

## LOCAL REVENUE SERVICES AGREEMENT

**THIS AGREEMENT**, made and entered into this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ A.D., 2023, by and among the Municipal Association of South Carolina (the "Association") and all the parties who are now or may hereafter become participants ("Participants") in South Carolina Local Revenue Services, a division of the Association ("LRS"),

### WITNESSETH:

**WHEREAS**, certain governmental functions may be more efficiently and effectively provided in cooperation with other governments, particularly when the sharing of such functions may deliver economies of scale, avoid redundancies in staffing, facilitate intergovernmental communication and coordination, benefit the citizens and taxpayers of the State by offering single points of contact, and allow retention of highly trained and specialized staff or private contractors in situations in which it would not be cost effective for a single government to retain such professionals;

**WHEREAS**, Article VIII, sec. 13 of the South Carolina Constitution provides that any incorporated municipality "may agree with . . . any other political subdivision for the joint administration of any function and exercise of powers and the sharing of the costs thereof," and that "[n]othing in this Constitution may be construed to prohibit the State or any of its counties, incorporated municipalities, or other political subdivisions from agreeing to share the lawful cost, responsibility, and administration of functions with any one or more governments, whether within or without this State;"

**WHEREAS**, S.C. Code § 4-9-41(A) provides that any "incorporated municipality ... may provide for the joint administration of any function and exercise of powers as authorized by Section 13 of Article VIII of the South Carolina Constitution;"

**WHEREAS**, certain municipalities in the State have determined that it would be effective and efficient to jointly perform certain functions, including without limitation the business license functions more fully described below;

**WHEREAS**, LRS is a division of the Association and a committee of the board of directors of the Association and will establish or continue one or more Revenue Service Programs (as hereinafter defined); and

**WHEREAS**, the Participants, through action of their respective governing bodies, have elected to comply with the conditions of this Agreement and to authorize LRS to perform the functions and exercise the powers herein described;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, for and in consideration of the mutual covenants, promises, and obligations herein contained, which are given to and accepted by each signatory hereof to the other, the parties hereto agree as follows:

**Section 1. Definitions.** As used in this Agreement, the following terms shall have the meanings set forth below:

- (a) "Appeals Board" means the board created pursuant to Section 8 hereof for purposes of hearing and determining appeals under this Agreement.
- (b) "Association" means the Municipal Association of South Carolina.
- (c) "Gross Proceeds" means, with respect to any Revenue Service Program and for any period of calculation, the total amount of Impositions collected by LRS during such period.
- (d) "Imposition" means any tax, fee, rate, charge, fine, penalty, or interest charge that has been lawfully imposed by a Participant and for which a Revenue Service Program has been established. Such Impositions include, without limitation, Statewide Business License Taxes.
- (e) "LRS" means South Carolina Local Revenue Services, established by this Agreement.
- (f) "LRS Board of Directors" means the board of directors of LRS.
- (g) "LRS Business License Official" shall mean the person designated from time to time by the LRS Board of Directors to act as the business license official (as such term is used in S.C. Code §§ 6-1-400 to -420) with respect to one or more Revenue Service Programs. The LRS Board of Directors may, but need not, designate different persons as the LRS Business License Official for different Revenue Service Programs.
- (h) "Participant" means a local government that has become a participant in LRS by applying to LRS for admission and, if approved, accepting the terms of participation in LRS by ordinance and signing this Agreement in counterpart.
- (i) "Net Proceeds" means, with respect to any Revenue Service Program and for any period of calculation, the amount of Gross Proceeds that remain for distribution to Participants after the payment of operation and maintenance expenses (including, without limitation, LRS's compensation) for such period.
- (j) "Revenue Service Programs" means any one or more programs established or continued by LRS to administer, assess, collect, and enforce Impositions. Such Revenue Service Programs may include, without limitation, programs for the administration, assessment, collection, and enforcement of Statewide Business License Taxes.
- (k) "S.C. Code" means the South Carolina Code of Laws of 1976, as amended.
- (l) "State" means the State of South Carolina.
- (m) "Statewide Business License Taxes" means business license taxes that, pursuant to the S.C. Code, are applicable in a manner or at a rate that applies throughout the State. Such business license taxes include without limitation the business license taxes applicable to insurers under Title 38, Chapter 7 of the S.C. Code; to brokers under Title 38, Chapter 45 of the S.C. Code; to telecommunications companies under Title 58, Chapter 9, Article 20 of the S.C. Code; and such other business license taxes as may now or hereafter be made

applicable throughout the State in a manner or at a rate that has been established by State law.

**Section 2. Authorization of LRS.** The municipalities that are initial signatories hereto do hereby establish LRS and authorize it to perform the functions and exercise the powers described in this Agreement. The functions to be performed hereunder are more specifically described in Section 5 below and the powers to be exercised are more specifically described in Section 6 below. The Participants, regardless of their respective dates of admission to LRS, further agree as follows:

- (a) The functions and powers described in this Agreement would be more efficiently and effectively performed and exercised in cooperation with other governments through LRS;
- (b) The Participants shall comply with the conditions of this Agreement and, by joining LRS, shall jointly perform the functions and exercise the powers herein described by contract with LRS.

**Section 3. Participation.** The right to participate in LRS shall be limited to local governments within the State. A qualifying entity may become a Participant by applying to LRS for admission and, if approved, accepting the terms of participation in LRS by ordinance and signing this Agreement in counterpart. LRS shall be sole judge of whether an applicant shall be admitted as a Participant. A Participant may be suspended or expelled by the LRS Board of Directors from LRS, provided that such suspension or expulsion shall not be effective until 30 days after written notice of suspension or expulsion has been mailed to it.

**Section 4. LRS Board of Directors.** LRS shall be governed by a Board of Directors containing five Directors. The members of the Association's Executive Committee (comprising the President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Third Vice President, and Immediate Past President of the Association) shall serve *ex officio* as Directors of LRS, with terms of office coterminous with their terms as officers of the Association. The President of the Association, or in his or her absence the First Vice President of the Association, shall serve as chair at meetings of the LRS Board of Directors. With respect to LRS's officers, the members of the LRS Board of Directors shall occupy the same offices as they do with respect to the Association.

**Section 5. Functions of LRS.** LRS may, and at the direction of and subject to the control of the LRS Board of Directors shall, establish or continue one or more Revenue Service Programs including, without limitation, for the administration, assessment, collection, and enforcement of Statewide Business License Taxes and other Impositions related to Statewide Business License Taxes. LRS's functions with respect to the Revenue Service Programs shall include, without limitation, training employees; developing resources to assist business license functions; making necessary investigations into entities or individuals subject to Impositions; developing databases for the application, calculation, allocation, and distribution of Impositions; establishing procedures for determining and calculating the amounts due as Impositions; communicating with entities or individuals subject to Impositions; collecting current and delinquent Impositions; initiating, defending, managing, resolving, and settling disputes or litigation matters that affect more than

one Participant; and acquiring, licensing, developing, improving, maintaining, and protecting software and other information technology infrastructure.

**Section 6. Powers of LRS.** LRS shall have the following powers:

- (a) adopt bylaws for the regulation of its affairs and the conduct of its business and prescribe rules and policies and promulgate regulations in connection with the performance of its functions and duties;
- (b) adopt an official seal and alter it at its pleasure;
- (c) maintain an office at a place it determines;
- (d) sue and be sued in its own name and plead and be impleaded;
- (e) require documentation of amounts due from taxpayers, including without limitation by requiring reconciliation reports in which the taxpayer provides sufficient information to verify whether revenues of the taxpayer are appropriate for exclusion as non-municipal revenues and to determine the proper allocation of Impositions among Participants;
- (f) receive, administer, and comply with the conditions and requirements of a gift, grant, or donation of property or money;
- (g) acquire by purchase, lease, gift, or otherwise, or obtain options for the acquisition of, any property, real or personal, improved or unimproved, including an interest in land less than the fee thereof in conformity with state law;
- (h) sell, lease, exchange, transfer, mortgage, or otherwise dispose of, or grant options for any such purposes with respect to, any real or personal property or interest therein in conformity with state law;
- (i) make and execute contracts, agreements, or other undertakings with such agents, service contractors, persons, firms, corporations, and attorneys as it deems appropriate to perform its functions and exercise its powers;
- (j) acquire, license, develop, improve, maintain, and protect software and other information technology infrastructure;
- (k) employ professionals, support staff, attorneys, appraisers, financial advisors, and other consultants and employees as required in the judgment of LRS and fix and pay their compensation from funds available to LRS for that purpose;
- (l) transact any lawful business that will aid the purposes and functions of LRS;
- (m) make payments or donations, or do any other act, not inconsistent with law, that furthers the business and affairs of LRS; and
- (n) do all things necessary or convenient, not inconsistent with law, to further the activities and affairs of LRS

**Section 7. Attorney-in-Fact Designation; Dispute Resolution and Conduct of Litigation.** Each Participant hereby appoints LRS and its designees as its agent and attorney-in-fact to act on its behalf with respect to Impositions. As agent and attorney-in-fact, LRS shall be fully empowered to initiate, defend, manage, resolve, and settle any disputes or litigation (whether in its own name or in the name of the Participants) relating to Impositions owing or payable to one or more Participants; to pay all expenses, costs, and judgments that might be incurred against LRS when acting on behalf of its Participants for communication, investigation, negotiation, enforcement, defense, or settlement with respect to Impositions; and to take all other actions as may be necessary to administer, collect, investigate, enforce, and implement the Revenue Service Programs. Each Participant, pursuant to Rule 17 of the S. C. Rules of Civil Procedure and Rule 17 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, specifically acknowledges the standing of LRS to prosecute a civil action for collection in its behalf and hereby ratifies any such action that LRS may commence.

The LRS Board of Directors may, by majority vote, authorize a third party (including without limitation the Association) to act as attorney-in-fact to the same extent as set forth in this section on behalf of the Participants.

LRS's authority to initiate, defend, manage, resolve, and settle disputes and litigation shall be subject to the following terms and conditions:

- (a) If, with respect to any particular dispute, a proposed compromise or settlement would reduce the amount asserted by LRS to be payable to an individual Participant by more than ten percent (10%) of the total amount remitted by LRS to such Participant in the immediately preceding year for the relevant Revenue Service Program, then, notwithstanding subsections 7(b) and 7(c) below, LRS shall be required to secure the written consent of such Participant before compromising or settling such dispute with respect to such Participant. Otherwise, LRS shall be entitled to compromise or settle such dispute on behalf of each Participant without further authorization by such Participants beyond that contained herein.
- (b) Any proposed compromise or settlement that would result in a reduction of \$100,000 or less from the amount originally claimed to be due and owing by LRS may be approved or denied by LRS without separate approval by the LRS Board of Directors. The LRS Board of Directors shall, by appropriate action from time to time, designate one or more staff members or contractual counterparties who are authorized to compromise or settle such disputes.
- (c) Any proposed compromise or settlement that would result in a reduction of more than \$100,000 from the amount originally claimed to be due and owing by LRS must be approved or denied by the LRS Board of Directors.

- (d) Any proposed compromise or settlement that would result in a waiver of penalties, interest, late charges, or other amounts owing due to late payment of an Imposition must be approved or denied by the LRS Board of Directors.

**Section 8. Appeals Process.** The Participants acknowledge that, pursuant to local ordinances, regulations, and rules, each Participant has its own procedures by which matters relating to the calculation, assessment, and collection of business license taxes may be appealed. With respect to Impositions subject to this Agreement, however, each Participant has enacted a local ordinance by which appeals relating to such Impositions are excluded from the otherwise applicable local ordinance. Each Participant agrees that the appeals process described in this Section shall apply to all appeals relating to Impositions subject to this Agreement. Each Participant hereby consents to the adoption of the appeals process described in this Section; specifically declares its intention that such appeals process shall be deemed an exception to its otherwise applicable local ordinances, regulations, and rules; and agrees that it has or will approve such appeals process by appropriate local action.

- (a) There is hereby created a board for purposes of hearing appeals pursuant to this Section (the “Appeals Board”). The Appeals Board shall contain three members. The President of the Association, the Executive Director of the Association, and the President of the South Carolina Business Licensing Officials Association (“BLOA”) shall each serve *ex officio* as members of the Appeals Board, with terms of office coterminous with their terms as officers of the Association or BLOA, as appropriate. The President of the Association, or in his or her absence the Executive Director of the Association, shall serve as chair at meetings of the Appeals Board.
- (b) With respect to the calculation, assessment, and collection of Impositions, the following appeals process, as required by Section 6-1-410, shall apply.
- (1) If a taxpayer fails or refuses to pay an Imposition by the date on which such Imposition is due, the LRS Business License Official may serve notice of assessment of the Imposition due on the taxpayer by mail or personal service. Within thirty days after the date of postmark or personal service, a taxpayer may request, in writing with reasons stated, an adjustment of the assessment. An informal conference between the LRS Business License Official and the taxpayer must be held within fifteen days of the receipt of the request, at which time the taxpayer may present any information or documents in support of the requested adjustment. Within five days after the conference, the LRS Business License Official shall issue a notice of final assessment and serve the taxpayer by mail or personal service with the notice and provide a form for any further appeal of the assessment by the taxpayer.
  - (2) Within thirty days after the date of postmark or personal service, the taxpayer may appeal the notice of final assessment by filing a completed appeal form with the LRS Business License Official, by mail or personal service, and by paying to LRS

in protest at least eighty percent of the business license tax based on the final assessment. The appeal must be heard and determined by the Appeals Board. The Appeals Board shall provide the taxpayer with written notice of the hearing and with any rules of evidence or procedure prescribed by the Appeals Board. The hearing must be held within thirty days after receipt of the appeal form unless continued to another date by agreement of the parties. A hearing by the Appeals Board must be held at a regular or specially called meeting of the Appeals Board. At the appeals hearing, the taxpayer and LRS have the right to be represented by counsel, to present testimony and evidence, and to cross-examine witnesses. The hearing must be recorded and must be transcribed at the expense of the party so requesting. The Appeals Board shall decide the assessment by majority vote. The Appeals Board shall issue a written decision explaining the basis for the decision with findings of fact and conclusions and shall inform the taxpayer of the right to request a contested case hearing before the Administrative Law Court. The written decision must be filed with the LRS Business License Official and served on the taxpayer by mail or personal service. The decision is the final decision of LRS on the assessment.

- (3) Within thirty days after the date of postmark or personal service of LRS's written decision on the assessment, a taxpayer may appeal the decision to the Administrative Law Court in accordance with the rules of the Administrative Law Court.

**Section 9. LRS May Be Separately Organized.** Hereafter, the LRS Board of Directors may determine, for corporate governance, recordkeeping, and operational purposes, that LRS should be established as a separate entity, either under the South Carolina Nonprofit Corporation Act, currently codified at Title 33, Chapter 31 of the S.C. Code, or otherwise. If the LRS Board of Directors so determines, it may take all such actions as may be necessary to organize LRS as a separate entity without further approval by the Participants, provided that such organization shall not otherwise vary or modify the terms of this Agreement except to the extent necessary to reflect the new organizational structure of LRS.

**Section 10. Participation in a Revenue Service Program.** A Participant may elect to participate in a Revenue Service Program by signing and delivering a separate supplement to this Agreement with respect to such Revenue Service Program (each, a "Participant Program Supplement"). The Participant Program Supplements shall be substantially identical within each Revenue Service Program. The form of the Participant Program Supplement is attached hereto as Appendix A.

**Section 11. Collection of Impositions; Distributions; Payment for Services; Prohibition on Lobbying Activity.**

- (a) LRS shall collect, subject to the Participant Program Supplements, all Impositions subject to this Agreement.

- (b) The Participants will compensate LRS for its services. Initially, such compensation shall be in the amount of four percent of Gross Proceeds collected for the benefit of each Participant within each Revenue Service Program, subject to any volume discount approved from time to time by the LRS Board of Directors, together with any interest earned on funds held on deposit prior to disbursement. The Participants acknowledge that this amount represents operating expenses payable to LRS for services rendered. For accounting and recordkeeping purposes, LRS will apply this rate to each Participant separately within each Revenue Service Program. Hereafter, and notwithstanding Section 13 below, the LRS Board of Directors by majority vote may amend the compensation method by giving notice to all participating Participants at least ninety days prior to the effective date of such amendment. Such amendment shall become effective after the ninety-day notice period with respect to each Participant without further action by such Participant, provided that such Participant may withdraw from participation at any time within ninety days after notice of the amendment is provided.
- (c) LRS will regularly, and not less than once in each calendar quarter, distribute the Net Proceeds to Participants.
- (d) No funds or personnel of LRS may be used or employed to influence any election; support or oppose any partisan organization; support or oppose the enactment, repeal, or modification of any federal or state legislation; or seek to influence any federal or state local government officials in the discharge of their official functions.

**Section 12. Fiscal Year.** LRS shall operate on a fiscal year from 12:01 a.m. January 1 of each year to 12:00 midnight December 31 of the succeeding year (the “LRS Year”). Application for participation, when approved in writing by LRS shall constitute a continuing contract for each succeeding LRS Year unless cancelled by LRS.

**Section 13. Amendment.** This Agreement may be amended by an agreement executed by those Participants constituting a majority of the Participants in LRS during the current LRS Year. In lieu of this amendment procedure, the Participants hereby appoint a 4/5 majority (i.e., at least four Directors) of the LRS Board of Directors agents to make any amendments to this Agreement that would not fundamentally alter the contemplated arrangement. Written notice of any amendment proposed for adoption by the LRS Board of Directors shall be mailed to each Participant not less than 30 days in advance. Written notice of amendments finally adopted by the LRS Board of Directors shall be mailed to each Participant not more than 30 days after adoption.

**Section 14. Terms Applicable on Admission.** Any entity that formally applies to participate in LRS and is accepted by LRS shall thereupon become a party to this Agreement and be bound by all of the terms and conditions hereof. A Participant may withdraw from participation by delivery of written notice of withdrawal at least 90 days prior to the end of an LRS Year, to be effective as of the end of such LRS Year.



**Section 15. Term; Dissolution.** LRS has been established with the bona fide intention that it shall be continued in operation indefinitely and that the contributions to LRS shall continue for an indefinite period. However, the LRS Board of Directors reserves the right at any time to terminate LRS by a written instrument to that effect executed by at least four-fifths (4/5) of the members of the LRS Board of Directors. Such written termination notice shall be delivered to each Participant no less than 120 days prior to the effective date of termination. In the event of such termination, Participant contributions shall cease as of the date of termination and the assets then remaining in the fund shall continue to be used and applied, to the extent available, for the (a) payment of claims arising prior to such termination and (b) payment of reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in such termination. Any monies or other assets thereafter remaining in LRS shall be distributed pro rata to the Participants in LRS as of the day of termination. In no event shall any such assets be returned or distributed to any individual. Upon such termination, the LRS Board of Directors shall continue to serve for such period of time and to the extent necessary to effectuate termination of LRS.

*[signatures appear on following page]*

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the Participants listed below acknowledge their participation in LRS and acceptance of obligations thereunder, by the due execution hereof, following appropriate governmental body approval, by its mayor or other duly authorized official. Further, LRS has caused these presents to be signed by its President and attested by its Vice President.

**MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

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B. Todd Glover, Executive Director

**LOCAL REVENUE SERVICES, A DIVISION OF THE  
MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

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Mayor Rick Osbon, President of LRS

**ATTEST:**

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Mayor Barbara Blain-Bellamy, Vice President of LRS

**PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE PAGE**

**TOWN OF BLUFFTON, SOUTH CAROLINA**

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Name: Stephen Steese  
Title: Town Manager

**ATTEST:**

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Name: Kimberly Gammon  
Title: Town Clerk of Bluffton

**APPENDIX A: FORM OF PARTICIPANT PROGRAM SUPPLEMENT**

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Bluffton (the "Municipality") has applied for and been approved to participate in South Carolina Local Revenue Services ("LRS");

**WHEREAS**, the Municipality has executed a counterpart of the Local Revenue Services Agreement (the "Agreement") by and among itself and all other participants in LRS;

**WHEREAS**, capitalized terms used and not otherwise defined herein have the meaning given to such terms in the Agreement;

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to the Agreement, LRS has established Revenue Service Programs for Statewide Business Licenses and other Impositions; and

**WHEREAS**, the Municipality now desires to agree to participate in one or more Revenue Service Programs;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the Municipality hereby agrees with LRS as follows:

**Section 1. Participation in Revenue Service Programs.** The Municipality hereby elects and agrees to participate in the following Revenue Service Programs: ITP / BTP / TTP.

**Section 2. Term.** This Participant Program Supplement is effective until December 31, 2023, and shall continue from year-to-year thereafter until terminated by either party upon notice delivered in writing given at least 90 days prior to the next upcoming December 31.

**Section 3. Payment for Services.** The Municipality agrees that it will compensate LRS for its services as set forth in the Agreement. Initially, such compensation shall be in the amount of four percent of Gross Proceeds collected for the benefit of the Municipality within each Revenue Service Program, subject to any volume discount approved from time to time by the LRS Board of Directors, together with any interest earned on funds held on deposit prior to disbursement. The Municipality acknowledges that this amount represents operating expenses payable to LRS for services rendered. For accounting and recordkeeping purposes, LRS will apply this rate to the Municipality separately within each Revenue Service Program.

**Section 4. Expenses; Fund Accounting.** (a) The rate for services established herein shall be inclusive of all administrative expenses of LRS, except legal expenses incurred in connection with the services rendered. Legal expenses incurred by LRS are not included in the base rate and shall be prorated to all Participants in direct relationship to the disbursements of the Revenue Service Program to which the legal expenses relate.

(b) LRS will deposit all funds received in an appropriate account for which accurate records will be maintained. Business license taxes collected for the Municipality, less the service charge herein agreed to, will be disbursed to the Municipality on or before March 1 of each calendar year and thereafter as remaining collections permit.

**Section 5. Special Provisions for BTP.** (a) Pursuant to Title 38, Chapter 45 of the South Carolina Code of Laws (the "Brokers Insurance Statute"), the Municipality designates the Municipal

Association of South Carolina as the municipal agent to act on behalf of the municipality for the purposes of the Brokers Insurance Statute.

(b) The Brokers Insurance Statute governs the receipt from the South Carolina Department of Insurance (“DOI”) and distribution to the Municipality of all municipal premium taxes from brokers for non-admitted surplus lines insurance. Upon receipt of the taxes from the DOI, LRS will deposit all funds received in an appropriate account for which accurate records will be maintained. Taxes will be disbursed to the Municipality, less the service charge herein agreed to, as collections permit.