

Cabinet	Ombudsman	Number of Ombudsmen Related	General or Specific Nature of Reported Inquiries	Current Trends or Challenges	Small Business Success Story (optional)
Economic Development	Matthew Wingate	0		<p>The Covid 19 effect on small businesses, the economy, and the health and well-being of all Kentuckians was obviously the main challenge of this reporting period.</p> <p>In early March, operations of retail and service industries came to an abrupt halt with dire impacts on those businesses and employees. The Cabinet for Economic Development responded quickly to Kentucky small business owners and employees needing assistance by directing them to federal funding programs through the Small Business Administration (SBA) and to the state unemployment program and resources.</p>	<p>The pandemic continues at the time of this report. The KY Innovation office in the Cabinet for Economic Development continues to provide programs, information and resources for Kentucky's entrepreneurs, innovators, and investors.</p> <p>The Kentucky Small Business Tax Credit program awards nonrefundable tax credits to qualifying small businesses based on their job creation and investment over the past 24 months. In 2020, 146 Small Businesses received KSBTC tax credits of \$1,465,400. These businesses created 428 new jobs and invested \$4,772,878 in their businesses during the prior 24 months.</p> <p>The Kentucky Small Business Credit Initiative offered through our office is a loan enhancement program created during the last recession. This program will continue to support creditworthy loan projects from participating lenders across the Commonwealth. This program enables lending to Kentucky small businesses that might not otherwise qualify.</p> <p>The Kentucky Angel Investment Act awards attractive tax credits to qualified investors that invest in knowledge based small businesses in Kentucky. This program is available again as of January 2021 to attract angel investment to</p>
Education & Workforce Development	Rick Jordan	0	No inquiries related to Education & Workforce Development regulations and small business community.		
Energy and Environment	Kari Johnson	76	Environmental Issues - Air (64), Water Quality (6); Waste Management related issues (6)	<p>In response to the 2020 novel coronavirus (Covid-19) declared national emergency, and EPA's March 26, 2020 memorandum COVID-19 Implications for EPA's Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Program, the Energy and Environment Cabinet developed guidance for Kentucky regulated facilities seeking exemptions or relief, enforcement discretion, a waiver and/or time extension of regulatory compliance requirements due to the direct effects by the Covid-19 emergency. The Cabinet used this process which expired on August 30, 2020 to effectively manage, track and approve/deny requests. As part of the COVID-19 pandemic, Kentucky small business have not been or have had limited operation for portions of the year, which has dramatically reduced the number of assistances provided during 2020. Personnel have also been working remotely since March. To continue to provide customer service during the pandemic, the assistance hotline, which is the main method by which small businesses reach out was updated to instruct callers to contact via email, agency webpages were updated with new resources, and guidance information, and staff develop a process for conducting virtual site visits to continue providing compliance assisting to small facilities with air permit applications.</p>	

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Finance & Administration	Brad Nilsson	0			
Health and Family Services	Bob Blackburn	0	The ombudsman did not receive any inquiries relating to regulations during the reporting period.		
Justice and Public Safety	Gina Hill	0	During the reporting period, our cabinet reviewed 22 regulations. During the reporting period, our Cabinet repealed or amended 22 regulations.		
Labor	Majorie Arnold	1	Guidance on closure of Dog Daycares during Healthy at Home/Healthy at Work		
Military Affairs	Judith April Brown	449	449 total Small Business Contracts were awarded to 150 Small Business companies by the Kentucky Department of Military Affairs during this period. No additional inquiries beyond solicitation of these contracts. No negative related issues experienced.	No challenges reported during this reporting period. Our small business company contracts/purchases, (total value of \$69,608,080.66) focused on providing direct support to Kentucky National Guard operations and Department of Military Affairs' facilities (construction/maintenance). These contracts/purchases are administered by both the Kentucky National Guard and the Department of Military Affairs under the overall supervision of the Adjutant General of Kentucky, appointing authority for both organizations under the Department of Military Affairs.	N/A
Personnel	Tanya Lawrence	0			

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Public Protection	Sherrelle Roberts-Pierre	0	Small businesses have been negatively impacted by the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. Nearly the entire year has been spent implementing changes to ease the burdens created by the COVID-19 emergency. Below are a few of the changes implemented across PPC.	Small businesses have been negatively impacted by the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. Nearly the entire year has been spent implementing changes to ease the burdens created by the COVID-19 emergency. Below are a few of the changes implemented across PPC. All agencies were directed to take measures to allow customers and citizens to do business remotely. This included: remote testing; online permit applications; online renewals of permits and licenses; remote customer service; and redesign of PPC website to be more user friendly	Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, we have received multiple accounts of how government flexibility during this crisis has aided small businesses. The greatest success story to date would be the implementation of the Team Kentucky Food and Beverage Relief Fund. PPC is administering the fund, which is a Beshear administration priority. The Team Kentucky Food and Beverage Relief Fund is providing financial assistance to restaurants and bars that were required to close for on-site service due to the closure order (Executive Order 2020-968). The Fund has been designed to provide one-time grant awards of up to \$10,000 per restaurant or bar, with a maximum of \$20,000 to a business entity that operates multiple restaurants and bars. These grants are to be used as a reimbursement for business expenses incurred between March 6, and December 31, 2020. Reimbursable expenses include items like: rent, employee salaries, health insurance costs, inventory and personal protective equipment.
Tourism, Arts & Heritage	Jessica Tyler	1	Kentucky Tourism Development Incentive Program and applicability	Small businesses that rely on tourism attractions to drive revenue to local communities have experienced a significant financial impact as a result of COVID-19. Many businesses have qualified for disaster relief funding that has helped small businesses. In April, Gov. Beshear and Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet Secretary Mike Berry announced a funding award of more than \$450,000 to provide novel coronavirus (COVID-19) prevention, preparedness and response assistance to non-profit arts organizations throughout the commonwealth as part of the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Through the Kentucky Arts Council, 93 Kentucky arts organizations received critical funding support to help stabilize arts organizations and provide assistance to protect employees from long-term unemployment. An additional \$1.1 million in operating support was awarded to 95 arts organizations to provide unrestricted operating support to ensure that year-round participation in the arts is available to Kentuckians through the Kentucky Arts Partnership (KAP) program. This critical funding is anticipated to generate more than \$84.1 million in revenue for Kentucky's economy. Kentucky Humanities awarded \$500,000 to 85 cultural organizations throughout the state through funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) as part of the CARES Act. Kentucky Humanities CARES Act Grants provide unrestricted operating and/or humanities program support to humanities organizations throughout the Commonwealth who have suffered program financial losses due to COVID-19. These grants provide immediate funds to humanities-based cultural organizations to help stabilize organizations by providing money for them to maintain essential functions and retain core personnel during this public health crisis and ensure their future success.	The Kentucky Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet (TAH) is collaborating with the Kentucky Main Street Program (KYMS) for a special holiday promotion highlighting small businesses in Main Street communities across the Commonwealth. Kentucky Main Street features 29 participating communities that consist of small businesses, restaurants, art spaces and retail unique to Kentucky. The goal of the program is to encourage downtown revitalization and economic development through preserving historic buildings. During November and December, individual Main Street communities are being highlighted on social media (@KyTAHC) using the hashtags #ExploreKyMainSt and #ShopKyMainSt.
Transportation	Kenny Bishop	0	Nothing reported		

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TOTALS		527			

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