

# MASON ENTERPRISE CENTER-FAIRFAX

## CLIENT HANDBOOK

### WELCOME TO THE MEC

**Welcome to the Mason Enterprise Center. We are excited that you have chosen the Mason Enterprise Center as the base of operations for your business.** You have joined a business support program that accelerates the successful development of small businesses by providing entrepreneurs with an array of targeted resources and services.

The Mason Enterprise Center in Fairfax (MEC-Fairfax or MEC) is designed to facilitate the growth and development of emerging, growth business by providing a nurturing environment-including shared office facilities, one-on-one business mentoring and counseling, access to networking and partnering opportunities.

As a client of the MEC-Fairfax Business Incubator Program, you will have access to management guidance, technical assistance, networking opportunities and consulting tailored toward your growing businesses. Clients have access to dedicated office space and flexible leases, shared basic business services and equipment, technology support services and assistance in obtaining the financing necessary for business growth.

A basic outline of the services and support available to you is summarized in this handbook. Keep in mind that some of the most valuable rewards to participation in the MEC-Fairfax Incubator Program come from the community of entrepreneurs who now surround you every day. Please take advantage of your accessibility to small business peers, staff and service partners.

Thank you for your participation in the MEC-Fairfax Business Incubator Program. We look forward to working with you and wish your company much success.

Sincerely,

Gisele Stolz  
Business Incubator Director  
Mason Enterprise Center

## BUSINESS ASSISTANCE SERVICES

The MEC-Fairfax was established in 1995 as a partnership initiative between George Mason University and the Economic Development Authority of the City of Fairfax (EDA). The MEC- Fairfax offers a comprehensive array of services and support to client companies selected for participation. The policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are designed to optimize successful outcomes for MEC-Fairfax staff and clients. The MEC-Fairfax reserves the right to modify the policies, procedures, resources, and services of the MEC-Fairfax as stated and contained herein in order to better serve the interests of the MEC-Fairfax and participating client companies.

You have joined a business support program that accelerates the successful development of small businesses by providing entrepreneurs with an array of targeted resources and services.

The following services are provided to client companies based on availability and need:

### Support Services

- Free one-on-one business consultation, including advice on business planning, strategic planning, market research and financing alternatives
- Free one-on-one business consultation with MEC Business Mentors
- Access to George Mason University students and faculty
- Access to seminars and workshops at MEC and George Mason University
- Access to MEC and partner organizations' networking events
- Referrals to trusted experts in the "Friends of Mason Enterprise Center" professional network, comprised of consultants in the areas of legal, marketing, accounting, human relations, government contracting, technology and finance
- Other benefits to include discounts to Chamber of Commerce membership and other preferential rates to service providers
- City Connected move out grant from the City of Fairfax

### Facility Amenities

- Professionally furnished office space
- Shared receptionist to greet visitors and sign for packages
- Telephone answering service with direct lines available and private voice mail
- High speed internet access
- Use of conference and meeting rooms
- Audio/visual equipment
- Secure mailbox
- Shared fax machine / Shared photocopy machine
- Kitchen privileges with Starbucks coffee machines and snacks
- Mail and courier services

## MEC-FAIRFAX PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The Mason Enterprise Center Business Incubator is designed to offer a comprehensive array of services and support to client companies eligible for participation. Applications are available on our website [MEC-Fairfax.org](http://MEC-Fairfax.org). Participation in the program is made available from a partnership between George Mason University and the EDA.

### MEC-Fairfax Selection Criteria

The Mason Enterprise Center-Fairfax provides services to a wide range of entrepreneurs. Applicants for the business incubator are subject to the following criteria:

- High growth potential
- Innovative product or service, beyond the conceptual stage
- Initial financing in place
- Executive management in place
- Solid business and professional references
- Good personal financial statement and credit
- A business that employs six (6) or fewer employees, at least one of whom must own the enterprise.
- Business should have an executive summary, business model canvas, or business plan
- Must be current on all federal, state and local tax obligations
- Applicant must be willing to comply with all regulations, guidelines and policies as they relate to the program.
- Business owner(s) and /or business have not previously left the program with a debt, defaulted lease agreement, or business closure.

Businesses can reenter the program if they have previously left the program in good standing prior to graduating.

### Other Criteria:

- Business is suitable to operate in a “professional office environment” and does not require a large waiting area for customers or unattended children, or extensive parking needs.
- Generally compatible with the incubator community, and willingness to support and promote MEC-Fairfax’s mission. Does not weaken or alter the MEC-Fairfax image or purpose, nor negatively affect other participants’ business operations.
- Willingness to conduct business in an open, collaborative and cooperative fashion with the Incubator, including regular status reports to the Business Incubator Director, MEC-Fairfax.
- Applicant should possess a rudimentary knowledge of the chosen field and be willing to acquire basic business practices before moving forward.

- There is no restriction on the number of similar businesses, businesses with the same or similar function, or businesses that provide the same or similar good or service that may participate in the MEC-Fairfax Business Incubator Program or may occupy the MEC-Fairfax at any one time.

In order to apply for the program, a Business must complete a program application. Businesses will be evaluated by their fit with the resources and services provided.

### **Ineligible Businesses:**

- Regulated lending institutions
- Real estate investment businesses
- Any store which principle business is the sale of alcoholic beverages for consumption.
- Religious organizations

## **ADMISSION GUIDELINES**

Businesses that participate in the MEC-Fairfax Business Incubator Program agree to the following conditions, which are devised in an effort to promote successful business outcomes:

- Client will provide a valid business license
- Client will obtain insurance and provide a copy of their certificate of insurance, and such insurance shall be maintained for duration of client's participation in the MEC-Fairfax Business Incubator Program
- Client company will attend at a minimum, one business related class or workshop per quarter (i.e. lunch and learns, MEC workshop, class or workshop, PTAP seminars, etc.) offered by the MEC or service partners.
- At the time of admission and on an annual basis, Client will provide the MEC-Fairfax management with the following information in support of measuring program outcomes:
  - Number of employees
  - Projected Annual Revenue
  - Spinoffs, Acquisitions Rollups
  - Change in product or service offerings
  - Internship/Externship Opportunities
  - Updates regarding business outcomes (i.e. grant awards, news coverage, new contracts, patents, etc.

## **EXIT AND GRADUATION CRITERIA**

A client's progress toward achieving the graduation objectives will be evaluated within three years of its admission to the MEC-Fairfax, and annually thereafter based on the following criteria:

- Company has experienced significant revenue growth and/or profitability allowing client to continue operation without further assistance from MEC-Fairfax services and support (number of employees, facilities, etc.),
- Business is acquired by another company, and/or
- Company gives appropriate notice of leaving as outlined in Lease Agreement.

If a business has not met graduation criteria within five years, the company will be subject to immediate graduation. The regional manager will determine a date for graduation within six months of the client's lease expiration. If there are existing leases whose terms extend beyond the six-month guideline, the manager will negotiate an early termination of such a lease. Clients may be permitted to remain in the MEC past the graduation / termination date determined above on a month-to-month basis.

## TERMINATION OF PARTICIPATION

Companies participating in the MEC-Fairfax may depart from the program at any time by notifying the Mason Enterprise Center in writing one full calendar month prior to exiting. The Mason Enterprise Center reserves the right to terminate a company's participation in the program due to any of the following:

- Actions which are illegal or detrimental to the MEC-Fairfax or that have caused harm to other MEC-Fairfax clients
- Violation of the client's lease or MEC-Fairfax Rules and Procedures
- Failure to occupy and utilize office space
- Failure of company to pay rental fees when due. Late fees are applicable.
- Failure of client to perform or observe terms of the MEC-Fairfax Guidelines and Procedures
- Companies will receive a written notice 30 days prior to termination, except where the lease and/or law permit a shorter notice period
- Security deposits will be refunded in accordance with the lease and Virginia law following the return of all issued keys and the inspection of the space to insure that no damages occurred during participation in the program. Security deposits cannot be used to cover the last month's participation fee.

## FACILITES OPERATION

### Business Hours

- MEC-Fairfax Reception Hours of operation are:
  - Monday-Friday: 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM\*
  - Saturday-Sunday: Closed to General Public (Key Fob Access Only)\*

\*After Hour access is available by Key Fob access only; Note that these hours are subject to change.

- The MEC-Fairfax generally observes all federal holidays each year. The dates will be posted and emailed as listed below.

○ New Year's Day	○ Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
○ Memorial Day	○ Independence Day
○ Labor Day	○ Thanksgiving Observance
○ Winter Holiday Closing - GMU	

## Visitors

When customers come to the MEC-Fairfax to see you, we will call and notify you that they are in the reception area. At your instruction, your clients / customers will either be directed to your office or asked to be seated and wait in the reception area until meeting with you.

## Inclement Weather

The MEC-Fairfax will close administrative offices in conjunction with George Mason University official announcements regarding delays or cancellations due to inclement weather conditions. While recognizing the importance of maintaining your business operations, the safety of those concerned will be the priority regarding this decision.

## After Hours

The Building Front Door is open as follows:

1. Monday-Friday: 6:30 AM – 7:30 PM\*
2. Saturday: 8:00 AM – 3:30 PM\*
3. Sunday: CLOSED\*

\*Note that these hours are subject to change.

All entrances to the MEC main office will automatically lock at 5:00 PM each weekday evening. After hours entry will require your key-fob access. If you are already in the building at that time, please make sure that visitors are not granted access upon leaving. If you have visitors / employees who need to get into the building after normal business hours, please instruct them

to advise you of their anticipated arrival time so that you can meet them at the entrance door and escort them into the building.

## Mailbox Usage

MEC-Fairfax Incubator Program clients may use the following information for mail:

4031 University Drive, Suite 100  
Fairfax, VA 22030

All mail will be left in your designated mailbox, and it is the client's responsibility to ensure mail is picked up on a regular basis.

## Lock and Key Policy

Each Client shall be issued two keys upon taking possession of its office space. The MEC-Fairfax administrative staff will maintain a Master Key for all Client spaces. Clients may purchase additional keys from the MEC-Fairfax for \$10 each. Clients cannot change locks or place additional locks on any doors within their suites without the approval of the MEC-Fairfax Regional Manager. All locks would subsequently be re-keyed to the building standards at the Client's expense.

In addition to keys, Clients shall receive key fobs cards for the property in the proportion of one key-fob per authorized employee. There will be a \$25.00 charge to replace lost key-fobs. All keys and key-fobs must be surrendered upon termination of a lease agreement.

## Photocopying

There are photocopying machines on each floor. In order to make copies you will need a copy card. A copy card can be obtained from the reception desk.

## Fax Machine

You are able to send and receive faxes here at the Mason Enterprise Center. The fax machine is located on in the mailroom on the first floor. Faxes received under your company information or your name will be placed in your mailbox when received.

The fax number is: 703.277.7730

## UPS/Fed Ex/ Airborne Express

The receptionist will sign for all incoming packages. When you receive a package, the receptionist will notify you by email and then leave the package on the table in the mailroom.

## Kitchen Area

Each floor has a refrigerator, coffee machine, and microwave. Please use these areas at your convenience. If you find a problem in any of these areas (coffee machine not working, no paper towels, etc.) please be sure to let the receptionist (703.277.7700 or [confacct@gmu.edu](mailto:confacct@gmu.edu)) know.

## CONFERENCE ROOM RESERVATION PROCEDURES

The MEC-Fairfax offers conference space for business gatherings. Spaces are open to MEC-Fairfax clients and through prior agreement.

All MEC conference rooms and training spaces are well-equipped to handle working meetings and presentations. Should you require audio visual equipment, please request it when you make the reservation. We have LCD projectors, but they are always in demand and their availability cannot be guaranteed.

On-site clients may reserve conference rooms up to 4 hours per company per day. You will find a listing of rates attached for full day or half day reservations beyond your allotted hours. Please contact Aziza (703.277.7700 or [confacct@gmu.edu](mailto:confacct@gmu.edu)) for more information about those rates. Conference Room reservation requests should be sent as email calendar invites to [confacct@gmu.edu](mailto:confacct@gmu.edu). Tentative reservations and availability can be viewed by anyone using Outlook's shared calendar feature. Please visit <http://www.MEC-Fairfax.org/incubatorclientresources.html/> for additional instruction.

## CONFERENCE ROOM USAGE AND GUIDELINES

- Tentative Meeting dates will be held for two weeks only.
- Set-up and take-down services are not available. The individual reserving the room is responsible for making arrangements.
- A room may not be scheduled for a single meeting greater than 24 hours.
- Recurring meetings may not be scheduled for more than 30 days.

- All meeting requests must include a subject that clearly defines the purpose of the meeting. The scheduler's name and contact information must also be included in the body of the request.
- Use only whiteboard-approved markers.
- Place all trash in receptacles, clean whiteboards, contact facilities staff if necessary.
- Training Rooms should be locked following usage.
- On occasion, Clients may find it in their best interest to host public events such as news conferences and/or visiting dignitaries which would involve large crowds. When planning these events, Clients must provide MEC-Fairfax with written advance notice at least seven (7) business days prior to the event. The notice should indicate the date, time, location, and nature of the event as well as an estimate of the crowd size.

### **Conference Room Locations:**

- **First Floor**

- Conference Center A – 122A (maximum occupancy: 30 people)
- Conference Center B – 122B (maximum occupancy: 20 people)

- **Second Floor**

- Conference Room 1 (maximum occupancy: 7 to 8 people)
- Conference Room 2 (maximum occupancy: 2 to 5 people)
- Conference Room 3 (maximum occupancy: 2 to 4 people)
- Conference Room 4 (maximum occupancy: 2 to 4 people)
- Conference Room 5 (maximum occupancy: 10 to 12 people)

- **Third Floor**

- Conference Room 6 (maximum occupancy: 2 to 6 people)
- Conference Room 7 (maximum occupancy: 8 people)

- **Fourth Floor**

- Conference Room 8 (maximum occupancy: 6 to 8 people)
- Conference Room 9 (maximum occupancy: 5 to 6 people)
- Conference Room 10 (maximum occupancy: 10 to 12 people)
- Conference Room 11 (maximum occupancy: 10 people)

## CLIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- As a client of the MEC-Fairfax, it is important for you to recognize that if you violate the rules described in this Handbook, you can face a variety of consequences as determined by the Incubator Manager, including being terminated as a client. This is in addition to the provisions of the Lease Agreement. Also, please be aware that this Handbook shall not be deemed to give additional rights or privileges to the client over those already described in the Lease Agreement.
- The Incubator and its staff will make their best efforts to support your business and provide the services outlined in your Lease Agreement. By signing below, you agree that nothing contained in the Handbook should be deemed to constitute nor be construed or implied to create the relationship of principal and agent, partnership, joint venture, or any other relationship between client and MEC-Fairfax.
- In this regard, although each client will have the benefit of various businesses, financial, technical and management services afforded by MEC, the MEC will not be liable for the advice, depth, extent, quality, and / or quantity of such management, financial, business, and / or technical services afforded to clients through the MEC. Furthermore, such services, and the people and entities providing them, are merely advisory in nature without binding effect on any client. Each MEC client is free to accept or reject such advice and services offered to it; and, each client is responsible for all decisions with respect to its own business, and for all consequences of these decisions.

LESSEE:

[INSERT BUSINESS/CLIENT NAME]

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Name:

Title: