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NEW YORK, NY 10007

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** June 21, 2021

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**A RECOVERY FOR ALL OF US: NEW YORK CITY ANNOUNCES CONCIERGE SERVICE TO SLASH RED TAPE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES**

*Program cuts processing time by 50%; guarantees 48-hour response to all small business inquiries*

**NEW YORK**—Mayor Bill de Blasio and NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS) Commissioner Jonnel Doris today launched NYC Business Quick Start, a historic, \$11 million concierge service for small businesses. This new interagency initiative will cut red tape and make New York City the easiest place in the United States to open or reopen a small business.

NYC Business Quick Start will provide small businesses a sole point of contact to help navigate City regulations, as well as a public dashboard. The program guarantees a 48-hour response to all small business inquiries and will cut processing time by 50 percent.

The City expects 50,000 small businesses to benefit from the NYC Business Quick Start and its predecessor SBS business-assistance programs.

“There’s no time to wait for our small businesses to return to the neighborhoods they serve. This is the moment to bring New York City back, and that starts with making this city the easiest place in America to open a small business’ doors,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “This program will give business owners all the tools they need to run their businesses smoothly and build a recovery for all of us.”

NYC Business Quick Start is a collaboration between 100 City personnel across a host of agencies, including SBS, Department of Buildings (DOB), Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), and the New York City Fire Department (FDNY).

“For decades, small business owners have had to navigate a complex, time-consuming and costly administrative process before they generate their first dollar of revenue. With the launch of NYC Business Quick Start today, the de Blasio administration has tackled what has been an endemic problem in many large cities all across the U.S.,” said **Lorraine Grillo, Senior Advisor for Recovery**. “By reducing the upfront burden of opening or re-opening a business, NYC Business Quick Start will benefit small retailers, bodegas and family-owned businesses – the lifeblood of New York City’s economy and key to achieving a recovery for all.”

“Our city’s recovery depends on small businesses,” said **Deputy Mayor of Operations Laura Anglin**. “NYC Business Quick Start is an unprecedented interagency effort to reduce barriers

and help businesses serve their communities. This effort will speed New York City's recovery and deliver the vibrant, inclusive neighborhoods New Yorkers deserve."

"Since the beginning of this administration, the City has been committed to reducing the regulatory burden that exists on small businesses. This mission has remained alive, especially throughout the pandemic," said **J. Phillip Thompson, Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives and Co-Chair of the Racial Inclusion and Equity Taskforce**. "The NYC Business Quick Start will cut red tape and increase city government transparency, benefitting the many businesses that are reopening and new entrepreneurs that are seeking to make an impact."

"NYC Business Quick Start demonstrates the City's commitment to help small businesses navigate the regulatory environment," said **Jonnel Doris, Commissioner of NYC Department of Small Business Services**. "Each agency will work hand in hand with our small businesses to make New York City a seamless place to start and sustain a business in a post-COVID-19 environment."

For more information on NYC Business Quick Start, visit [nyc.gov/business](https://nyc.gov/business) or call 888-SBS-4NYC (888-727-4692).

SBS has launched 29 recovery programs and campaigns to help reopen businesses and provide the necessary resources to navigate the challenges of the pandemic. In the last year, the agency assisted more than 4,000 businesses with over \$305 million in PPP applications, connected over 5,000 businesses with \$156 million in loans and grants, helped over 62,400 callers to the SBS hotline (888-SBS-4NYC), and assisted 90,000 job seekers. SBS is currently helping small businesses apply for the New York State Pandemic Small Business Recovery Grant Program – a \$5,000 - \$50,000 grant for businesses with less than \$500,000 in revenue; businesses that need assistance can visit [nyc.gov/financingassistance](https://nyc.gov/financingassistance).

"The health of our city depends on healthy small businesses," said **Dr. Dave A. Chokshi, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene**. "We aim to make navigating the regulatory environment as easy and stress-free as possible for local entrepreneurs. We are grateful for all they've done to adapt over the past year to keep their customers and our city safe from COVID-19."

"We are thrilled to join this initiative and continue to support New York City's small business recovery," said **Melanie La Rocca, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Buildings**. "Whether they are opening their doors for the first time, or welcoming their customers back, this program makes it easier than ever for small business owners to access the resources they need."

"A healthy New York City economy relies on our thousands of small businesses and our business owners need the rapid support of government, including for critical water and sewer services," said **Vincent Sapienza, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Environmental Protection**. "I thank Commissioner Doris and the team at SBS for their leadership on this effort and am happy to report that DEP engineers are already expediting the review of small business applications."

“For a business to be successful, the safety of their employees and customers is essential,” said **Daniel A. Nigro, Commissioner of NYC Fire Department**. “The Department is proud to take part in NYC Business Quick Start helping small businesses open safely and continuing our city’s recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.”

“Small businesses are essential to a thriving city, especially here in New York. Many of these mom-and-pop shops have struggled to survive the COVID-19 pandemic. Providing these entrepreneurs with a central place to receive resources and cut through regulatory red tape is the least we can do to help them bounce back during these difficult times. Under those conditions, I support the NYC Business Quick Start Program, and I hope special attention will be given to Minority and Women-Owned Businesses (MWBs) that have been hit hardest by the pandemic,” said **State Senator James Sanders Jr.**

“Small businesses are the foundation of New York’s economy, and the pandemic has left them in dire financial straits,” said **Council Member Selvena Brooks-Powers**. “As the economy restarts, NYC Business Quick Start will help our local retailers and family businesses reopen, and connect them with the assistance they need. We are one step closer to ensuring our communities make a full recovery.”

"For independent entrepreneurs, New York City is often a place that stifles creativity. We need safety for our workers and neighbors, but the challenges of a small business cutting through the bureaucracy of DOB, DEP, DOHMH and FDNY can be insurmountable. As Chair of the Commission on M/WBE, I have seen over and over that this is especially difficult for Black-owned businesses. This new concierge service offers a way to level the playing field. It offers help that so many minority-owned and other businesses deserve," said **Council Member Robert Cornegy, Jr.**

"Small Business is the very fabric of our neighborhoods, often being the place where neighbors meet for not just shopping but also socializing. We have seen the difficulties that our businesses have had during the pandemic and the effect it has had on keeping our neighborhoods safe and vibrant. As I continue to walk the shopping areas of my district, I know that there has been an outpouring of support for local shops. This initiative not only helps our businesses return, but will help new owners overcome obstacles to opening thus giving them the opportunities to succeed and prosper. We have been very focused on making sure everyone gets their vaccine, but this program is the shot in the arm our small businesses need," said **Council Member Eric Dinowitz**.

"Centralizing business support services will help ease the burden on small businesses trying to navigate city rules and regulations. Thank you to SBS for addressing this common complaint and for looking to address inquiry processing times," said **Council Member Peter Koo**.

"The pandemic devastated small businesses in New York City across industries, and navigating agencies and regulations is one of the most common concerns I hear from local owners. Now is the time for creative thinking on how to make starting and operating a venture here more efficient, transparent, and welcoming. A one-stop shop like NYC Business Quick Start is an important step towards making our city friendlier to the entrepreneurship that will help us recover and grow," said **Council Member Carlina Rivera**.

"Small businesses are the heart and soul of our city. Any recovery must put them front and center as we prioritize agency resources to cut processing times," said **Council Member Paul Vallone**. "I applaud the Administration for launching the multi-lingual NYC Business Quick Start, which will ensure that all small businesses are able to reopen quickly and easily to bring our city back better than ever!"

"As the former Commissioner of the NYC Department of Business Services I am well aware of the need for coordinated responses from city government when it comes to our business community," said **Prof. Wallace Ford, Medgar Evers College, City University of New York**. "NYC Business Quick Start is exactly the kind of initiative that is needed as businesses, small and large, seek to fully participate in the recovery of New York City."

"Red tape and bureaucracy have long been a challenge for small businesses, and in particular, entrepreneurs whose native language is not English. Making it easier to own and operate a small business is key to not only their recovery but the recovery of the whole City. We look forward to seeing NYC Business Quick Start in action!" said **Robert J. Benfatto, Jennifer Tausig, and Mark Caserta, NYC BID Association**.

"This initiative will spring our recovery into high gear. As businesses reopen and new ones join our communities, nothing is more important than eliminating bureaucratic delay and confusion. We want businesses to be focusing on their customers, not their paperwork. We applaud the administration for their understanding of the real experience our small business owners are facing and bringing all of these agencies and resources together on their behalf," said **Elizabeth Lusskin, President, LIC Partnership and Executive Director, LIC Business Improvement District**.

"The Bronx Chamber is a longtime advocate of increased access to business startup supports for our City's entrepreneurs," said **Lisa Sorin, President of the New Bronx Chamber of Commerce**. "As we rebuild toward a strong post-pandemic future, the Bronx Chamber is thrilled that this interagency initiative will alleviate red tape and make it easier to open or reopen a business."

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