



The Regional Development Corporations of Vermont (RDC's of VT) have responded quickly and forcefully to business needs during COVID-19.

The RDC's of VT are the one-stop portal for anyone looking to start a business or receive technical assistance for companies of all sizes. This incorporates activities ranging from site selection, financing and permitting assistance as well as standard business counseling. Many of our offices house a Small Business Development Center (SBDC) staff person as well as providing direct access to a Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) service provider. We also are a direct conduit to state resources, through our partnership with the Department of Economic Development (DED).

We serve all of the companies in our respective regions, the majority of which, as is the case throughout Vermont, are "small" businesses. With our long-standing relationships with local, state and federal government partners, we are seen as the regional resource for economic development and related subjects. This includes areas such as Workforce Development. The RDC's of Vermont partnered with the VT Department of Labor on a series of regional workforce summits last fall, with employers and educational providers, to identify challenges and opportunities with the state's workforce development system. The events served as a successful representation of the coordination work that the RDC's of Vermont do within our regions in a statewide framework.

We have been full-time on the front lines of business support related to COVID-19 since March, providing guidance on matters such as understanding and adhering to Executive Orders, the various opportunities within the CARES act/other financing resources, direction with the UI and PUA programs and much more. Many of the RDC's have been also providing critical financial support to our microbusinesses (under 10 employees) through our Revolving Loan Funds.

Frankly, perhaps the most important role we have played is providing a friendly, understanding voice, trying to help each other through this unprecedented time of need.

This has been a natural extension of the daily work that the RDC's of Vermont perform, as the one-stop portal on behalf of DED. The annual state investment supports regional expertise and outreach to thousands of businesses from all sectors.

Surveying the RDC's, we have been in regular communication with 1912 businesses since March and, of those, 1262 were those less than 25 employees (the **vast** majority of those, less than 10). This includes those that are self-employed to the largest employers in the state. We have supported hair salons, restaurants, farmers/ag businesses, woodworkers, service providers, construction firms, professional services, medical providers and retail stores, manufacturers, food producers, lodging establishments, and the list goes on and on. (con't)



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We're in regular contact with our partners in state government (e.g. ACCD, DOL), as well as our friends at SBDC and SBA. Many of us have organized weekly meetings/calls with regional Recovery Teams, including Regional Planning Commissions, Chambers of Commerce and downtown organizations. Together, we are providing technical and emotional support and are preparing to shift our efforts from triage to recovery.

The RDC's of Vermont look forward to leading the way in helping Vermont's companies navigate an uncertain landscape as we help to Restart Vermont. While the threats resulting from COVID-19 are unique, we will continue to do what we always have done: dedicate our staff and our efforts to supporting every business in the regions that we serve.