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Int. No. 300

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A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to establishing an office of small business digitalization and technical amendments in relation thereto

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Section 20-m of chapter 1 of the New York city charter, as added by local law number 164 for the year 2021, is renumbered section 20-o.

§ 2. Chapter 1 of the New York city charter is amended by adding a new section 20-p to read as follows:

§ 20-p. Office of small business digitalization. a. Definitions. For purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

Designated citywide languages. The term "designated citywide languages" means (i) the top six limited English proficiency languages spoken by the population of New York city as determined by the department of city planning and the office of the language services coordinator, based on United States census data; and (ii) the top four limited English proficiency languages spoken by the population served or likely to be served by the agencies of the city of New York as determined by the office of the language services coordinator, based on language access data collected by the department of education, excluding the languages designated based on United States census data.

Digitalization. The term "digitalization" means the process of moving towards a digital business, including, but not limited to, developing a digital presence and using digital technologies to update a business model and obtain new opportunities and revenue.

Director. The term “director” means the director of the office of small business digitalization.

Office. The term “office” means the office of small business digitalization.

b. Office established. The mayor shall establish an office of small business digitalization to coordinate and facilitate the digitalization of small businesses in the city. Such office may be established within the executive office of the mayor or as a separate office or within any other agency or office the head of which is appointed by the mayor. Such office shall be headed by a director, who shall be appointed by the mayor or by the head of such other agency or office.

c. Powers and duties of director. The director shall have the power and duty to:

1. Promote the digitalization of small businesses, including, but not limited to, developing and implementing culturally appropriate programs and policies regarding digitalization;

2. Provide culturally responsive technical assistance and mentoring to small business owners regarding digitalization on topics, including, but not limited to, creating websites, developing effective online practices and understanding digital privacy issues;

3. Develop and implement a culturally appropriate small business digitalization plan, which shall do the following:

(a) Outline a path to digitalization for small businesses;

(b) Assess the challenges small businesses face and the assistance small businesses need to digitalize; and

(c) Develop and monitor a set of metrics to assess the digitalization of small businesses;

4. Conduct outreach regarding the digitalization of small businesses in the designated citywide languages to limited English proficiency small business owners;

5. Assess programs and policies regarding the digitalization of small businesses adopted in the city and in other jurisdictions;

6. Advise the mayor on the digitalization of small businesses, including, but not limited to, the office’s

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efforts and progress on the small business digitalization plan as required by paragraph 3 of this subdivision; and

7. Consult with relevant agencies and stakeholders in carrying out the powers and duties set forth in this subdivision.

d. Reports. No later than one year after the effective date of this section, and annually thereafter, the director shall submit a report regarding the office as established by subdivision b of this section to the mayor and the speaker of the council and post such report on the office's website. Such reports shall summarize the activities of the office and assess the digitalization of small businesses. The annual report shall include, but not be limited to, the following information for the previous year:

1. A summary of the office's efforts to promote the digitalization of small businesses;

2. A description of the technical assistance and mentoring the office provided to small business owners regarding digitalization;

3. An update on the small business digitalization plan as required by paragraph 3 of subdivision c of this section; and

4. A summary of any new programs or policies implemented by the office to help small businesses digitalize.

§ 3. This local law takes effect 180 days after it becomes law.

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