Washington Small Business Development Center

Client Rights and Responsibilities

- **Confidentiality.** Your client status with the Washington SBDC will remain confidential. All information you share with your advisor or any other SBDC staff or volunteer will be held in strictest confidence. [You may CHOOSE to disclose your name to the SBA; that is a choice you can make when you check the appropriate box on SBA Form 641 (counseling information form) to become an SBDC client.]

- **You make decisions.** SBDC advisors work to provide clients with the knowledge, tools, resources, and expertise they need to make data-driven decisions. SBDC advisors will discuss options and potential consequences, but clients make their own decisions about how to move forward.

- **Conflict of interest.** SBDC employees are prohibited from personally benefitting from their work with clients. No recommendations will be made as to the purchase of goods or services from any individual or firm with whom any Washington SBDC employee has any financial, familial, or personal interest.

- **No fee for business advising**. SBDC services are provided at no cost to the business owner.

- **Your responsibility**. Your advisor will provide information, tools, and resources for you to consider. Your advisor may also suggest assignments for you to complete before the next meeting. The advisor will not do the work for you but will provide technical assistance to help you move forward.

- **Economic development.** The national SBDC program was created in 1980 to help drive economic development through small business success. The Washington SBDC receives about half its funding from the SBA and the other half from state and local funding partners, including Washington State University, Washington State and other institutions of higher education and economic development.

- **We verify economic development** by asking each client to participate in confidential surveys. Clients typically receive one national survey each year to measure client satisfaction and return on investment and up to two network surveys asking about business growth as measured by loans, owner investments, jobs created, increased revenue, new business starts, etc. This information is ONLY reported to stakeholders in summary form to preserve client confidentiality.

    - Your participation in SBDC surveys is critical to our ability to document the value of SBDC advising and collect feedback that helps us improve our services.

Thank you for choosing to work with the Washington SBDC. We are excited to help you write the next chapter of your business journey.

Sign_____ Date_____