ACS / SMALL BUSINESS BRIEF

Practical insight for owners and managers in North Carolina

OCTOBER 2026
INAUGURAL ISSUE

Before year end, review how work really gets done

The useful review is the one that changes a recurring problem customers and employees actually experience.

AN OPERATIONS REVIEW THAT LEADS TO ACTION

1 Find the pattern Choose three recurring issues → **2 Assign the change** One owner and one measure → **3 Verify the result** Check again in 30 to 60 days

Start with a few friction points: a missed handoff, a repeated complaint, a late supplier, or work that depends on one person. Choose three issues that consumed management time this year. For each, compare the promised result with what happened.

Use the record: service dates, rework, customer messages, inspection findings, missed deadlines, and employee feedback. Ask where the process broke down. Was an expectation unclear? Was the owner missing? Did a control exist on paper but fail in practice?

Give each improvement an owner, a due date, and one observable measure. A revised procedure is only the start. Check whether the work is performed differently after the change, then carry unresolved items into the next planning cycle.

A real-world example

If customers repeatedly call for job status, the problem may be a handoff between scheduling and the field team. Add a standard update when work is delayed, assign it to a coordinator, and count how many customers still have to call. That shows more than recording that a procedure was rewritten.

THE 45-MINUTE REVIEW

01 Name the pattern List three repeated problems.

02 Pick one Choose the most costly or disruptive.

03 Assign and measure Write the owner, due date, and check date.

04 Test the result If the measure has not moved, revise the action.

EVIDENCE TO BRING

- Repeat complaints and open promises
- Rework or inspection findings
- Missed handoffs and deadlines
- Vendor delays and single-person dependencies

THE SUCCESS TEST

30–60 DAYS

Did the result improve for the customer after the change? If not, keep the issue open and adjust the process.

SERVICE RECOVERY / RESOURCE 11

Begin with the customer’s experience: acknowledge the impact, stabilize the situation, restore service, and follow up. Use #6 to resolve the internal cause.

ACCOUNT RISK / RESOURCE 12

A weakening account needs more than a last-minute offer. Review decision makers, service history, changing needs, and renewal timing.

A 30-day follow-through

THIS WEEK
Choose the issue and record the current result. Agree on the owner and the customer standard.

NEXT TWO WEEKS
Test one practical change. Ask the people doing the work what still gets in the way.

AT DAY 30
Compare the new result with the baseline. Keep, adjust, or replace the action.

WORKING QUESTION Which recurring problem consumed the most time or customer confidence this year?

A lasting fix shows up in the work: fewer repeat calls, a reliable handoff, a result that meets the customer standard, and a named owner who checks it again.

EXPECTATIONS DEFINED. PERFORMANCE MEASURED. RESULTS MANAGED.

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Small Business Legislative Watch

Federal, North Carolina, and local developments | Status checked September 29, 2026

FEDERAL / IN EFFECT

Child care credit

The IRS says the employer-provided child care credit is expanded for amounts paid or incurred after Dec. 31, 2025. Eligible small businesses may use 50% of qualified child care expenditures, subject to the credit rules and annual limit. Ask a tax adviser whether your arrangement qualifies.

NORTH CAROLINA / PROPOSED

Small business capital

Senate Bill 1056 proposes a small business capital access program. The General Assembly lists it in the Senate Appropriations/Base Budget committee. It is not law. Monitor the bill if financing is part of your plan.

LOCAL / GREENSBORO

Planning fees

Greensboro reports that seven Planning Department application fees rose with its FY 2026–27 budget. If you plan a zoning or development application, check the current fee schedule before budgeting. This is not a general business fee.

OFFICIAL SOURCES IRS Section 45F | NCGA S1056 | Greensboro application fees

Status and eligibility can change. Confirm details with the responsible agency or a qualified adviser before acting.

Put the issue to work

FREE RESOURCE OF THE MONTH

Annual Operations Review Checklist

Resource #10 helps review customers, process performance, people, vendors, and quality. Choose a few changes you can assign and verify, rather than a long wish list.

Find the ACS Resource Center: acsllc-nc.com

SERVICE SPOTLIGHT

An independent look at your systems

Eligible local businesses may request one complimentary ACS Introductory Assessment focused on a relevant operating area. No fee, obligation, or requirement to purchase an ACS service.

Request an assessment: acsllc-nc.com/assessment

A connected resource path

#10 Review the pattern > #11 Recover a customer experience > #6 Correct the internal cause > #12 Protect the account relationship

ONE MEASURE TO CARRY INTO NOVEMBER

Choose a measure that reflects the customer's experience: repeat complaints, missed updates, rework, or on-time completion. Record the current result now and check it after your first change. If the number does not improve, ask what still makes the work difficult.

October planning notes for owners

BUDGET AND CAPACITY

Before approving a new tool, hire, or vendor change, identify the recurring problem it should solve. Decide which measure will tell you whether the investment helped. A busy team may need a clearer handoff before it needs another system.

CUSTOMER COMMITMENTS

Review promises that remain open, especially those made during service recovery. Confirm who owns each update and the date the customer expects it. If a problem is repeated across accounts, connect the customer response to an internal corrective action.

ACS Small Business Brief is a monthly, practical note for owners and managers. Share this issue with the person who owns the next improvement.

Before the next issue, record one baseline, make one change, and schedule one check of the result. A single completed cycle will teach you more than a list of unassigned goals.

EXPECTATIONS DEFINED. PERFORMANCE MEASURED. RESULTS MANAGED.