

(A) (1) THE SECRETARY SHALL APPOINT A DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE, AN ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, AND OTHER PERSONNEL AS REQUIRED.

(2) THE DIRECTOR SHALL BE KNOWLEDGEABLE IN BUSINESS INVESTMENT AND FINANCE, AND SHALL DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN CONTINUAL LIAISON WITH MAJOR FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND FEDERAL AGENCIES.

(3) THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SHALL BE KNOWLEDGEABLE IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT, AND SHALL DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN CONTINUAL LIAISON WITH MAJOR BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL CONCERNS.

(B) (1) THE DIRECTOR SHALL DESIGNATE ONE STATE PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN EACH MAJOR REGION OF THE STATE TO SERVE AS SMALL BUSINESS EXTENSION SERVICE CENTER.

(2) ONE CENTER SHALL BE DESIGNATED IN EACH OF THE FOLLOWING REGIONS:

(I) WESTERN: GARRETT, ALLEGANY, WASHINGTON, FREDERICK, AND CARROLL COUNTIES;

(II) CENTRAL: ANNE ARUNDEL, CALVERT, CHARLES, ST. MARY'S, MONTGOMERY, PRINCE GEORGE'S, HOWARD, AND BALTIMORE, ~~HARFORD, AND ANNE ARUNDEL~~ COUNTIES AND BALTIMORE CITY; AND

~~(III) SOUTHERN: MONTGOMERY, PRINCE GEORGE'S, ANNE ARUNDEL, CALVERT, CHARLES, AND ST. MARY'S COUNTIES; AND~~

(IV) (III) EASTERN: HARFORD, CECIL, KENT, QUEEN ANNE'S, TALBOT, CAROLINE, DORCHESTER, WICOMICO, SOMERSET, AND WORCESTER COUNTIES; ~~AND~~.

~~(V) SUBURBAN: WASHINGTON, MONTGOMERY, AND PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTIES.~~

(3) EACH CENTER SHALL UTILIZE THE EXPERTISE OF FACULTY MEMBERS AND STAFF, PUBLIC OFFICIALS, AND PRIVATE RESOURCES TO PROVIDE EXTENSION SERVICES TO SMALL BUSINESSES WITHIN ITS DESIGNATED REGION.

(4) THE DIRECTOR SHALL COORDINATE WITH THE OFFICIALS OF EACH DESIGNATED INSTITUTION TO EFFECTUATE THE PURPOSES OF THIS SUBTITLE.

(C) THE OFFICE SHALL PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO SMALL BUSINESSES, EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH THE CENTERS, INCLUDING:

(1) OPERATION OF AN INFORMATION EXCHANGE COVERING CURRENT AND NEW TECHNICAL INFORMATION AND DATA CONCERNING BUSINESS INVESTMENT AND MARKETING TRENDS IN THIS