 percent decline in recidivism rates.

Fortunately, licensing reform for ex-offenders has found wide, bipartisan support around the country. Nevada must help ex-offenders earn an honest living by reducing the burdens imposed on them by occupational licensing boards.

[16] [State of Occupational Licensing in Nevada](#)

[17] NRS 622.085 <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nrs/NRS-622.html>

[18] <http://cepr.net/images/stories/reports/employment-prisoners-felonies-2016-06.pdf>

[19] <https://research.wpcarey.asu.edu/economic-liberty/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/CSEL-Policy-Report-2016-01-Turning-Shackles-into-Bootstraps.pdf>





How do Occupational Licenses Affect Quality of Service and Consumer Safety?

While occupational licenses may be intended to prevent poor-quality service or to protect public health and safety, the evidence suggests that they do not provide those benefits.[20]

In fact, Nevada's strict licensing regime may lead to reduced service quality and expose the public to greater risk of actual physical harm.

Patterns in occupational licensing requirements show that occupations less likely to involve risk to the public are often more highly controlled than riskier occupations. In fact, Nevada's boards and commissions, which oversee the state's occupational licenses, are filled with well-connected industry insiders who approve new license holders and essentially serve as gatekeepers to new competition.

Rather than protecting the public, many of Nevada's boards and commissions are effectively cartels preventing competition and artificially inflating prices for consumers.

Paul J. Larkin notes in the Harvard Journal of Law & Public Policy a "curious and stubborn fact: Private individuals rarely urge governments to adopt licensing regimes, but private firms often do." [21] By creating a bottleneck via licensing and regulation, incumbent providers can create a false sense of demand to earn artificially high profits.

Perversely, restrictive licensing that leads to less competition and higher prices may even force consumers to resort to far more risky do-it-yourself behavior. A study found that more restrictive electrician licensing rules led to fewer electricians per capita and thus was associated with more accidental electrocutions.[22]

While some licensing burdens are set out to protect consumers, many are not aligned with occupational risks.

[20] Mitchell

[21] Larkin Jr., Paul J., "Public Choice Theory and Occupational Licensing," Harvard Journal of Law & Public Policy 39

[22] Sidney L. Carroll and Robert J. Gaston, "Occupational Restrictions and the Quality of Service Received: Some Evidence," Southern Economic Journal 47



Trends in Occupational Licensing Across the United States

A consensus among economists and policy experts on the left and the right has emerged over the last decade suggesting that “licensure in the United States is excessive, limits competition, raises consumer prices, has a disparate impact on certain communities, and has little or no effect on either quality or public safety.”[23] Researchers blame state-level licensing for fewer jobs, higher consumer costs, less competition, increased income inequality, and less social and economic mobility, among other negative externalities.

Despite widespread acknowledgment of this reality, licensing burdens remain high and pervasive, particularly in the Silver State. In fact, Nevada continues to be the most oppressive state in America as far as licensing burdens are concerned.

Compact Agreements

In recent years, many states have adopted reforms to ease licensing burdens for professionals moving between states. Increasingly popular, reciprocity laws and state compacts allow licensees to practice across state lines and improve mobility. These agreements create a standardized list of requirements, scope of practice parameters, and implement a consistent approach for all compact member states. Forty-five states have adopted at least one compact and 230 pieces of occupational licensure compact legislation related to nine different professions.[24]

Recent legislation also reflects a growing recognition that licensing requirements may create more obstacles between workers and employers than are necessary for public safety. By expediting and simplifying licensing requirements or even doing away with licenses altogether, states are attempting to eliminate these obstacles.

Ex-offender Licensing Reform

Several states, including Georgia, Arkansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, and Tennessee, have passed laws supporting “fair chance licensing,” which removes unnecessary obstacles to ex-offenders seeking gainful employment.[25]

[23] Changes in Occupational Licensing Burdens Across States. Mercatus Center at George Mason University.

[24] 2022 Occupational Licensing Trends. National Conference of State Legislatures.

[25] [Unlicensed & Untapped: Removing Barriers to State Occupational Licenses for People with Records](#). National Employment Law Project.



“Given that nearly one in four workers in America needs a license or certificate to work in their chosen field, reforming state occupational licensing laws—by removing unfair restrictions against people with records—is a commonsense solution with growing bipartisan support,” said Maurice Emsellem of the National Employment Law Project.[26]

Reducing or Eliminating Licensing Requirements

Since 2017, beauty and cosmetology professions have seen a decline in education and experience in licensing requirements nationally. Virginia enacted a bill in 2022 that reduced the number of hours required to obtain a cosmetology license by 33 percent.[27]

Five states, Alabama, Alaska, Colorado, Illinois, and Rhode Island, are re-evaluating the continued existence and functioning of various state licensing boards and professional licenses. Alabama enacted sunset laws for the Real Estate Commission and the State Board of Prosthetists.[28] [29] Similarly, Colorado has implemented sunset provisions for massage therapists and veterinary practices. [30] [31]

The Minnesota Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee proposed a bill that favors lighter regulation. “No government shall require an occupational license, certification, registration, or other occupational regulation that imposes a substantial burden on the person unless the government demonstrates that it has a compelling interest in protecting against present and recognizable harm to the public health and safety.”[32]

[26] <https://www.nelp.org/removing-barriers-to-economic-opportunity-for-americans-with-criminal-records-is-focus-of-new-multistate-initiative/>

[27] “Virginia Board Removes Bureaucratic Barriers to Obtain Cosmetology License.” State of Virginia, Office of the Governor.

[28] http://alisondb.legislature.state.al.us/Alison/SESSBillStatusResult.aspx?BILL=SB98&WIN_TYPE=SELECTED_STATUS

[29] http://alisondb.legislature.state.al.us/Alison/SESSBillStatusResult.aspx?BILL=SB94&WIN_TYPE=SELECTED_STATUS

[30] <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb22-1226>

[31] <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb22-1235>

[32] [Reforming Occupational Licensing Policies](#), Brookings Institute



Recommendations to Make Nevada Truly Business Friendly

The Office of Small Business Advocacy recommends less-burdensome ways for the state to promote health and safety without harming Nevadans simply trying to start a business or find a job. Alternatives such as market competition, certifications, registration, or no regulations at all would maintain standards in different professions while preventing unnecessary obstacles for those willing to work hard and innovate. [33]

The Nevada legislature and local governments throughout the state should eliminate licenses for low-risk occupations and ensure that any remaining licensure requirements are closely related to public health and safety.

Decades of research found that one of the most important factors in determining how heavily a state regulated occupations was the “degree of political influence.” In other words, excessive licensing laws are often advanced by industry insiders who directly profit from the ability to legally exclude potential competitors.

This is cronyism at its worst. Government at all levels should work to simplify Nevadans’ desire to work for themselves, create jobs, and provide for their families, rather than restrict opportunities so the politically connected may profit.

Occupational Licensing Reform

1

Pass legislation that sets ambitious goals for the elimination of licenses and the reduction in licensing burdens.

2

Establish an independent commission charged with examining Nevada’s licensing laws.

- Its first task should be to identify each license the state requires and the burdens associated with those licenses (fees, exams, required training, education, experience, and other obligations).
- The commission should be charged with evaluating all licenses, should not be dominated by members of the licensed professions, should include consumer representatives and representatives from organizations devoted to assisting job-seekers, and should include third-party experts who have no financial stake in licensure. Furthermore, the commission should be guided by a set of criteria for evaluating regulations.[34]
- Licensing boards should ensure that fewer than 50 percent of voting board members are practitioners to reduce the risk of the

[33] [Reforming Occupational Licensing Policies](#), Brookings Institute

[34] Mercatus on Policy: The Effects of Occupational Licensure on Competition, Consumers, and the Workplace. Table 4: Guiding Principles for Occupational Licensing Reform.



board passing self-interested regulations. Additionally, state boards composed of a majority of active market participants and not actively supervised by the state are subject to anti-trust laws.[35]

- The commission should be charged with performing a comprehensive review of all occupations to identify licensure requirements that can be eliminated or reformed.
- The authorizing legislation should commit elected officials to accept the commission's recommendations in their entirety or not at all, providing elected officials some degree of political coverage from the special interests that will inevitably be upset by the elimination of their regulatory privilege.



When public safety is not of concern, the Nevada legislature and local governments should enact certification or registration programs or even no regulation.

- Example: Services provided by locksmiths, ballroom dance instructors, interior designers, pet groomers, and auctioneers do not pose a significant risk to the health and safety of Nevadans and likely do not warrant regulation under a license.
- Reject new licenses that are not supported by high-quality evidence or are not narrowly targeted to protect health and safety. Instead, favor less-restrictive alternatives like inspections, registration, and certification.



When a license is deemed to be in the public interest, states and localities should accept, as much as possible, licenses granted by other states.

- Licensure adds a potential barrier that prevents qualified professionals in some licensed professions from relocating to Nevada because potential applicants must fulfill new licensing requirements when migrating across state lines.
- Recognition of occupational licenses across states, similar to the existing recognition of commercial trucker licenses across states, would help military families and other workers who are required to relocate due to a job for a spouse or other family member.
- Calls to reduce occupational licensing barriers to interstate mobility have come from the executive branch of the federal government, including both the Obama and Trump administrations, as well as the Departments of Defense and the Treasury.

[35] North Carolina State Board of Dental Examiners v. Federal Trade Commission, 2015



Shortcomings of the Office of Nevada Boards, Commissions, and Council Standards

The Office of Small Business Advocacy recognizes that, in accordance with SB 431, the Department of Business and Industry created the Office of Nevada Boards, Commissions, and Council Standards during the 2023 legislative session. The Office released a report in January 2025, “Reforming Nevada’s Boards and Commissions,” which concluded that the state’s boards and commissions should be centralized under the Department of Business and Industry and that some of the state’s boards should be merged.[36]

While OSBA supports and applauds the report’s conclusion to centralize boards and reduce fees, the main issue for Nevada’s entrepreneurs and workers is that many of these boards and commissions and the licenses they require should not exist at all.

Government agencies and the individuals employed there should always be held accountable for their work. OSBA receives two main complaints from small business owners: 1) licensing, regulations, and zoning are confusing and overwhelming, and 2) there’s a lack of communication from state and local government agencies such as the Governor’s Department of Business and Industry.

Many state and local government departments are severely understaffed, and tasks like serving small business owners get pushed aside. In addition, government agencies may create policies that make their jobs easier but do not benefit the public or our state’s small business owners.

The Governor’s Department of Business and Industry oversees Nevada’s boards and commissions and now wants to manage administrative oversight, transparency, and accountability:

“Having a single office responsible for all boards allows for better monitoring of compliance, more efficient handling of complaints and investigations, and the ability to swiftly address any issues that arise.”

Maintaining these functions under the same roof presents a severe conflict of interest, allowing a situation where “the fox guards the henhouse.” Licensees and applicants are left with no unbiased resource to mitigate issues that arise.

In a recent example, Forbes Travel Guide was forced to seek representation from law firm McDonald Carano to fight the State of Nevada’s Private Investigator’s Licensing Board’s (PILB) position that Forbes Travel Guide should be required to obtain licensure for all of its reviewers because its employees were acting as “private investigators” or “mystery shoppers.”

[36] Kristopher Sanchez and Nikki Haag. Governor’s Department of Business and Industry [“Reforming Nevada’s Boards and Commissions.”](#) January 2025.



Obtaining a private investigators license in Nevada requires, “At least 5 years (2,000 hours each year, totaling 10,000 hours) experience as an investigator, or the equivalent thereof.”[37] In other words, an individual would have to already be a career law enforcement officer in order to meet the requirements to become a licensed investigator. Other requirements to become a licensed private investigator include passing a 100-question exam that is only administered four times a year and an up-front payment of \$970 in fees.[38][39] Additionally, no one convicted of a felony or any crime involving moral turpitude or the illegal use or possession of a dangerous weapon can receive a private investigator license in Nevada.[40]

In practice, the PILB wanted the authors of a guidebook to become investigators at a police department for five years then pass an exam in order to write hotel, restaurant, and sightseeing recommendations.

The PILB, in a board meeting held in September 2024, showcased a disturbing lack of knowledge or understanding about the nationally published travel guide, with one board member asking, “Has any subpoena been issued to collect the information (for your guide)?”[41]

The attorney for Forbes Travel Guide elucidated the ridiculous hypocrisy that exists in the PILB and many Nevada occupational licensing boards:

“The statute says if you review anybody’s business and you accept consideration for it you need to be licensed. There are restaurant reviewers that work for the newspapers in this town who are not licensed as private investigators, but nonetheless, go into restaurants, don’t tell anybody they’re there to review their food, eat, write about it, publish their findings. The board does not license them.”

According to PILB’s broad definition of “mystery shopper,” social media users, bloggers, and members of the public who post reviews to online platforms such as Google, Facebook, Yelp, TripAdvisor, or OpenTable must obtain a private investigators license.

McDonald Carano sought assistance from Kristopher Sanchez, Director of the Governor’s Department of Business and Industry (and head of the Office of Nevada Boards, Commissions, and Council Standards), and Sonia Joya, Southern Nevada Outreach Director for Governor Joe Lombardo, in a letter dated June 18, 2024. [42] As of December’s meeting, this issue still has not been resolved for Forbes Travel Guide.

Fighting burdensome and dumb regulations and needless hassles like this is why OSBA is desperately needed in Nevada. It is imperative that OSBA remain an independent agency outside the management of the Governor’s Department of Business and Industry or any other office that oversees business regulations or licensing.

[37] <https://pilb.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/pilbnvgov/Content/Licensees/FirstTimeLicenseeInfoSheet.pdf>

[38] <https://pilb.nv.gov/Licensees/ExamDates/>

[39] <https://pilb.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/pilbnvgov/Content/Licensees/FirstTimeLicenseeInfoSheet.pdf>

[40] https://pilb.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/pilbnvgov/Content/Forms/LicenseBookletJAN2019_8X11.pdf

[41] <https://pilb.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/pilbnvgov/Content/Boards-commissions/2024/Septpercent202024percent20Protectedpercent20Boardpercent20Meetingpercent20Minutes.pdf>

[42] <https://pilb.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/pilbnvgov/Content/Boards-commissions/2024/1-FORBESpercent20LETTERpercent20TOpercent20PILB.pdf>



Reform Opportunity: Ex-Offenders

In 2023, the Nevada legislature considered AB 363, which would have improved the process licensing entities use to determine whether a criminal record disqualifies a person from securing a license.[43] This legislative action would ensure that licensing boards do not consider old and irrelevant convictions that do not bear on a person's ability to safely perform the duties of the occupation, and it provides people with a meaningful path for having adverse decisions reviewed.

Despite the bipartisan coalition strongly supporting this bill, it died in committee.

OSBA supports refiling AB 363 in the 2025 legislative session and the following changes to make the path to gainful employment easier for ex-offenders:

- 1** Avoid blanket bans on licenses for ex-offenders. Denials should be based only on crimes directly related to the license sought.
- 2** Boards should be required to consider multiple factors, including evidence of rehabilitation and the time elapsed since the crime was committed.
- 3** Provide impartial hearings to guarantee due process for applicants and require boards to bear the burden of proof that an ex-offender would pose a genuine threat to public safety if licensed.

Reform Opportunity: Beauty

Lower the education and experience required for a barber's license.

It is harder to get a barbering license in Nevada than in any other state. Nevada requires aspiring barbers to complete 1,500 hours of education (200 classroom hours and 1,300 practical hours cutting hair at the barber school), followed by an 18-month, full-time apprenticeship. Only two other states require an apprenticeship (it is usually an alternative to school, not an additional requirement), and the required duration is much shorter.[44]

OSBA recommends the following changes to make it easier to become a licensed barber:

- 1** Reduce the education requirement to 1,000 hours, a proposal supported by the Future of the Beauty Industry Coalition (FBIC). The FBIC points out that there is no reason why the education and experience requirements should vary so much between states.
- 2** Allow aspiring barbers to simultaneously fulfill their 1,000 hours through a combination of school and apprenticeships. Students should be able to complete their practical hours either through their barbering school or through an approved apprenticeship, whichever they prefer.

[43] See AB 363, [35] [North Carolina State Board of Dental Examiners v. Federal Trade Commission](#), 2015

[44] Knepper, et al., at <https://ij.org/report/license-to-work-3/tw-occupation-profile/barber/>



- 3** Eliminate statutory language that requires apprenticeships to be structured as 40 hours per week jobs (NAC §643.030). Many aspiring barbers want to be able to fulfill their required hours while working other part- or full-time jobs so they can financially support themselves and their families.
- 4** Allow aspiring barbers to simultaneously fulfill their 1,000 hours through a combination of school and apprenticeships. Students should be able to complete their practical hours either through their barbering school or through an approved apprenticeship, whichever they prefer.

Lower the education and experience requirements for a cosmetology license.

Nevada also places extremely high licensing burdens on aspiring cosmetologists, requiring 1,600 hours of education (a combination of classroom hours and practical experience) to become licensed. This is near the top of the list nationally, with states' required hours ranging from 1,000 to 2,100 hours.[45]

OSBA recommends the following changes to make it easier to work in the cosmetology industry:

- 1** Reduce the requirement for a full-service license to 1,000 hours.
- 2** Reduce the 1,000-hour “hair designer” license to 500 hours.
- 3** Allow unlicensed individuals to cut hair under the supervision of licensed cosmetologists or barbers.
- 4** Exempt blow-dry styling (already exempt in six states), hair braiding (already exempt in 33 states), and shampooing (already exempt in 18 states) from licensing.
- 5** Make apprenticeships more accessible by recognizing U.S. Department of Labor-registered programs as valid paths to licensure and allow all Nevada residents to participate in them (rather than only rural residents).

[43] See AB 363, [35] [North Carolina State Board of Dental Examiners v. Federal Trade Commission](#), 2015

[44] Knepper, et al., at <https://ij.org/report/license-to-work-3/ltw-occupation-profile/barber/>

[45] Knepper, et al., at <https://ij.org/report/license-to-work-3/ltw-occupation-profile/cosmetologist/>



Reform Opportunity: Contractors

Eliminate license requirements for lower-skilled occupations.

All contractors in Nevada must obtain variations of the same license, regardless of the complexity or safety hazards inherent in the trade. Minimum requirements to qualify as a contractor include, among other demands:

- Four years of relevant experience, both in the specific trade and in business administration.
- At least one exam, and often two (a trade exam and a business administration exam).
- Approximately \$1,000 in fees (\$300 application fee, \$600 license fee, and miscellaneous fees paid to third parties for exams).[46]

However, painting walls, manicuring lawns, and pruning trees does not require the same level of expertise nor pose the health and safety risks if done improperly as, for example, wiring a commercial building or constructing multi-story housing.

These lower-skilled trades are excellent job opportunities for people without formal education, English language learners, recent immigrants, and other people on the first rungs of the economic ladder. They are also crucial jobs that home builders need to hire in order to address Nevada's housing shortage.

OSBA proposes eliminating the contractor license requirement for certain trades that require less skill to safely complete, including, but not limited to:

- **C-4 Painting and decorating**
- **C-10 Landscape contracting**
- **C-19 Installing terrazzo and marble**
- **C-20 Tiling**
- **C-42 Constructing, altering, or improving video service networks**

In place of the contractor's license requirement, OSBA proposes a simple registration and bonding/insurance requirement. This ensures Nevada can still protect consumers and easily investigate complaints.

Cut fees and experience requirements.

Nevada requires four years of demonstrated, relevant experience in order to get a contractor's license, which is higher than most states' requirements. Nevada's requirements are drastically higher than neighboring states and on par with California:

[46] For information on how to obtain a contractor's license, see the Nevada State Contractors' Board's website: http://www.nscb.state.nv.us/licensing_requirements.htm.



- Arizona: Between two and four years; none for certain occupations such as paving and drywall.[47]
- California: four years.[48]
- Idaho: none for most occupations; six years for HVAC and sheet metal contracting. [49]
- Utah: none.[50]

Some of the occupations for which Nevada requires a full-fledged contractor license would not require any licensure in a large number of other states. For example, painting contractors are licensed at the state level in only 27 other states. The process to receive a landscape contractor's license in other states usually amounts to little more than paperwork and a registration fee (typically around \$100). Only 13 states require landscape contractors to take an exam, and only nine have experience requirements.[51]

Neighboring states also recognize that occupations like painting and sheet metal work are incredibly different and require distinct levels of training. Nevada should follow suit by considering reforms similar to those adopted by Utah in 2017. Utah eliminated a two-year experience requirement and all exam requirements for 33 specialty contractor licenses.[52]

Nevada's fees are also exceptionally steep. Fees to obtain a contractor's license vary by specialty across states, but those in neighboring states tend to range from \$300 to \$500 total; Idaho's fee for lower-skilled contracting specialties like drywall and cement work is just \$50. Similar to our recommendation for experience requirements, Nevada should—at the very least—cut its license and application fees in half.

Reciprocity

Licensing reciprocity allows workers licensed in other states the freedom to move to Nevada without incurring the incredible burden of having to go through the licensing process again. Nevada should more broadly recognize the licenses of other states and reduce/eliminate the barriers to transferring an out-of-state license to a Nevada license.

Nevada will not waive the 4-year experience requirement if a contractor has merely been investigated for misconduct in another state (NAC §624.590). This language should be changed to include only a finding of guilt and/or sanction leveled against a contractor by the relevant licensing authority to be disqualifying, not merely the allegation or investigation thereof. Further, the nature, age, and magnitude of the infraction should be considered when determining whether a contractor's experience will be recognized.

[46] For information on how to obtain a contractor's license, see the Nevada State Contractors' Board's website: http://www.nscb.state.nv.us/licensing_requirements.htm.

[47] Knepper, et al. at <https://ij.org/report/license-to-work-3/ltw-state-profile/arizona/>

[48] Knepper, et al. at <https://ij.org/report/license-to-work-3/ltw-state-profile/california/>

[49] Knepper, et al. at <https://ij.org/report/license-to-work-3/ltw-state-profile/idaho/>

[50] Knepper, et al. at <https://ij.org/report/license-to-work-3/ltw-state-profile/utah/>

[51] Knepper, et al. at <https://ij.org/report/license-to-work-3/report/reform-spotlight-contractor-trades-licensing/>

[52] "Utah Construction Trades Licensing Act." H.B. 313, 62d Leg., Reg. Sess. (Utah 2017). <https://le.utah.gov/~2017/bills/static/hb0313.html>.



Expand the handyman exemption.

Most states allow a certain amount of “handyman” type work to be done without a license. Nevada’s exemption applies to any work worth less than \$1,000 in combined parts and labor. A simple job, accounting for parts and labor, can quickly reach \$1,000, especially in light of today’s inflation. Idaho’s exemption is \$2,000 and Utah’s is \$3,000. But given the lack of inherent safety risk to customers in this type of work—such as hanging shelves, patching broken drywall, and repairing a damaged fence, which most lay people are capable of doing for themselves if they are so inclined—OSBA recommends Nevada become a national leader and increase its handyman exemption to \$10,000.

Reform Opportunity: Child & Senior Care

The United States is confronting a growing crisis marked by an increasing demand for caregiving services (including the elderly, children, and individuals with disabilities) and a significant shortage of professional caregivers. If left unaddressed, this crisis poses far-reaching consequences for the economy and society.

There is an extreme shortage of childcare and senior care in Nevada. Fixing this issue should be a priority for Nevada legislators. When working-age individuals cannot participate in the workforce because of a lack of child care or senior care, the ripple effect can be felt throughout the economy.

According to a recent report from the Boston Consulting Group, lack of adequate care will cost the United States \$290 billion annually in GDP by 2030 due to lost productivity, earnings, and tax revenue from workers who cannot fully participate in the workforce due to care challenges. [53]

An estimated 40 million caregivers rely on paid helpers, such as nannies, daycares, and nursing homes, to maintain their employment. If the shortage within the care sector continues, many of these individuals will be driven out of the workforce, causing further economic decline.[54] These factors particularly impact women who are often tasked with the role of family caregiver.

OSBA recommends the following changes to make affordable childcare more accessible to families and create entrepreneurship opportunities for those who otherwise would not have the option:

- 1 Increase the number of children SCEs may serve from four to six.**
- 2 Preempt local districts’ ability to impose stricter regulations on home daycare facilities than what is set by the state legislature. This will ensure access to small childcare establishments in Nevada’s main population centers.**

[53] *Solving the \$290 Billion Care Crisis*, Boston Consulting Group.

[54] *Caregiving in Crisis: Understanding the U.S. Care Economy Shortage*, Center Forward.



Reform Opportunity: Interior Design

Nevada is only one of three states to license interior designers—and all three impose incredibly high burdens on these entrepreneurs who do not engage in any services that trigger health and safety concerns.[55] Obtaining an interior design license in Nevada requires the completion of four years of education, an additional two years of experience, and the payment of nearly \$1,600 in fees. The fact that 48 states do not require an occupational license to be an interior designer should be argument enough that such a license should not be required in Nevada, either.[56]

Reform Opportunity: Food Freedom

OSBA worked with several clients who want to explore ways to make and sell food from their homes.

Unfortunately, Nevada's homemade food laws are some of the strictest in the nation. Nevada only allows the sale of a limited list of non-potentially hazardous foods, prohibits online sales and sales to retailers, and arbitrarily limits cottage food producers' annual sales to just \$35,000.[57] This limits the ability of Nevadans—particularly women living in rural areas and those who wish to make culturally significant foods—to earn a living from home.[58] It is also contrary to the national trend towards expanding homemade food sales. Currently, seven states (California, Iowa, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Utah, and Wyoming) have “food freedom” laws, which allow the sale of nearly all foods from home. And recent data shows that doing so is incredibly safe.[59]



[55] Knepper, et al., at [53] [Solving the \\$290 Billion Care Crisis](#). Boston Consulting Group.

[54] [Caregiving in Crisis: Understanding the U.S. Care Economy Shortage](#). Center Forward.

[56] For additional evidence regarding the economic protectionism inherent in interior design licensing and titling laws, see Carpenter, D.M. (Nov. 2007). *Designing Cartels: How Industry Insiders Cut Out Competition*. Arlington, VA: Institute for Justice. <https://ij.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Interior-Design-Study.pdf>

[57] For a detailed breakdown of Nevada's homemade food law, please see <https://ij.org/issues/economicliberty/homemade-food-seller/nevada/>.

[58] McDonald, J. (2017). *Flour Power: How Cottage Food Entrepreneurs Are Using Their Home Kitchens to Become Their Own Bosses*. Arlington, VA: Institute for Justice. <https://ij.org/report/cottage-foods-survey/>.

[59] New Data Show Homemade Food for Sale is Incredibly Safe. Arlington, VA: Institute for Justice. <https://ij.org/report/new-data-show-homemade-food-for-sale-is-incredibly-safe/>

[60] Food vendors in Arizona excited that the 'tamale bill' has been signed. <https://www.12news.com/video/life/food/75-9b3527ce-bafe-4114-bf11-edca92a9e2be>



Food freedom reforms have already proven successful in states like Wyoming and Utah. These states adopted laws that allow home-based producers to sell almost any type of homemade food directly to consumers, with minimal regulatory burdens. These changes led to a thriving cottage food industry, stronger local economies, and expanded consumer choice—all without compromising public safety.

Last year, Arizona became the eighth state to adopt a food freedom law.[60] Arizona's new law, which went into effect in 2024, is now the nation's most permissive homemade food law.[61]

By adopting "food freedom" reforms, Nevada has the opportunity to unleash the potential of small-scale food producers, foster economic development, and celebrate the state's cultural diversity.

Challenges Facing Nevada's Home-Based Food Industry

- **Overly Restrictive Regulations:** Nevada imposes tight restrictions on home-based food businesses through its cottage food laws. These laws:
 - Limit the types of products that can be sold to a narrow range of non-perishable goods.
 - Require extensive permitting and inspections, often creating high costs for small-scale producers.
 - Restrict sales to specific venues, such as farmers' markets or community events, and ban online sales or other direct-to-consumer models.
- **Barriers to Producing Culturally Significant Foods**
 - Many individuals in Nevada's diverse communities seek to produce culturally significant foods, such as tamales, kimchi, traditional baked goods, or dried fruit. However, existing regulations often prohibit selling these foods, despite their low risk of causing harm.
- **Limited Economic Opportunities for Rural Areas**
 - In rural Nevada, opportunities for economic development are scarce. Allowing individuals to produce and sell homemade foods could stimulate local economies by creating small businesses that require minimal startup costs. However, current laws make it nearly impossible for rural residents to benefit from the cottage food industry.

[61] <https://ij.org/press-release/home-based-foodproducers-encourage-arizona-lawmakers-to-finish-the-job-and-free-entrepreneurs/>



OSBA recommends following in neighboring states' footsteps by adopting similarly permissive food freedom legislation, including:

- 1** Eliminate the arbitrary \$35,000 annual cap on gross homemade food sales.
- 2** Allow all types of food to be sold.
- 3** Allow direct-to-consumer sales. Foods sales should be permitted from home, at farmers' markets, and online.
- 4** Streamline the permitting process for home-based food businesses. This will encourage more individuals to participate in the industry. Specific actions include: Eliminate or reduce permit fees for small-scale producers; provide clear, accessible guidelines for compliance; and offer affordable or free food safety training to support safe production practices.

OSBA worked with policymakers, food experts, and cottage food makers to help craft legislation that will be included in this legislative session.



Reform Opportunity: Farm-to-Fork Events

OSBA worked with a Nevada farm when their application to host a farm-to-fork event was rejected because the primary ingredient in their pasta salad (the pasta noodles) did not “substantially” make use of farm-grown ingredients. According to the application rejection, commercially purchased pasta for a pasta salad was not acceptable, while a homemade version of pasta would be allowed to be included. Similarly, farm-made ice cream was rejected because not all ingredients were from the farm, but commercially purchased ice cream with a farm-made sauce was allowed. Pulled pork was permissible only if the whiskey for the whiskey barbeque sauce was distilled on the farm.

NRS 446.868 allows farms to hold farm-to-fork events under certain conditions without being classified as food establishments for health inspections.

To qualify as a farm-to-fork event, the following conditions must be met:

- Poultry and rabbit meat must be raised, butchered, and processed on the farm in accordance with NRS chapter 583.
- All other food items, including salads, side dishes, and desserts, must be prepared on the farm using ingredients substantially produced there.

The term “substantially” creates a particular problem as this is left up to interpretation of each inspector. In addition, the purpose of farm-to-fork events is to highlight Nevada’s amazing agriculture, not to produce all the ingredients in one location.

OSBA supports updating the NRS code to 1) define “substantially” to eliminate conflicting interpretations and 2) allow Nevada-made farm products, even when the product is not from that particular location, to be included as a farm-to-fork ingredient.



Reform Opportunity: Food Trucks / Food Carts

The food truck and food cart industry has grown significantly, providing affordable and diverse food options while supporting small business owners. However, OSBA continues to work with food truck clients on licensing and regulatory issues that hinder their growth and success.

OSBA has identified the following key issues:

- **Multiple Permits and Licensing Requirements**

- Food truck operators must navigate an overwhelming number of permits, including health permits, fire safety permits, and business licenses, at both state and local levels. Operators must apply for permits in multiple jurisdictions which creates unnecessary duplication and confusion.

- **Vendor Location Restrictions**

- Many local regulations restrict where food trucks can operate, often favoring brick-and-mortar establishments or limiting access to high-traffic areas. These restrictions reduce revenue opportunities for vendors and limit consumer access to diverse food options.

- **Health Department Compliance**

- Health department standards for food trucks are often excessively strict and inconsistently enforced, with requirements varying significantly between inspectors. Failed inspections can result in costly fines or closures, creating uncertainty for vendors.

- **Expensive and Inaccessible Event Permits**

- Event permits for food trucks are becoming increasingly costly and difficult to obtain. This discourages participation in local events that provide vital revenue streams.



- **Lack of Commissary Kitchens**

- Food trucks are often required to use commissary kitchens for food preparation and storage. However, these kitchens are scarce, expensive, and frequently located far from vendors' operating areas, adding significant operational costs and logistical challenges.

OSBA recommends the following reforms to address these issues:

1

Streamline Permitting and Licensing

- Implement a one-stop online system for food truck operators to apply for all necessary permits and licenses, reducing redundancy and simplifying compliance.
- Create uniform licensing standards across state and local jurisdictions to eliminate conflicting requirements.

2

Reform Vendor Location Policies

- Establish clear and consistent guidelines that balance food truck access with the needs of brick-and-mortar businesses.

3

Standardize Health Department Compliance

- Develop clear, statewide health and safety standards for food trucks to ensure consistency across inspections.
- Provide training for inspectors to ensure fair and uniform enforcement of health codes.
- Offer more frequent educational resources and workshops for food truck operators to help them comply with regulations.



Reform Opportunity: Three-Tier Alcohol System

In 2024, OSBA worked with several distributors and producers of alcohol and alcohol-related products. Each time, the three-tier distribution system caused significant headaches and barriers to these entrepreneurs.

The "three-tier" alcohol distribution system in Nevada, like in most U.S. states, was established after the repeal of Prohibition. The system separates the alcohol industry into three distinct tiers:

1. **Producers (breweries, wineries, distilleries):** Manufacture alcoholic beverages.
2. **Distributors (wholesalers):** Purchase alcohol from producers and sell it to retailers.
3. **Retailers (bars, restaurants, liquor stores):** Sell alcohol directly to consumers.

Under this system, businesses within each tier cannot own or operate in another tier, creating strict separations. For example, a brewery cannot directly sell its products to retailers or consumers in most cases; it must go through a licensed distributor.

While the three-tier system was designed to prevent monopolies and ensure regulatory oversight, it creates significant barriers for small businesses, especially independent producers and retailers.



OSBA has identified the following key issues:

- **Limited Market Access for Small Producers**

- Small breweries, wineries, and distilleries often struggle to secure contracts with distributors. Larger distributors tend to prioritize established brands with high sales volumes, leaving small producers with limited options to reach retailers and consumers.
- Impact: Craft producers may face restricted growth opportunities, limited brand visibility, and reduced sales potential.

- **Reduced Profit Margins**

- Small producers must sell their products to distributors at wholesale prices, who then mark up the price before selling to retailers. This markup reduces the profits for both producers and retailers.
- Impact: Small businesses have less capital to reinvest in their operations, hire staff, or expand.

- **Lack of Control Over Distribution**

- Under the three-tier system, producers cannot directly manage their product distribution or marketing strategies. They rely entirely on distributors to promote their products and ensure availability.
- Impact: Small producers risk losing control over how and where their products are marketed and sold, making it harder to establish a competitive foothold.

- **Barriers for Small Retailers**

- Retailers face limited flexibility in purchasing alcohol directly from local producers, as they are required to go through distributors. This can lead to higher costs due to distributor markups and limited access to niche or local products that distributors may not prioritize.
- Impact: Small retailers may find it difficult to differentiate themselves from larger competitors or meet consumer demand for unique, local options.

- **Challenges for Direct-to-Consumer Sales**

- The three-tier system often restricts small producers from selling directly to consumers, either on-site (e.g., in tasting rooms) or online. While some exceptions exist, these are usually limited in scope.
- Impact: Producers lose a vital revenue stream and an opportunity to build direct relationships with their customers.



OSBA recommends the following reforms to address these issues:

- 1** **Expand Self-Distribution Rights.** Allow small producers to self-distribute their products to retailers and consumers up to a certain production volume.
- 2** **Simplify Direct-to-Consumer Sales.** Permit broader direct-to-consumer sales, including online sales, with appropriate safeguards.
- 3** **Encourage Small Distributor Licenses.** Create licensing opportunities for small, independent distributors focused on promoting local and niche products.
- 4** **Reduce Barriers for Retailers.** Allow retailers to purchase limited quantities directly from local producers for specific products, bypassing the distributor requirement.

By addressing these challenges, Nevada can support small businesses in the alcohol industry, promote local economic growth, and enhance consumer access to unique and innovative products.



Small Business Outreach

Over the past year, OSBA hosted resource fairs and town halls with small business owners, elected officials, heads of government agencies, and community partners. Held in cities and towns throughout the state, these events have targeted historically underserved communities and have helped to highlight issues faced by small business owners.



RESOURCE FAIRS

It is important that OSBA meet small business owners in their communities to hear directly about the issues impacting them.

In partnership with other state and local agencies and stakeholders, OSBA hosts business resource fairs for existing and potential small business owners. Events like these help entrepreneurs understand what resources and tools are available to them in their community and throughout the state.

3,631

Number of
attendees at
resource fairs.



2024 Small Business Resource Fairs

CENTRAL NEVADA SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE FAIR

 Tonopah Convention Center

88
Attendees

RENO-SPARK SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE FAIR

 Reno + Sparks Chamber of
Commerce

130
Attendees

FERNLEY SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE FAIR

 Fernley City Hall

75
Attendees

RENO FOOD BUSINESS RESOURCE FAIR

 Neil Road Recreation Center

275
Attendees



2024 Small Business Resource Fairs

RENO STARTUP WEEK



1,029

Attendees

VETERANS BUSINESS RESOURCE FAIR



50

Attendees

FOOD TRUCK RESOURCE FAIR



321

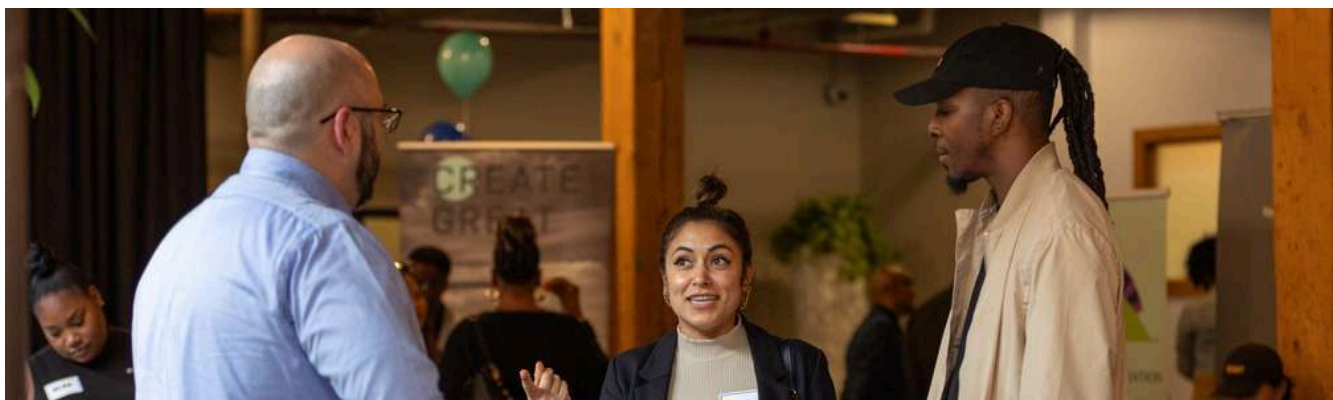
Attendees

MOM'S RESOURCE FAIR



87

Attendees



2024 Small Business Resource Fairs

COMMITTED TO OUR BUSINESS COMMUNITY EXPO



Las Vegas Convention Center

1,248

Attendees

STARTUP NV SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE FAIR



WeWork Town Square

276

Attendees

SCORE WOMEN'S RESOURCE EVENTS



Business & Industry

52

Attendees



OBSA Townhalls & Forums

It's vitally important for OSBA to meet with and hear directly from small business owners and stakeholders about the issues affecting their ability to start, run, and grow their businesses. Therefore, OSBA holds regular listening sessions with a diverse set of small business owners and business organizations throughout the state. These help provide entrepreneurs with direct access to government agencies and elected officials.

Elected officials, heads of agencies such as the Secretary of State's Office, the Department of Taxation, the Governor's Office of Economic Development, and the Department of Business and Industry attended OSBA's events to better understand the needs and frustrations of the state's small business owners. At these events, OSBA continues to hear that small business owners experience frustration navigating city, county, and state licensing requirements and regulations.



Latino Stakeholders Council



85
Attendees

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Stavros Anthony, Nevada Lieutenant Governor

Angie Taylor, Nevada State Senator

P.K. O'Neill, Assemblyman

Mariluz Garcia, Washoe County Commissioner

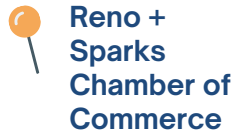
Lori Bagwell, Carson City Mayor

NOTABLE ATTENDEES

- **Ann Silver**, Chief Executive Officer, Reno + Sparks Chamber of Commerce
- **Ronni Hannaman**, Executive Director, Carson City Chamber of Commerce
- **Danny DeLaRosa**, President and CEO, Greater Nevada Credit Union
- **Leslie Mix**, Community Activist, Founder of Latino Stakeholders Council, Reno Latino Chamber of Commerce, Business Relations Specialist at Sierra Nevada Job Corps
- **Kyeema Peart**, Director, GOED's Office of Entrepreneurship
- **Lurdes Madrigal**, Director, Nevada Veterans Business Outreach Center



Reno Forum



120
Attendees

NOTABLE ATTENDEES

- **Ann Silver**, Chief Executive Officer, Reno + Sparks Chamber of Commerce
- **Ronni Hannaman**, Executive Director, Carson City Chamber of Commerce
- **Danny DeLaRosa**, President and CEO, Greater Nevada Credit Union
- **Leslie Mix**, Community Activist, Founder of Latino Stakeholders Council, Reno Latino Chamber of Commerce, Business Relations Specialist at Sierra Nevada Job Corps
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Alexis Hansen, Assemblywoman

Clara Andriola, Washoe County Commissioner

Michael Clark, Washoe County Commissioner

Miguel Martinez, City of Reno Councilman

Meghan Ebert, City of Reno Councilwoman

Kathleen Taylor, City of Reno Councilwoman

Dian Vanderwell, City of Sparks Councilwoman



Carson City Forum



176
Attendees

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Stavros Anthony, Nevada Lieutenant Governor
Cisco Aguilar, Secretary of State
Lisa Krasner, Nevada State Senator
P.K. O'Neill, Assemblyman
Lori Bagwell, Carson City Mayor
Lisa Schuette, Carson City Board of Supervisors
Nancy Paulson, Carson City Manager
Ken Furlong, Carson City Sheriff
Andrew Rasor, Carson City Treasurer
Melanie Bruketta, Carson City Justice of the Peace
Joe Cacioppo, President, Carson City School District Board of Trustees
Clay Mitchell, Storey County Commissioner
Dian Vanderwell, City of Sparks Councilwoman



NOTABLE ATTENDEES

- **Kyle Dalpe**, President, Western Nevada College
- **Ronni Hannaman**, Executive Director, Carson City Chamber of Commerce
- **Adrea Gibbs**, Executive Director, Storey County Chamber of Commerce
- **Hope Sullivan**, Director, Carson City Community Development
- **Christine Brandon**, Executive Director, Western Nevada Development District
- **Mendy Elliott**, Nevada Battle Growth, and Senior Vice President/Public Policy Director, Flynn Giudici Government Affairs
- **A'Keia Sanders**, Director, Governor's Office of Federal Assistance
- **Jim Peckham**, Director, F.I.S.H.
- **Lara Mather**, Business Development, Storey County
- **Tatjana Vukovic**, Deputy Director, Northern Nevada Development Authority
- **Tray Abney**, Nevada State Director, National Federation of Independent Business
- **Sarina Nez**, Program Officer, Nevada Indian Commission
- **Karsten Heise**, Senior Director of Strategic Programs & Innovation, GOED
- **Shari Davis**, Director, Rural Economic & Community Development, Main Street, GOED
- **Kyeema Peart**, Director, Office of Entrepreneurship, GOED
- **Paul Diflo**, Business Portal Administrator, Secretary of State
- **Milt Stewart**, Chief Executive Officer, Nevadaworks
- **Will Adler**, Principal, Silver State Government Affairs



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Fallon Forum



176
Attendees

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Stavros Anthony, Nevada Lieutenant Governor

Cisco Aguilar, Nevada Secretary of State

Robin Titus, Nevada State Senator

Gregory Koenig, Assemblyman

Ken Tedford, Fallon Mayor

Kelly Frost, City of Fallon Councilwoman

Myles Getto, Churchill County Commissioner

Jim Barbee, Churchill County Commissioner

NOTABLE ATTENDEES

- **Chris Sewell**, Director, Nevada Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation
- **JJ Goicoechea**, Director, Nevada Department of Agriculture

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- **Christine Brandon**, Executive Director, Western Nevada Development District
- **Adriane Roberts-Larson**, Deputy Executive Director, Administrative Services, Department of Taxation
- **William Brewer**, Executive Director, Nevada Rural Housing Authority
- **Daren Winkelman**, Administrator, Central Nevada Health District
- **Lucy Carnahan**, Executive Director, Fallon Chamber of Commerce
- **Shari Davis**, Director, Rural Economic & Community Development, Main Street, GOED
- **Kyeema Peart**, Director, Office of Entrepreneurship, GOED
- **Lisa Gallo Swan**, Director, Fallon Campus, Western Nevada College
- **Winnie Dowling**, Nevada State Director, Nevada Small Business Development Center



White Pine County Forum



86
Attendees

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Stavros Anthony, Nevada Lieutenant Governor

Cisco Aguilar, Nevada Secretary of State

Pete Goicoechea, Nevada State Senator

Bert Gurr, Assemblyman

Janet Van Camp, White Pine County
Commissioner

Nathan Robertson, City of Ely Mayor

Dr. Jerri Lynn Harper, City of Ely Councilwoman

NOTABLE ATTENDEES

- **Sheldon Mudd**, Director, Northeastern Nevada Regional Development Authority
- **JJ Goicoechea**, Director, Nevada Department of Agriculture
- **Shadrach Robertson**, Executive Director, White Pine Chamber of Commerce
- **Marcel Schaerer**, Deputy Director, Nevada Business & Industry
- **A'Keia Sanders**, Director, Governor's Office of Federal Assistance
- **Adam Young**, Superintendent, White Pine County School District
- **Saul Ramos**, Nevada State Director, US Small Business Administration
- **Mary Kerner**, Chief Executive Officer, Rural Nevada Development Corporation



Carson City Latino Forum



24
Attendees

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Stavros Anthony, Nevada Lieutenant Governor

Lisa Schuette, Carson City Board of Supervisors



NOTABLE ATTENDEES

- **Hope Sullivan**, Director, Carson City Community Development
- **Adriane Roberts-Larson**, Deputy Executive Director, Administrative Services, Department of Taxation
- **Arturo Guzman**, Constituent Services, Office of Mark Amodei
- **Luis Latino**, Owner, Latinos de Nevada



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Historic Eastside Forum



19
Attendees

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Fabian Doñate, Nevada State Senator

Edgar Flores, Nevada State Senator

Reuben D'Silva, Assemblyman



NOTABLE ATTENDEES

- **Anthony Manor**, Liaison, Clark County Commissioner for Will McCurdy
- **Maggie Salas Crespo**, Deputy Secretary of State
- **Dave Burlin**, VetsInTech



Enterprise Forum



36
Attendees

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Dallas Harris, Nevada State Senator

Fabian Doñate, Nevada State Senator

Tracy Brown-May, Assemblywoman

Duy Nguyen, Assemblyman

Michael Naft, Clark County Commissioner



NOTABLE ATTENDEES

- **Peter Guzman**, President, Latin Chamber of Commerce
- **Joshua Leavitt**, TechAlley
- **Kathleen Taylor**, National Association for Women Business Owners and Board Member, Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs
- **Brian Mills**, President, Wedding Chamber of Commerce
- **Eric Garner**, Director, NV Grow, College of Southern Nevada



Henderson Forum



29
Attendees

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Carrie Cox, Henderson City Councilwoman

Julie Pazina, State Senator

Danielle Gallant, Assemblywoman



NOTABLE ATTENDEES

- **Hector Lizaola**, Liaison, US Senator Catherine Cortez Masto
- **Kyeema Peart**, Governor's Office of Economic Development
- **Raj Tumber**, SCORE
- **Anabel Navarro**, SBDC



Veterans Small Business Forum



62
Attendees

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Stavros Anthony, Nevada Lieutenant Governor

Danielle Gallant, Assemblywoman

Byron Brooks, Nevada Board of Regents

NOTABLE ATTENDEES

- **Col. Mary L. Devine**, Director of Nevada Department of Veterans Services
- **Charles Ramey**, Veterans Administration, Southern Nevada
- **Dr. Annie Wilson**, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- **Byron Bybee**, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- **Terri Hendry**, Nevada Department of Veterans Services
- **Amanda Kehrer**, Nevada Department of Veterans Services



Moapa Valley Listening Session



21
Attendees

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Stavros Anthony, Nevada Lieutenant Governor

Toby Yurek, Assemblyman



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Pahrump Listening Session



33
Attendees

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Stavros Anthony, Nevada Lieutenant Governor

Greg Hafen, Assemblyman



Beauty Not Barriers Forum

The Institute for Justice held listening sessions with professionals in the beauty industry in northern and southern Nevada. OSBA's team was included in the discussions to learn firsthand about the challenges they face operating their businesses and recruiting workers.

The consensus is that Nevada's current regulations place an undue burden on individuals seeking to enter the profession and limit the growth of the workforce.

In Nevada, aspiring barbers are required to complete 1,600 hours of training at a licensed barber school—significantly more than the national average of around 1,200 hours. This requirement translates to approximately 9–12 months of full-time coursework, delaying entry into the workforce.

Additionally, the cost of obtaining a barbering license in Nevada is costly and can be prohibitive. Tuition for barber schools often exceeds \$15,000, and aspiring barbers must also pay for exam fees, licensing fees, and required supplies. These financial burdens are particularly challenging for individuals from low-income or disadvantaged backgrounds.

OSBA heard from barbers that Nevada's lack of streamlined reciprocity agreements with other states makes it difficult for licensed barbers from elsewhere to work in Nevada, leading to a shortage of barbers. Individuals relocating to Nevada must often undergo additional training or testing to meet state requirements, discouraging skilled professionals from entering the local workforce.

The culmination of these challenges has created a bottleneck for Nevada's barbering industry. Fewer individuals are entering the field, and out-of-state barbers are deterred from relocating. The shortage is particularly acute in rural and underserved areas, where access to barbering services is already limited.



OSBA has been instrumental in researching and advocating for a bill that addresses these challenges. The team has worked closely with stakeholders, including legislators, policy experts, and professional organizations to develop policy solutions that will help Nevada's barbering industry thrive.

The proposed legislation aims to:

- Lower the required training hours.
- Establish clear and fair reciprocity agreements.
- Streamline the licensing process to reduce bureaucracy.



Community Presentations

Along with OSBA's resource fairs, town halls, and forums, the team makes presentations across the state regarding entrepreneurship, licensing, and regulations.

Since the last legislative session, the Office of Small Business Advocacy has made presentations at:



Community Presentations

- Pahrump Chamber of Commerce
- Small Business Development Council Advisor Meeting
- Network of Enlightened Women Meeting
- State of Nevada Department of Business and Industry
- Clark County Commissioner Will McCurdy's SBOP Mixer
- Las Vegas City Councilwoman Nancy Brune's Small Business Breakfast
- Southern Nevada Entrepreneurship Ecosystem
- Southern Nevada Veterans Breakfast Meeting
- Nevada Business Advisors
- SCORE Mentor Meeting
- National Association of Employers Annual Conference
- Reno Start-Up Week
- Spring Valley High School
- Sin City Chamber Meeting
- SCORE Women's Monthly Meetings
- Wedding Chamber of Commerce
- Veteran's Resource Fair
- Launch Rural Nevada
- Institute for Justice, Beauty Not Barriers Event
- African Chamber of Commerce Meeting
- City of Las Vegas Mom's Resource Fair
- SBDC Healthcare Entrepreneurship Roundtable
- ConnectHER to Business Event
- Launch Reno
- Las Vegas Global Acceleration Forum
- National Association of Women Business Owners Coffee & Conversations
- Central Nevada Small Business Resource Fair
- National Association of Women Business Owners "Women Leading the Way" Summit
- Rural Roundup Small Business Competition
- DECA SCDC Conference
- Log Cabin Republican Meeting
- Kid Zone: Kidpreneur Meeting
- City of Las Vegas Micro Small Business Summit
- Outdoor Business Coalition
- Conservative Townhall of North Las Vegas
- Nevada Policy
- PHLV Radio
- National Association of Women Business Owners "ABCs of Advocacy"
- Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs
- Wedding Chamber of Commerce December 2024 Meeting



Looking Forward

As OSBA looks to the future, we remain committed to making Nevada a more business-friendly state by continuing to remove unnecessary regulatory barriers and providing direct support to small business owners. Our next steps include several key initiatives aimed at expanding our reach and enhancing the services we offer to Nevada's entrepreneurs.

Legislative Advocacy for Licensing Reform

OSBA will work with state legislators to introduce and support reforms that reduce excessive occupational licensing requirements, particularly for industries where these regulations disproportionately impact low-income individuals and those reentering the workforce. Targeted professions include contractors, interior designers, homemade food producers, and barbers.

Streamlining Licensing and Compliance Processes

Building on our past efforts, we aim to collaborate with state agencies to simplify and expedite licensing procedures. We will advocate for a more transparent and user-friendly system that provides clear guidelines and reduces wait times, ensuring that small business owners can start operating without unnecessary delays.



Expanding Outreach to Rural Communities

While Nevada's metropolitan areas have seen significant small business growth, rural communities still face unique challenges. OSBA plans to host additional resource fairs, town halls, and listening sessions to better understand and address the needs of rural entrepreneurs, ensuring that small business support is accessible statewide.

Enhancing Support for Previously Incarcerated Entrepreneurs

We recognize the critical role that business ownership can play in reducing recidivism and increasing economic mobility. OSBA will work to expand pathways for formerly incarcerated individuals to obtain necessary licenses and support programs that provide training and mentorship for those seeking to start their own businesses.

Developing a Centralized Online Resource Hub

To make business resources and requirements more accessible, OSBA will work with partner organizations to launch an online platform that provides a step-by-step guide for new business owners, information on licensing requirements, and direct access to government agencies for support. This initiative aims to simplify the process of starting and maintaining a business in Nevada.

Continued Development of Strategic Partnerships

OSBA will strengthen partnerships with chambers of commerce, trade associations, and small business advocacy groups to amplify our impact and provide a broader range of resources and networking opportunities to Nevada's entrepreneurs.

Ongoing Data Collection and Policy Recommendations

By continuing to analyze the impact of Nevada's regulatory environment on small businesses, OSBA will work with the Office of Entrepreneurship in the Governor's Office of Economic Development to provide a clear picture of Nevada's entrepreneurs to policymakers and government agencies.

The road ahead is filled with opportunities to make Nevada a leader in small business development and advocacy.

The OSBA team is dedicated to continuing our important work, ensuring that every aspiring entrepreneur has the support and freedom they need to succeed. By reducing regulatory burdens and expanding access to resources, OSBA will help make the dream of business ownership a reality for many more Nevadans.



Meet the OSBA Team

SARAH REEVES JOHNSON

Director,
*Lieutenant Governor's Office of Small
Business Advocacy*

Sarah has spent her career helping entrepreneurs succeed. She previously directed the marketing efforts of the National Federation of Independent Business; led programming for Belmont University's Center for Entrepreneurship, a top 25 Undergraduate Entrepreneurship Program; and, more recently, founded and ran a marketing and communications consulting organization to assist small businesses, nonprofit organizations, and state-based policy groups.

Sarah holds a Master's of Public Policy from Vanderbilt University and a Bachelor's of Business Administration in Marketing and Entrepreneurship from Belmont University.



MELISSA SAAVEDRA

Deputy Director

Melissa is the main point of contact for small businesses in Northern Nevada as well as Spanish-speaking entrepreneurs. In her previous role, Melissa was the Associate Publisher and Senior Business Development Manager for the Northern Nevada Business Weekly.



DENISE DANIELS FANNING

Program Manager

Denise is the contact for entrepreneurs in Southern Nevada. While working in Los Angeles in commercial film production, she developed an entrepreneurial vision and mindset.

Denise received a Bachelor of Science in Communications at the University of Texas, Austin.



Contact OSBA



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