



Charter Agreement

Introduction

This Charter is a commitment between your council and the Victorian Small Business Commission (VSBC) to work together to create a fair and competitive trading environment for Victorian small businesses. It also tells you what you can expect as a business owner from your local council and the VSBC. By signing the charter, the VSBC and local councils agree to meet these commitments within 12 months.

Commitments and what you can expect from us

Part 1 | Work with small businesses disrupted by infrastructure projects

The VSBC will:

- a. provide councils with VSBC resources for managing the impacts of disruption
- b. provide dispute resolution services in relevant matters
- c. advocate on behalf of small businesses with authorities who undertake major works
- d. work collaboratively with council to develop practical initiatives that benefit small businesses

Your council will:

- a. refer to the VSBC's [Small Business Engagement Guidelines](#) when planning new works and request that external project managers do the same
- b. provide small businesses with the VSBC's guide for small businesses on [Managing Disruption](#)

Part 2 | Support the creation of small business networks across Victoria

The VSBC and your council will:

- a. distribute the VSBC's guide to building [Stronger Networks](#)
- b. actively engage with small business networks and identify new opportunities for development
- c. include representatives of associations in conversations concerning small businesses

Part 3 | Faster permit approvals processes for small businesses

Your council will:

- a. work towards faster permit approvals for new small businesses. This may mean:
 - i. registering with the Better Approvals Project and completing this as scheduled; or
 - ii. implementing strategies to streamline permit approvals processes for small businesses

Part 4 | Prompt payment to small businesses

The VSBC will:

- a. raise awareness of the Australian Supplier Payment Code¹ across Victoria to ensure your business is paid within 30 days of issuing an invoice

Your council will:

- a. initiate processes to ensure invoices from small businesses are paid promptly; or
- b. commit to signing up to the Australian Supplier Payment Code to pay small businesses within 30 days

Part 5 | Easy to read, easy to understand information for Victorian small businesses

The VBSC will:

- a. liaise with Small Business Victoria on the development of new resources for your business and communicate requests from your council about what is needed
- b. refer your council to new resources as they are made available

Your council will:

- a. link your business with the resources available at business.vic.gov.au
- b. provide the VSBC Retail Lease Checklist to prospective tenants

Both parties will:

- a. identify opportunities for the development of new resources for your business

Part 6 | Open channels of communication between the VSBC and local councils

The VSBC will:

- a. advocate on behalf of small business when your council notifies VSBC of key issues of concern
- b. work with relevant agencies to progress matters of concern to local councils and small businesses

Your council will:

- a. notify the VSBC of issues affecting local small business communities
- b. refer commercial disputes to the VSBC dispute resolution team as appropriate
- c. provide details of the VSBC's dispute resolution services on its website

¹ Further information on the Australian Supplier Payment Code can be found on the website of the Business Council of Australia | www.bca.com.au

Additional commitments

Promotion of Initiative

The VSBC will:

- a. provide all participating councils with the Small Business Friendly Council Initiative logo to use in their own materials
- b. provide all participating councils with an animated video promoting the benefits of having a small business friendly council to Victorian small businesses
- c. share success stories and case studies from participating councils in the VSBC eNewsletter and on social media
- d. list all participating councils on the VSBC website

Your council will:

- a. utilise the Small Business Friendly Council Initiative and videos in relevant communications
- b. provide VSBC with case studies and success stories associated with the initiative

Quality assurance and review

The VSBC will:

- a. contact your council 12 months after signing the charter to assess their status on each commitment
- b. review feedback from your council about the value of the charter and modify it as appropriate after 12 months

Your council will:

- a. work towards fulfilling each commitment within the first 12 months of signing the charter
- b. work with the VSBC to amend the charter if required

