

Emergency Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board of Directors Meeting

An emergency meeting of the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board of Directors (IA Board) will be held Wednesday, March 25, beginning at 1 p.m., utilizing communications media technology via WebEx. This meeting is being held utilizing communications media technology pursuant to Executive Order 20-69. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss a proposed initial COVID-19 Economic Disaster Relief Grant Program.

The media and the public can access the meeting in real time via livestreaming on **WCOT** (Comcast and CenturyLink channel 13) and **Talgov.com**.

Additionally, Leon County will be broadcasting the meeting on Comcast channel 16, Prism channels 16 & 1016-HD, the County's [Facebook Live](#) page and [YouTube](#) channel.

Public comments may be submitted by email to Comments@BlueprintIA.org up until 9 a.m. on March 25, 2020.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

**March 25, 2020
1 PM EST
Digital Meeting**

Chair: Bryan Desloge

Agenda

- | | | |
|-------------|---|------|
| I. | AGENDA MODIFICATIONS | None |
| II. | INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS | |
| III. | GENERAL BUSINESS/PRESENTATIONS | |
| 1. | Consideration of COVID-19 Economic Disaster Relief Assistance Grant Program for Small Business | 1 |
| IV. | CITIZENS TO BE HEARD
Public comments may be submitted by email to Comments@BlueprintIA.org until 9 a.m. on March 25, 2020.
All comments received will be part of the record. | |
| V. | ADJOURN | |

NEXT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING: May 21, 2020, 3:00 PM

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 286.26, Florida Statutes, persons needing a special accommodation to attend this meeting should contact Susan Emmanuel, Public Information Officer, 315 South Calhoun Street, Suite 450, Tallahassee, Florida, 32301, at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. Telephone: 850-219-1060; or 1-800-955-8770 (Voice) or 711 via Florida Relay Service.

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Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency

Board of Directors

Agenda Item #1

March 25, 2020

Title: Consideration of COVID-19 Economic Disaster Relief Assistance Grant Program for Small Business

Category: General Business

Intergovernmental Management Committee: Vincent S. Long, Leon County Administrator
Reese Goad, City of Tallahassee Manager

Lead Staff / Project Team: Benjamin H. Pingree, Director, Department of PLACE
Cristina Paredes, Director, Office of Economic Vitality
Drew Dietrich, Deputy Director, Office of Economic Vitality
Richard Fetchick, Business Intelligence Manager
T.J. Lewis, Business Development Manager

STATEMENT OF ISSUE

This agenda presents an overview of the initial economic impacts being experienced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the actions taken by the Federal and State governments, thus far, to immediately address the issue. This item presents extensive details regarding Tallahassee-Leon County's initial, quick response actions to mitigate negative local economic impacts and to support our economic resilience. Finally, this item presents policy options to the joint city/county IA Board for a new, rapid response grant program: the Covid-19 Economic Disaster Relief (CEDR). The CEDR Program will be administered by the Office of Economic Vitality to bridge the gap between federal and state programs and quicken economic recovery to sustain local businesses most in need.

The rapidly evolving economic impacts of the COVID-19 Coronavirus on the US and Tallahassee-Leon County economy, as tracked by OEV staff through a survey and ongoing business interaction, indicate that a variety of sectors have experienced revenue decline and are responding by diminishing employee hours, furloughing or laying off staff, reducing inventory volumes, and in some cases temporarily closing.

Future issues remain to be seen and will continue to evolve; as of this meeting, the objective of this response program is to provide a rapid bridge to local small businesses, to sustain their operations in the midst of this crisis, and as they await Federal and State relief program funds, detailed further below, while also maintaining capacity by OEV for future needs as they arise. The CEDR Program, if funded at \$1,000,000 and disbursed at \$2,500 per eligible applicant, will assist up to 400 viable small businesses that have already applied for emergency funding to insure their continuity of operations. Moreover, CEDR aligns with existing federal and state

programs and has the potential to leverage up to \$820,000,000 in State (Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan – up to \$50,000 per applicant) and Federal (SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program – up to \$2,000,000 per applicant) relief funding to small businesses in Tallahassee-Leon County. Finally, the proposed CEDR is an effective tool to provide a rapid and effective local grant to those businesses to cover key costs such as rent, utilities and operating costs as they await the arrival of those state and federal funds.

FISCAL IMPACT

This item is anticipated to have a fiscal impact of \$1 million, which could be funded through the reallocation of the pay back to the City and the County (included in the approved FY 2020 budget). The City and County contributed approximately \$2 million each to fund the operations of the Office of Economic Vitality. Per the IA Board direction, the City and County will be repaid the amounts that were advanced over the first five years of the Blueprint 2020 sales tax. The repayment amount programmed for FY 2020 is \$1,000,000. Future repayments in the amount of \$500,000 will be made annually through FY 2024.

In coordination with the City and County, very preliminary revised sales tax projections estimate that for FY 2020 collection may be approximately 13% (\$524,339) below the original projected revenue of \$4,033,377. FY 2020 Revised estimates will be prepared once actual collection data is reported, which will be several months in the future.

Preliminary analysis suggests there are insufficient funds within the economic development portion of the sales tax program to pay for a broad grant program. Should the IA Board choose to seek additional dollars, funds would need to be borrowed (\$5 to \$10 million) to pay for larger programs in support of local businesses. Any borrowing would be repaid with future economic development sales tax funds, and would affect the viability of other OEV programs.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The OEV Strategic Plan does not explicitly address resilience or disaster response. However, the formation statement can be interpreted to include measures taken to ensure continuity and growth during contractionary periods:

“To guide the Tallahassee-Leon County’s economic development efforts in coordination with the private sector and community stakeholders by fostering fair and open competition, conducting extensive outreach to assist businesses in navigating and competing in today’s marketplace, and leveraging existing resources to maximize the infusion of financial capital to the local economy.”

RECOMMENDED ACTION

- Option #1 Approve the COVID-19 Economic Disaster Relief (CEDR) Assistance Grant Program for Small Business in the amount of \$1 million and approve the allocation of funds from the City/County payback to the CEDR grant program.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

COVID-19 has led to a disruption in the global, national, and local economy, leading to significant impacts on businesses and their employees. OEV is responding to the needs of local businesses by implementing promotional campaigns, information sharing, and an ongoing survey of local businesses. OEV will continue to monitor impacts and programs from around the United States, and adapt its ongoing response to the changing needs of local businesses.

Current results indicate that the majority of businesses have experienced impacts, with over 50% reporting a revenue drop of half or greater. Layoffs, furloughs, and reduced operations have begun. Attachment #1 describes current survey results in greater detail. Due to the high volume of affected businesses, the Federal government is the only entity through which a proportionate response can be delivered, wherein resources and financial support are distributed to all businesses.

KEY ASSUMPTIONS – RESPONDING TO COVID-19 ECONOMIC IMPACTS

- **Federal Government is the only entity with resources sufficient to implement comprehensive financial assistance.** Whether a sudden stop in the economy creates a temporary financial crisis or prompts a longer term recession, it creates an economic emergency for those hardest hit with small businesses and hourly employees facing the most urgent needs. Only the Federal Government can bring to bear the resources required to significantly mitigate this scale of potential small business closures and the substantial resulting unemployment. Working in support of federal and state incentives and programs to stabilize and stimulate the economy, and fill gaps at the local level for small businesses, presents an opportunity for local governments.
- **A historic federal economic stimulus package is expected this week.** The federal economic stimulus package is expected to provide significant resources in direct payments to individuals and loans to businesses, with \$500 billion earmarked for lending to businesses, local governments, and states, and \$350 billion to help small businesses meet payroll costs. Economic stimulus will not stop a longer term recession, but it will be a factor in the severity of the decline and the rate of the recovery. Further information is presented below regarding the federal response to date, the anticipated next federal stimulus packages, and there will be presentation at the meeting from federal lobbyists to discuss emerging developments in Washington, D.C.

- **Low interest, long term loans available – and more are coming.** Low interest, long term business loans are widely considered the best tool to save small businesses. Most small businesses live “pay check to pay check” with less than one month of savings and will not survive unless they have cash flow to pay overhead and employees. Further information is presented below regarding each key program being implemented by the state and/or federal government.
- **Unemployment benefits are critical in a temporary economic crisis.** For those who become unemployed due to COVID-19, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity currently has three programs available to address unemployment issues; Reemployment Assistance, Temporary Layoff Program, and Short Time Compensation Program. It is anticipated that more resources could become available based on US Congressional action. Note, additional information on unemployment benefits are included in the section below and Attachment #2.
- **Speed is imperative.** The speed at which small businesses receive financial assistance will in many cases determine if they can survive this shock and continue to employ people in the short and long term.
- **Future Resource Gaps.** The local response program (CEDR) is intended to offer immediate and meaningful support to bridge small business operational expenses not covered by State or Federal programs. As it is tough to predict the ongoing State and Federal funding priorities as it pertains to disaster relief, preserving future capacity to respond to local needs is achieved through this proposal, and is maintained by the City and County.

This agenda item recommends an initial rapid response grant by which immediate financial assistance to local businesses is provided. The COVID-19 Economic Disaster Relief Program (CEDR) would provide \$2,500 per qualified applicant to sustain business operations. This would cover fixed operational costs such as utilities and rent for approximately one month. This initial program proposal is built on the following objectives:

- **Protect existing small businesses.** According to the Tallahassee-Leon County COVID-19 Business Survey, 62.5% of respondents report a weekly revenue impact of greater than 50%. Their preferred resources include assistance paying overhead and cash grants to cover operating expenses, such as rent, utilities, and other operational needs. Protection in this instances would also include operating capital.

- **Avoid additional unemployed. As of 3/7/2020 (most recent week on US DOL)** Claims for unemployment in Florida rose from 4,853 to 5,325 (9.7%), and the trend appears to be continuing upward. Thus, business operating expense assistance is intended to prevent layoffs and further acceleration of local unemployment claims.
- **Do not duplicate federal or state incentives, programs. Bolstering the SBA Disaster Loan and Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan,** the proposed response would constitute a non-duplicative small grant that avoids adding future debt liability to local businesses.
- **Fill the gaps to accelerate our local economic recovery targeting the maximum leveraging of limited local resources.** Small grants are able to touch many small businesses – At \$2,500 per grant, this can assist approximately 400 businesses. This grant cannot solve pre-existing financial limitations that pre-date COVID-19; rather, it is a buoy during uncertain times that helps alleviate typical monthly expenses originating from public sector services. Of note, it is anticipated that this program will address immediate needs of the local business community during the initial responses efforts to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Future Resource Gaps.** The local response program (CEDR) is intended to offer initial immediate and meaningful support to bridge small business operational expenses not covered by State or Federal programs. As it is tough to predict the ongoing State and Federal funding priorities as it pertains to disaster relief, preserving future capacity to respond to local needs is achieved through this proposal, maintained by the City and County.

In addition, this agenda item provides an overview of the Federal and State responses to date related to COVID-19 as well as preliminary estimates on the impact to the collection of sales tax revenue, which funds Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency. Please note that County and/or City Federal Lobbyists will be available at the meeting for information sharing and to convey the latest federal actions to approve a new stimulus package.

FEDERAL RESPONSE AND PROGRAM OVERVIEW

As noted above, the federal government has taken initial prompt action to address the economic impact of the COVID-19. These actions are included as Attachment #3. The following is summary of the actions taken to date:

Congress initially reacted to community spread of the virus by passing H.R. 6074, the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, enacted on March 6. This “Phase 1” legislation provides \$8.3 billion in emergency supplemental appropriations to prepare for and mitigate the spread of the virus. It also includes funds for federal agencies working on diagnostic tests to identify the virus, therapeutic interventions to reduce its impact and a vaccine to stop coronavirus spread. The bulk of the funding in the Phase 1 legislation was allocated to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (\$6.5 billion) for public health preparedness and response. With regard to small business assistance, H.R. 6074 provided \$20 million to the U.S. Small Business Administration for administrative expenses related to increased loan volume to help businesses affected by the outbreak.

Following the passage of H.R. 6074, Congress immediately transitioned to working on a second bill to ease the economic impacts of the coronavirus. H.R. 6201, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, was enacted on March 18. This “Phase 2” bill includes food safety support needed in the wake of school and business closures, enhanced unemployment insurance benefits, new federal emergency paid leave benefits and refundable tax credits for small businesses to defray the cost of the paid leave, an increase in Medicaid matching funds to support healthcare providers, and policies to ensure that COVID-19 testing is significantly expanded and free to everyone in the U.S.

Highlights of H.R. 6074 (the “Phase 2” legislation) include the following:

- \$250 million for U.S. Department of Health and Human Services nutrition programs that aid elderly Americans
- \$1 billion for nutrition assistance to children and families
- Up to \$1 billion for emergency transfers to states to process and pay unemployment benefits

As of the publication of this agenda item, Congress is working on a third (“Phase 3”) bill which would provide as much as \$2 trillion of economic stimulus in response to the financial fallout related to the coronavirus pandemic. This package is expected to provide direct economic assistance to families and sectors of the economy impacted by the public health emergency. The U.S. Senate convened bipartisan negotiations on the Phase 3 bill on Friday, March 20. As of Monday, March 23, Senate and White House negotiators continue working to reach an agreement on the provisions of the legislation. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has indicated that the Senate will not adjourn until it passes a broad stimulus bill, which will also need to be approved by the U.S. House of Representatives.

At this time, the Phase 3 legislation is reported to include direct financial assistance to individuals; a \$500 billion lending program for businesses, local governments, and states; and another \$350 billion to help small businesses meet payroll costs. While the Phase 3 legislation will have components to assist both businesses and individuals, the overall strategy is to provide income replacement for those directly affected by the coronavirus outbreak. Broadly, this strategy seeks to get federal dollars to affected businesses quickly and to keep employees whole and on the books, which will help people get back to work quickly once the crisis subsides. This will provide income for affected people, keep them employed, and creating economic activity to buffet the downturn, and avoid a prolonged re-hiring period which will greatly reduce the duration and severity of the decline.

A key driver in the federal economic response is keeping local businesses staffed with their workers remaining employed, and compensated as supported by federal stimulus, during the present medical response phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. This federal objective, if approved by Congress, aligns with state and local objectives of 1) mitigating and/or avoiding the time cost of engaging in unemployment, re-training, and re-employment activities for both impacted workers and businesses and 2) maintaining economic activities generated by American households.

As noted above, the federal government has taken initial prompt action to address the economic impact of the COVID-19. The following provides information regarding the federal SBA disaster loan program. More details can be found in the OEV Business Resource Guide:

- **Activated the U.S. Small Business Administration's Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program:** Currently, this program provides businesses, regardless of size, and nonprofits including charitable organizations (such as churches and private universities) with working capital loans of up to \$2 million that can provide vital economic support to help overcome the temporary loss of revenue they are experiencing. These loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that can't be paid because of the disaster's impact. The interest rate is 3.75% for small businesses. The interest rate for non-profits is 2.75%. SBA offers loans with long-term repayments in order to keep payments affordable, up to a maximum of 30 years. Terms are determined on a case-by-case basis, based upon each borrower's ability to repay. SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loans are just one piece of the expanded focus of the federal government's coordinated response, and the SBA is strongly committed to providing the most effective and customer-focused response possible. Information on the number of applications being processed at this time is not yet known.

Please note that County and/or City Federal Lobbyists will be available at the meeting for information sharing and to convey the latest federal actions to approve a new stimulus package.

STATE RESPONSE AND PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The State of Florida has been swift in its response to changing conditions around the state as more Positive COVID-19 cases are confirmed. As of March 22, 2020, Governor's Ron DeSantis has issued seven (7) executive orders aimed at reducing the spread of the virus within the State and preparing local governments and medical professionals to ready appropriate responses to the outbreak in Florida's 67 counties. These actions are further detailed in Attachment #3.

The Governor's Executive Orders include establishing the Florida Department of Health as the lead agency to inform the public and manage Public Health issues for the duration of the declared state of emergency. The Governor also authorized state facilities to close in Cities/Counties directly impact by the COVID-19 outbreak. Additionally, the Governor has issued subsequent order to close Bars, Restaurants and Beaches, as well as Public Gyms, with a separate order closing a more expansive range of businesses in Broward and Palm Beach Counties. In those Counties, the County Administrator was given authority to modify the Governor's order under select circumstances. The Governor has also moved to issue an order relaxing rules for local governments to hold public meetings (providing telephone and video conferencing as options) as well as flexibility of meeting venues. This order, however, maintains all current Sunshine Law Requirements. Finally, Florida has also moved to prohibit all non-essential, elective medical procedures for the duration of the emergency in a move to ready medical professionals and health care equipment for response to positive COVID-19 cases where those resources may otherwise been required. DBPR is currently working with the state's licensed businesses to communicate the Governor's Executive Orders.

Florida has also established state-wide drive-through COVID-19 test sites and has issued an order to identify other facilities that can be used to augment available hospital capacity if needed in addition to providing for telemedicine options. The Florida Division of Emergency Management is currently working to deliver a rolling supply of mobile intensive care units, ventilators, hospital beds, hand sanitizer, coveralls, gloves, gowns, collection kits, and other protective equipment to medical treatment centers. The Florida Department of Corrections has suspended all visitation at all of the state's Correctional Facilities and non-critical inmate transfers. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) has approved two loan programs to businesses impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak and is actively working to waive fees related to employer-provided benefits. Additionally, the Department of Education has suspended student instruction through April 15 (K-12) and the State University System has directed all Universities to continue remote instruction through the end of the Spring 2020 semester.

The following sections provide an overview of the top programs to support small businesses that are managed by the DEO in partnership with the Florida SBDC network. Detailed information on this program is included in the Business Resource Guide (Attachment #4) developed by the Office of Economic Vitality:

- **Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program:** The Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program is currently available to small business owners located in all Florida counties statewide that experienced economic damage as a result of COVID-19. These short-term, interest-free working capital loans are intended to “bridge the gap” between the time a major catastrophe hits and when a business has secured longer term recovery resources, such as sufficient profits from a revived business, receipt of payments on insurance claims or federal disaster assistance. The Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program is not designed to be the primary source of assistance to affected small businesses, which is why eligibility is linked pursuant to other financial sources. Qualified small business applicants must be a for-profit employer business with 2 to 100 employees. A business can receive up to \$50,000 per eligible small business. Loans of up to \$100,000 may be made in special cases as warranted by the need of the eligible small business. Loans made under this program are short-term debt loans made by the state of Florida using public funds – they are not grants. Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loans require repayment by the approved applicant from longer term financial resources. Loan application process in the Capital Region is managed by the FAMU SBDC. These applications are then reviewed for approval by the Emergency Bridge Loan Committee. At the time of writing this item, the committee reviewed 14 applications and announced the award of two loans, the first in the state given to two Tallahassee-Leon County businesses.
- **Unemployment Programs:** In an email to the CareerSource Capital Regional Board last week, the local workforce board stated that based on projections by the U.S. Treasury Secretary, “about 30,000 people will be unemployed in our three-county area in the next few weeks.” The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity currently has three

programs available to address unemployment issues. It is anticipated that more resources could become available based on US Congressional action. Of note, DEO has not yet activated the Disaster Unemployment Assistance program at the time of writing this item.

- **Reemployment Assistance:** The Reemployment Assistance (RA) program provides temporary, partial wage replacement benefits to qualified workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own. It is funded solely by employers who pay federal and state payroll taxes and is provided at no cost to the workers who receive the benefits. The 2020 Claim Maximum is for 12 weeks with a weekly benefit amount of up to \$275, and a maximum benefit amount of \$3300, for each recipient.
- **Temporary Layoff Program:** This program is for employees that are temporarily laid off from work may be eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits. A temporary layoff occurs when the employee is separated from their job due to lack of work, and the employee has a return-to-work date within eight weeks of the separation. The same benefit amounts and assessment rules as Reemployment Assistance apply to this program, per recipient.
- **Short Time Compensation Program:** This program helps employers retain their workforce in times of temporary slowdown by encouraging work sharing as an alternative to layoff. The program permits prorated reemployment assistance benefits to employees whose work hours and earnings are reduced as part of a Short Time Compensation plan to avoid total layoff of some employees. The goals of this program is to:
 - Retain employees during a temporary slowdown can resume high production levels when business conditions improve and are spared the hardships of full unemployment.
 - Help employers avoid the expense of recruiting, hiring, and training new workers when business conditions improve.
 - Provide employers who must permanently reduce their workforce a way to transition to layoff. Affected employees may continue to work at reduced levels with an opportunity to find other employment before the expected layoff.
 - The benefits from this program tie directly to the employee's hourly wages and number of hours, per week, that will be missed, and are capped at 26 weeks, per employee, per year.

Staff is closely monitoring the implementation of new state programs to assist employers and employees during the COVID-19 response and recovery. The Florida Legislature passed its FY 2020-21 budget on Thursday, March 19. As of the publication of this agenda item, the budget bill (HB 5001) awaits the Governor's signature. The budget provides \$27.3 million in federal funds (allocated by Congress in H.R. 6074, the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act – discussed in greater detail below) and another \$25.1 million from the state's general revenue to the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) to combat the coronavirus. The state budget also allocates \$300 million in additional reserves to support state government

operations in anticipation of an economic slowdown. While the state budget takes effect on July 1, 2020, the funds appropriated to FDOH will be available for the remainder of the current fiscal year.

To that end, OEV will act as the local nexus, providing initial, and immediate relief for small businesses, and provide resources that fill the gaps in the State and Federal programs, while also supporting and enhancing those existing programs. OEV will be the local resource to analyze economic impacts, while initiating and activating the proposals presented within this item to support Tallahassee-Leon County businesses.

TALLAHASSEE/LEON COUNTY RESPONSE

Blueprint has proven to be a transformative economic asset for our community with capital projects and economic development programs which stimulate investment and promote economic opportunity for the long term economic vitality of our community. During the Great Recession which began in 2008, Blueprint's capital projects, and the private sector investment that followed, proving invaluable in lessening the overall economic decline, mitigating job loss and accelerating our local recovery. When the sales tax was extended by the voters in 2014, Leon County and Tallahassee became only the second community to include a locally optional economic development component. This led to the creation of the Office of Economic Vitality (OEV) to provide structure and alignment of resources and decision –making to support and sustain our strategic long term economic growth and to also position our community to best respond to opportunities and challenges that arise. As we face the local impacts of the unprecedented global COVID-19 pandemic, the Office of Economic Vitality (OEV) has responded. Attachment #5 includes a detailed account of OEV efforts to date regarding COVID-19 response and recovery:

- Developed a Business Resource Guide that is updated daily to reflect the most accurate resources available.
- Conducted an initial Business assessment survey and direct outreach to local business.
- Analyze what other communities across the state are doing to support small businesses in response to Covid-19.
- Launched the Open for Takeout initiative to respond to the executive orders by the gov. This resulted in other collaboration effort such as the March 21 Rally for Tally and donation of the Open for Takeout signs donated by Target Print and Mail.
- Increased communications via newsletters, social media, media
- Monitoring state and federal legislation concerning new programs and funding available to local businesses
- Working in collaboration with our partners to communicate resources available for business assistance. These efforts include possibly cross-training PLACE/OEV staff with partner resource providers.

In addition to these efforts, the County Administrator and City Manager, who serve as the Intergovernmental Management Committee (IMC), tasked OEV to immediately explore and provide recommendations for Intergovernmental Agency consideration on the question of:

“What can we do at the local government level, through Blueprint and the Office of Economic Vitality (OEV), to lessen the impact of the pandemic on our local small businesses and the people of our community they employ?”

As stated previously in this item, the objectives in developing a new program proposal were composed of the following:

- **Protect existing small businesses.** According to the Tallahassee-Leon County COVID-19 Business Survey, 62.5% of respondents report a weekly revenue impact of greater than 50%. Their preferred resources include assistance paying overhead and cash grants to cover operating expenses, such as rent, utilities, and other operational needs. Protection in this instances would also include operating capital.
- **Avoid additional unemployed. As of 3/7/2020 (most recent week on US DOL)** Claims for unemployment in Florida rose from 4,853 to 5,325 (9.7%), and the trend appears to be continuing upward. Thus, business operating expense assistance is intended to prevent layoffs and further acceleration of local unemployment claims.
- **Do not duplicate federal or state incentives, programs. Bolstering the SBA Disaster Loan and Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan,** the proposed response would constitute a non-duplicative small grant that avoids adding future debt liability to local businesses.
- **Fill the gaps to accelerate our local economic recovery targeting the maximum leveraging of limited local resources.** Small grants are able to touch many small businesses – At \$2,500 per grant, this can assist approximately 400 businesses within 30 days. This grant cannot solve pre-existing financial limitations that pre-date COVID-19; rather, it is a buoy during uncertain times that helps alleviate typical monthly expenses originating from public sector services. Of note, it is anticipated that this program will address immediate needs of the local business community during the initial responses efforts to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Future Resource Gaps.** The local response program (CEDR) is intended to offer initial immediate and meaningful support to bridge small business operational expenses not covered by State or Federal programs. As it is tough to predict the ongoing State and Federal funding priorities as it pertains to disaster relief, preserving future capacity to respond to local needs is achieved through this proposal, maintained by the City and County.

COVID-19 ECONOMIC DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAM (CEDR)

The COVID-19 Economic Disaster Relief Program (CEDR) is designed to offer a lifeline to local small businesses, which will result in greater continuity of operations, and sustain their viability during the application period for State and Federal relief programs and incentives. It will provide a rapid and effective local grant benefit to businesses, to bridge their limited cash reserves as they are pro-actively taking steps to amass financing and capital from other sources (e.g. SBA, State, private). Eligible businesses include the following:

- Be a for-profit corporation/business in Leon County (corporate, regional, division, registered office or franchise) and registered with the Florida Division of Corporations
- Must have at least 1 employee, but fewer than 50 employees
- Demonstrate a minimum reduction of 50% in revenue as a result of COVID-19
- Have an active utility account with the City of Tallahassee Utilities, Talquin Electric Cooperative, or Progress Energy Florida in good standing or current status of the date of COVID-19 Emergency Declaration, March 18, 2020.
- Provide a proof of application for either the Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan or the U.S. SBA Disaster Loan Assistance program.
 - This component is a critical piece of the application. It will demonstrate that the business is taking best-practice efforts to expand liquidity during a disaster, similarly to hurricane events.
- Pledge in good-faith to remain in business for at least 45 days following the receipt of CEDR funding and provide estimated average monthly operating expenses.
 - This includes an affidavit form for financial information provided as part of the Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan or U.S. SBA Disaster Loan Assistance Program.
 - A clawback clause will exist as part of grant disbursements, written by Blueprint Attorneys, as a control to insure applicant performance.

If funded at \$1 million, CEDR is anticipated to assist approximately 400 local businesses. OEV staff have prepared a grant logistics and management plan that envisions an online application and dedicated email address for simple, remote procedures. Other County and City offices with available staff can commit staff to processing applications. According to staff research, a \$2,500 grant would cover the average commercial utility bill in Tallahassee (Attachment #7) and roughly \$1,000 of additional expenses. The program is proposed to run for 30 days and have a response time, from application to OEV through approval to grant delivery of 3-5 business days.

In summary, this program (CEDR) would provide rapid, and meaningful assistance to the most vulnerable members of our local small business community, namely those who have less than 50 employees. Moreover, the recommended \$1 million dollar investment could provide a bridge for up to 20,000 employees as their employer seeks Federal and State assistance. In order to manage application volume and provide a timeline for assessment, it is recommended that the application period become effective on Thursday, March 26, 2020 and run for a period of 30 days. After which a full performance report shall be generated regarding grant program impact.

Although greater than 400 businesses exist in Leon County with 50 or fewer employees, current statistics on Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loans indicate a rate of approximately 15 applicants per day and at the time of writing this item, 41 applications have been received. It is estimated that by May 8 (current application deadline), the SBDC could process 500 applications. Historically the majority of the emergency bridge loan applications have less than

50 employees. . However, we anticipate some will be above the 50 employee threshold. At the time of application, these businesses must provide the following documentation:

- Government issued personal identification of all individual applicants (driver's license, state or federal ID, or passport).
- Federal Business tax returns for the last two completed years for all individual applicants, if available.
- Employer tax documentation.
- Personal tax returns for the last 2 completed years with attached Schedule C for all individual applicants, if available and where appropriate.
- Additional information that the applicant believes would assist the Loan Review Committee in making its decision (such as a loan summary).

Acknowledging, that 80% of those who apply for an emergency bridge loan program, also are captured in the application for the of the U.S. SBA Disaster loan, staff believes that the 400 capacity of the proposed CEDR grant program could meet the demand in our market place for initial rapid relief.

Finally, the business survey administered by OEV, indicates that small businesses have universally experienced loss of business and revenue, however, many of them have not yet determined impacts to staff. Therefore, CEDR offers rapid support to help with employee retention during these first critical weeks.

BUDGETARY AND BONDING CONSIDERATIONS

It is important to note that staff will be coming back to the IA Board with a full budget review of the impacts of COVID-19 on the current FY 2020 for both the Office of Economic Vitality and the Blueprint Infrastructure program of work once additional revenue information is analyzed in the weeks ahead. This includes for the Blueprint Capital program.

Staff has presented an option to fund a proposed \$1 million COVID-19 Economic Disaster Relief Program reallocating current year pay back to the City and the County. Based on early and preliminary analysis, there are currently insufficient funds within the economic development portion of the sales tax program to pay for a broad grant program. Should the IA Board choose to seek additional dollars, funds would need to be borrowed (\$5 to \$10 million) to pay for larger loan/grant programs in support of local businesses. Any borrowing would be repaid with future economic development sales tax funds, and would affect the viability of current capital programs. Attachment #9 provides additional detail on budgetary considerations.

An expedited time-line for borrowing could take three weeks. The Agency has the option to secure a bank loan as opposed to a bond issuance. Typically, bonds issued by a government pay for infrastructure projects and are tax-exempt. However, the issuing of bonds to provide grants to businesses would be considered taxable debt. Interest rates are currently just below 4%, but this could change in the near term. In addition, while the bond proceeds can pay for grants to businesses, bonds cannot be issued to provide loans to businesses.

As stated in the assumptions at the start of this item, the current situation is evolving and future actions of both the State and Federal government are unknown at this time. By moving forward with CEDR, this preserves revenues and possible bonding capacity to address local economic issues that may still arise in the future.

The data and responses presented herein represent the best available effort to respond initially and rapidly to continually evolving conditions, rather than a single final response. Once the passage of Federal and State relief programs are completed, the IA Board may, at its discretion, direct staff to provide additional programs to fill the gaps identified in the Federal and State programs.

CONCLUSION:

This agenda item provides the IA Board with an opportunity to assess information available regarding local business impacts and responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. While small business impacts are evident, the extent, duration, and needs will continue to evolve during weeks to come. Nonetheless, other major metropolitan areas are rolling out assistance that attempts to fill federal and state gaps, such as through grants, loans, and deferred costs.

Tallahassee-Leon County may create a tailored response that bolsters business operation for smaller establishments that entered the pandemic with an already healthy balance sheet. These initial \$2,500 grants provide immediate capital and relief as businesses assemble their larger continuity capital stack. Through a \$1 million allotment, approximately 400 grants can be made to small local employers over the coming 30-60 days. The goal will be to aid business operation, keep local employers open for business, and prevent layoffs and closures.

The available effort to respond initially and rapidly to continually evolving conditions, rather than a single final response. Once the passage of Federal and State relief programs are completed, the IA Board may, at its discretion, direct staff to provide additional programs to fill the gaps identified in the Federal and State programs.

OPTIONS:

- Option #1: Approve the COVID-19 Economic Disaster Relief (CEDR) Assistance Grant Program for Small Business in the amount of \$1 million and approve the allocation of funds from the City/County payback to the CEDR grant program.
- Option #2: Do not approve the COVID-19 Economic Disaster Relief Assistance Grant Program for Small Business in the amount of \$1 million.
- Option #3: IA Board Direction.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

- Option #1: Approve the COVID-19 Economic Disaster Relief (CEDR) Assistance Grant Program for Small Business in the amount of \$1 million and approve the allocation of funds from the City/County payback to the CEDR grant program.

Attachments

1. OEV Business Survey and U.S. Local Government Responses Update
2. State of Florida Response and Executive Orders
3. State and Federal Legislative Responses
4. Business Resource Guide
5. Local OEV Responses to COVID-19
6. Tallahassee-Leon County CEDR Application
7. Average Commercial Utility Bill (Non-Demand Users)
8. CEDR Grant Logistics for Internal Management
9. Budget: OEV Unallocated Funds and Disaster Response

Attachment 01 - OEV Business Survey and U.S. Local Government Responses Update

COVID-19, Findings of Need, Proposed Response

The effects of COVID-19 on the economy continue to emerge, however initial reports indicate that accommodation, food services, and arts, entertainment and recreation (under the larger banner of tourism & hospitality) are likely to experience negative revenue implications from quarantine and social isolation measures in effect across the country¹. OEV is committed to studying and responding to these effects locally.

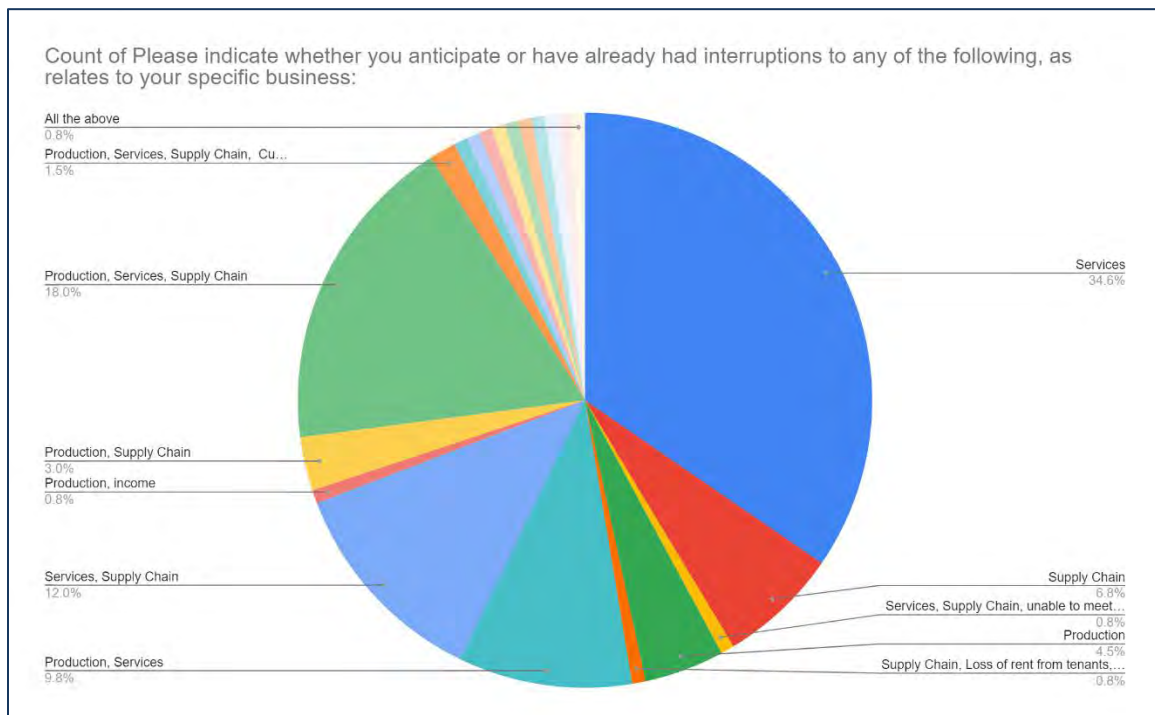
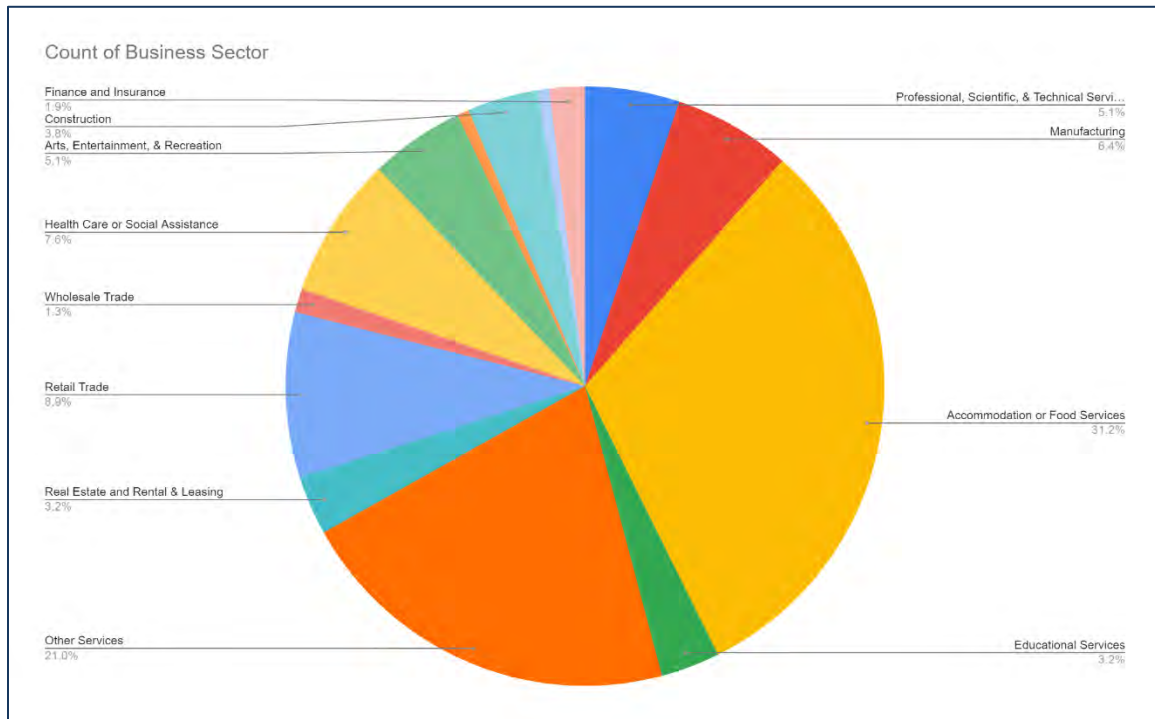
To that end, the staff-designed and implemented *Tallahassee-Leon County COVID-19 Business Survey* has collected 159 responses as of 3/23/2020. 52% of respondents align with the “Tourism and Hospitality” industry, 40% have between 1 and 5 employees (32% have between 10 and 50), and 97% report impacts due to the Coronavirus. The main impact is loss of revenue or closure, due to: “as a restaurant, we have been cut to half capacity” and “patients have been cancelling in-person appointments”. 44% of respondents indicate that employees have been furloughed or laid off. 63% of business respondents estimated 50% or greater weekly revenue losses as a result of COVID-19. “Financial”, “Cash”, “Interest free loans”, and “utility assistance” are all commonly mentioned by respondents as the resource most needed.

A scan of other local governments with COVID response programs indicates that communities are re-activating existing disaster assistance or looking to state and federal resources for cash infusions. The exceptions are New York, San Francisco, Seattle, and New Orleans, which have created grants of \$10,000 per affected business (San Francisco), no-interest loans of up to \$75,000 (NYC), or direct payouts to participants in the gig economy of \$500-\$1000 (New Orleans). As of March 23, no major metro area in Florida had published information regarding a local business cash assistance program. See “Scan” matrix for detail.

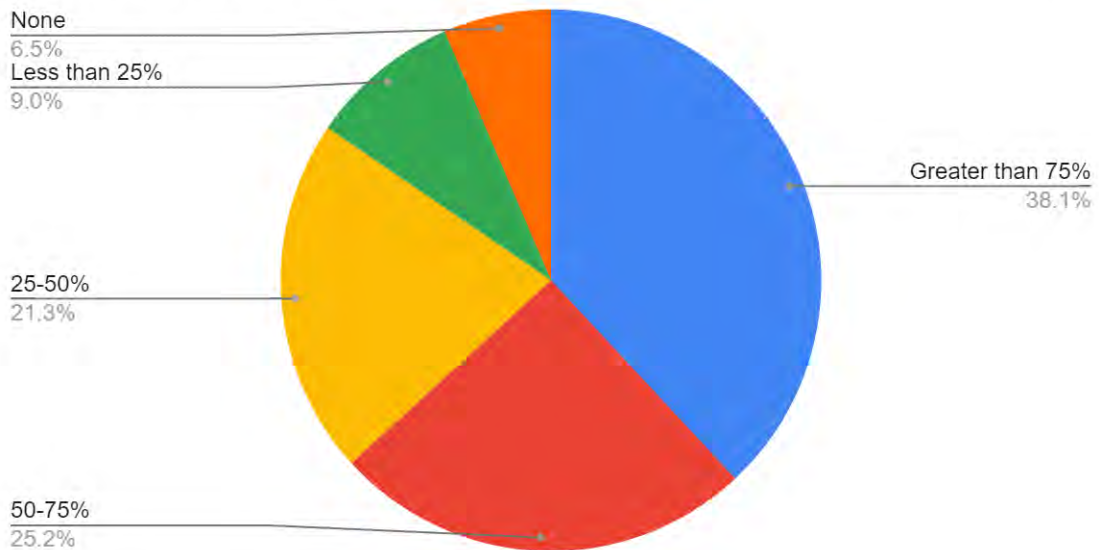
Data indicate that businesses are feeling the impacts of COVID, however permanent closures and businesses’ ability to scale back to “business as usual” once limiting measures are lifted is unclear. Trend-setting larger metros are responding with grants to small business. OEV has the opportunity to pilot a similar grant program that could target locally-owned small to medium businesses (under 50 employees) who have shown proactive steps toward securing additional bridge funding (SBA or Florida DEO), and who are in good standing with Tallahassee Utilities (as a proxy for general business health leading into the COVID disaster).

¹ Center for Strategic & International Studies finds that “The COVID-19 outbreak has generated both demand and supply shocks reverberating across the global economy...[and]tourism and travel industries will be among the hardest hit”
<https://www.csis.org/analysis/global-economic-impacts-covid-19>

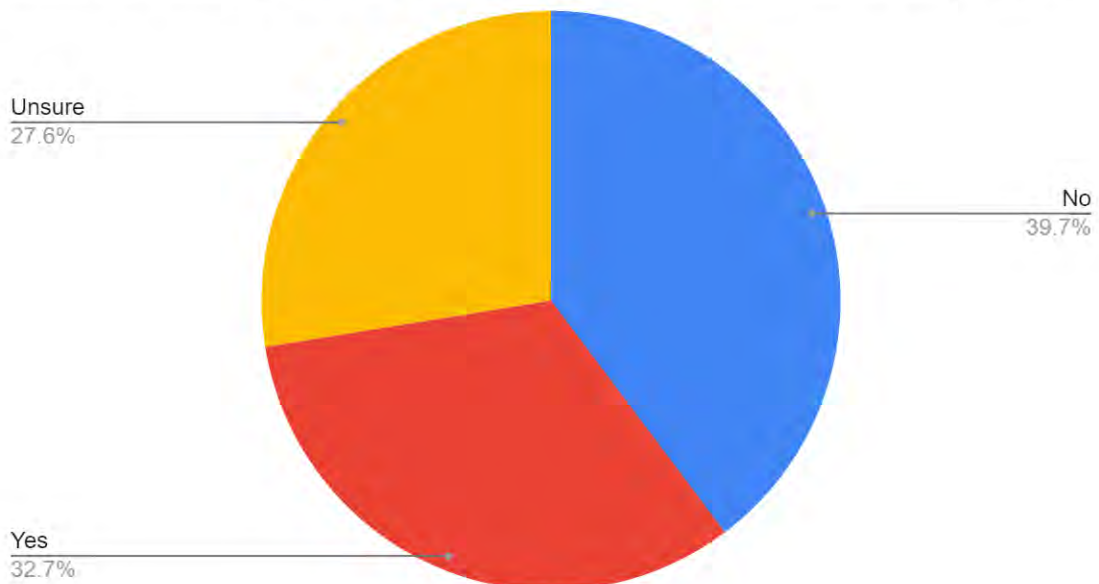
Chart Outputs from OEV COVI-19 Business Survey

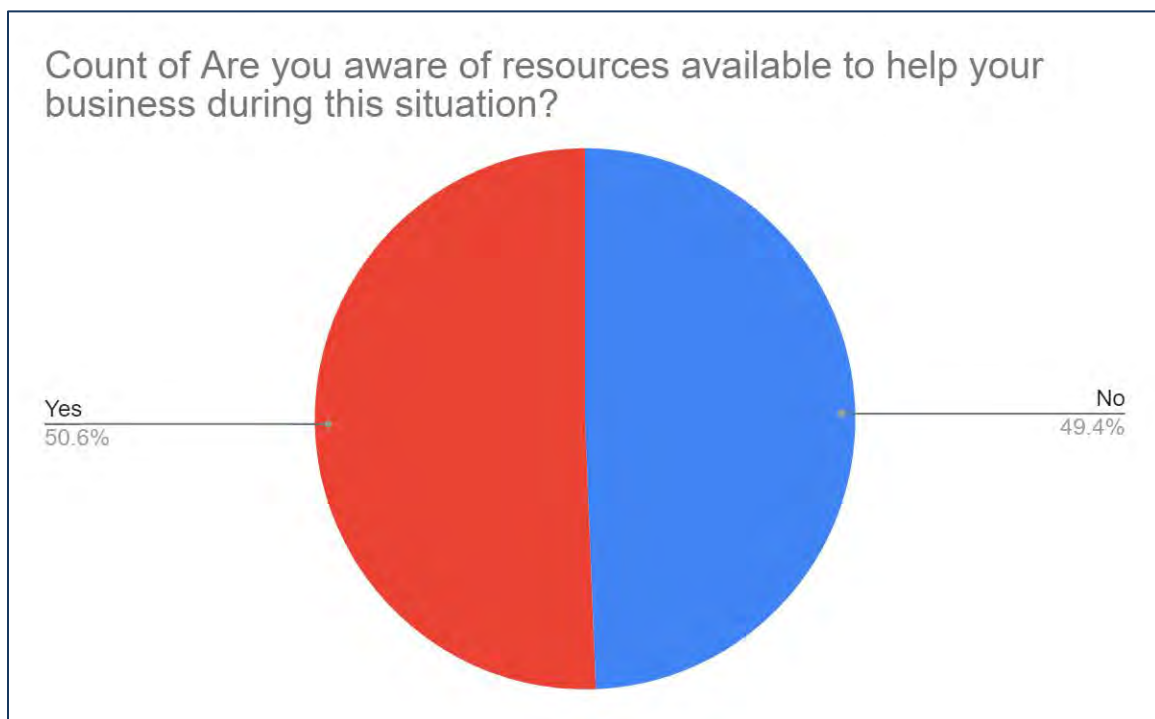
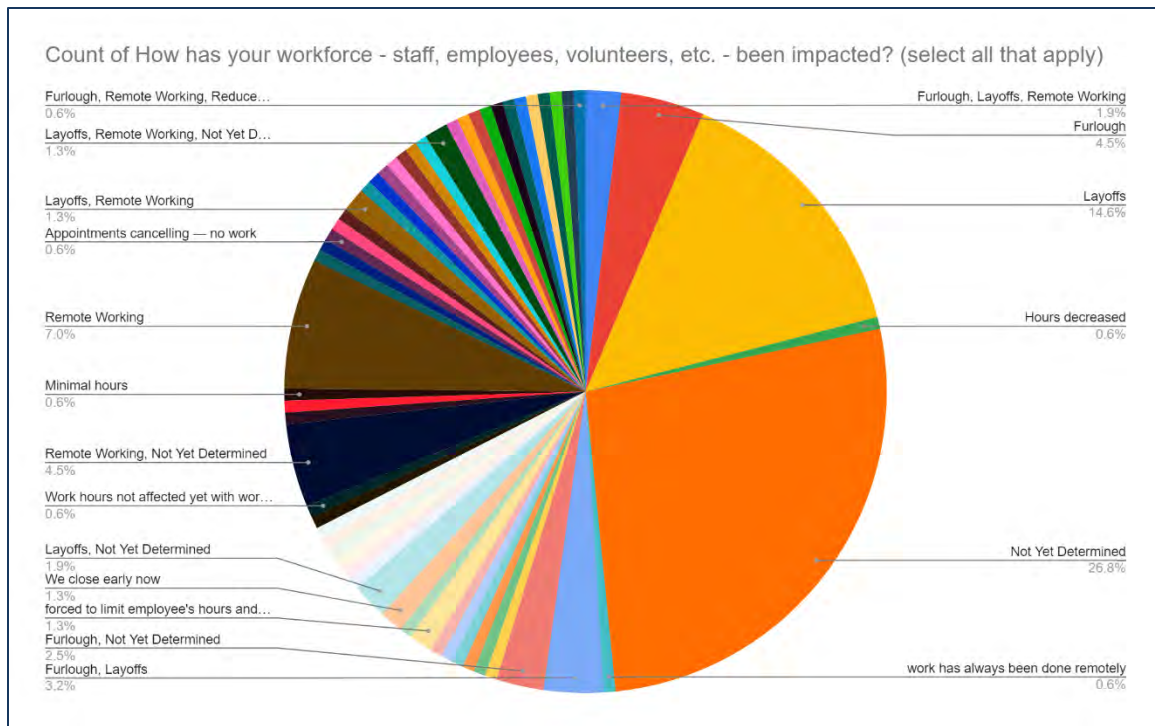


Count of What is your estimated loss of revenue per week as a result of COVID-19?



Count of Does your business have a business continuity plan?





Local Government COVID-19 Resources

March 20, 2020

The following represents a reference matrix for municipal and county resources currently publicized as COVID-19 business relief.

Location	Resource Name	Description	Funding / Activated	Application	Gap Filled
Seattle, WA	COVID-19 Small Business Stabilization Fund	Building on the City's initial Small Business Recovery Package to support small businesses and working people impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, Mayor Jenny A. Durkan announced today that the City will invest an additional \$1 million in the City's Small Business Stabilization Fund , bringing the total new amount of available funding for small businesses impacted by COVID-19 to \$2.5 million. Eligible small businesses will receive a grant of up to \$10,000 to mitigate revenue lost by COVID-19.	Up to \$10,000 per business from a fund of \$2.5 million (250 grantees)	<p>Criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The business owner must have a low- or moderate-income ($\leq 80\%$ of the Area Median Income). The business must have five employees or less. The business must have a physical establishment. The business must have experienced a loss of income due to COVID-19. The business must be located within Seattle. <p>You may qualify for a grant of up to \$10,000.</p> <p>Deadline to apply is March 25.</p>	Provides a grant rather than a loan instrument, thus preventing future increased financial liability.
San Francisco, CA	COVID-19 Small Business Resiliency Fund	Because of the disruptions that COVID-19 has created for our small business community, the COVID-19 Small Business Resiliency Fund was created. It allows impacted small business owners to access up to \$10,000 for employee salaries and rent. This program is administered in partnership with Northeast Community Federal Credit Union . https://oewd.org/covid-19-small-business-resiliency-fund	\$10,000 per business <i>Currently active with online application form</i>	<p>To be eligible for the COVID-19 Small Businesses Resiliency Fund, small businesses must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Have at least 1 employee and no more than 5 employees Demonstrate a loss of revenue of 25% or more Have less than \$2,500,000 in gross receipts Be engaged in activities that are regulated by the City and County of San Francisco and have a license/permit associated to that regulation 	
San Francisco, CA	Small Business Relief Program	Deferral of Business Taxes from Q12020 to Q1 2021; delay of all small businesses license and permit fees for three months; lobbying to state and federal government for financial support; collaboration with private sector financial partners for credit and lending flexibility and financial support. See this link	<p>Tax Deferrals vary by business</p> <p><i>Tax Deferral effective immediately</i></p>	<p>No application yet required for deferral;</p> <p>Contact for the Office of Small Businesses: (415) 554 -6134</p>	Temporarily alleviates a financial obligation for small businesses not able to be offered by state or federal entities.
New York City, NY	NYC Employee Retention Grant Program	The City is offering small businesses with fewer than 5 employees a grant to cover 40% of payroll costs for two months to help retain employees.	<p>Variable</p> <p><i>Activated for businesses with 1-4 employees that can demonstrate revenue reduction</i></p>	<p>Businesses, including non-profits, must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be located within the five boroughs of New York City 	Provides a grant rather than a loan instrument, thus preventing future increased financial liability.

		https://www1.nyc.gov/site/sbs/businesses/covid19-business-financial-assistance.page		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate that the COVID-19 outbreak caused at least a 25% decrease in revenue • Employ 1-4 employees in total across all locations • Have been in operation for at least 6 months • Have no outstanding tax liens or legal judgements 	
NYC, NY	NYC Small Business Continuity Fund	<p>Businesses with fewer than 100 employees who have seen sales decreases of 25% or more will be eligible for zero interest loans of up to \$75,000 to help mitigate losses in profit.</p> <p>https://www1.nyc.gov/site/sbs/businesses/covid19-business-financial-assistance.page</p>	<p>Zero interest loan up to \$75,000</p> <p><i>Not yet active as of 3.22.2020</i></p> <p><i>Survey analysis of businesses underway</i></p>	<p>Businesses must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be located within the five boroughs of New York City • Demonstrate that the COVID-19 outbreak caused at least a 25% decrease in revenue • Employ 99 employees or fewer in total across all locations • Demonstrate ability to repay the loan • Have no outstanding tax liens or legal judgements 	May increase the volume of businesses served alongside SBA loans; acts as a bridge loan.
Seattle, WA	Amazon Neighborhood Small Business Relief Fund	Cash grants to Seattle's small businesses that need assistance.	<p>Contingent on Amazon review of application.</p> <p><i>Currently active for eligible neighborhoods in Seattle</i></p>	Small business in Seattle, under 50 employees, less than \$7 million revenue, be service or retail open to general public, for operating expenses	Provides a grant rather than a loan instrument, thus preventing future increased financial liability.
Miami, FL	None at Present	"Mom and Pop" grant temporarily suspended	N/A	N/A	
Orlando, FL	None at Present	<p>Only offering 2-1-1 and State incentives</p> <p>https://www.orlando.gov/COVID-19</p>	N/A	N/A	
Orange County, FL	Crisis Rent and Lot Rental Assistance	<p>Financial assistance for rental and lot rental. Available to residents of Orange County; non-businesses</p> <p>See this link.</p>	<p>Funding is variable depending upon documentation /</p> <p><i>Currently Active</i></p>	<p>Phot ID</p> <p>Social Security Cards</p> <p>Lease</p> <p>Bank Statement for past 30 days</p> <p>Pay Stubs</p> <p>Household income documentation</p> <p>Letter from employer re: layoff, reduced hours</p>	Supplement to state unemployment insurance

Jacksonville FL	None at Present	Only mention is of COVID testing centers on JaxChamber site: https://www.myjaxchamber.com/	N/A	N/A	
Hillsborough / Tampa	None at Present	Only mention is of state resources: https://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/en/residents/public-safety/emergency-management/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-business	N/A	N/A	
New Orleans, LA	COVID-19 gig economy relief fund	Relief fund to meet the needs of gig economy workers who have been directly impacted via a loss of income. https://www.nolaba.org/relief-fund/	\$500-\$1,000 per worker depending upon need, each 45 days for eligible applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proof of residency in Orleans Parish • Proof that > 60% of income is generated via “gig work” • Demonstrated loss of income as a result of COVID-19 • At or below 100% Annual Median Income Guidelines. 	Direct-to-worker assistance expands “unemployment” to include persons who may not be experiencing traditional layoff (and thus unable to claim unemployment).



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE March 22, 2020

Contact: Joint Information Center on COVID-19 for the State of Florida (850) 815-4940, ESF14@em.myflorida.com

The State of Florida Issues COVID-19 Updates

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. - The State of Florida is responding to COVID-19. In an effort to keep Florida residents and visitors safe and aware regarding the status of the virus, the Florida Department of Health will issue this update every day, seven days per week.

Governor Ron DeSantis is in constant communication with Florida Division of Emergency Management Director Jared Moskowitz and State Surgeon General Dr. Scott Rivkees as the State of Florida continues to monitor and respond to the threat of COVID-19.

Today, in a briefing at the Hard Rock Stadium in Miami, Governor DeSantis announced more actions on COVID-19:

- The federal testing site at the Hard Rock Stadium in Miami will open to the public tomorrow and those 65 and older who have symptoms of COVID-19, in addition to the first responders and health care workers who started testing today.
- This site is federally supported, state managed, and locally executed.
- Partners involved in setting up this site include the Florida Division of Emergency Management, the Florida Department of Health, the Florida National Guard, Miami-Dade Police, Miami-Dade Fire and FedEx.
- There are two additional federal testing sites:
- The Jacksonville site at TIAA Bank Field, Lot J, opened yesterday and collected more than 280 people on the first day.
- The Orlando site at the Orange County Convention Center is set to open on Wednesday.
- At this time, there are more than 18,000 hospital beds available statewide, including nearly 1,700 adult intensive care unit beds.

More Information on COVID-19

To find the most up-to-date information and guidance on COVID-19, please visit the Department of Health's dedicated [COVID-19 webpage](#). For information and advisories from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), please visit the [CDC COVID-19 website](#). For more information about current travel advisories issued by the U.S. Department of State, please visit the [travel advisory website](#).

For any other questions related to COVID-19 in Florida, please contact the Department's dedicated COVID-19 Call Center by calling **(866) 779-6121**. **The Call Center is available 24 hours per day**. Inquiries may also be emailed to [**COVID-19@flhealth.gov**](mailto:COVID-19@flhealth.gov).

What you Should Know

COVID-19 can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth, including when an individual coughs or sneezes. These droplets may land on objects and surfaces. Other people may contract COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

Symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough and shortness of breath. Symptoms may appear in as few as two days or as many as 14 days following exposure. Most people recover from COVID-19 without needing special treatment. The elderly and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems and diabetes are more likely to develop serious illness.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus. The Department recommends everyday preventive actions to help stop the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick;
- Staying home when you are sick and avoiding contact with persons in poor health;
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands;
- Covering your cough or sneezing into a tissue, then disposing of the tissue;
- Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing;
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty; and
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

The CDC does not recommend that asymptomatic, healthy people wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19. Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for [health workers](#) and [people who are taking care of someone in close settings](#) (at home or in a health care facility).

A person that experiences a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, such as fever, cough or shortness of breath, within 14 days after travel from any other destination with community transmission should call ahead to their health care provider and local CHD and mention their recent travel or close contact.

If a person has had close contact with someone showing these symptoms who has recently traveled from this area or been in contact with a person with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19, he or she should call ahead to a health care professional and the CHD. The health care provider will work with the Department to determine if the person should be tested for COVID-19.

Actions the state has taken to prepare for and respond to COVID-19:

- Yesterday, Governor DeSantis issued four executive orders:
- [Executive Order 20-69](#): this Executive Order waives in-person meeting requirements so that public officials can safely continue their duties without impediment.
- [Executive Order 20-70](#): this Executive Order directs all movie theatres, concert houses, auditoriums, playhouses, bowling alleys, arcades, gymnasiums, fitness studios and beaches to close in Broward County and Palm Beach County.
- [Executive Order 20-71](#): this Executive Order directs all restaurants and food establishments within the state to suspend on-premises food and alcohol consumption for customers.
- [Executive Order 20-72](#): this Executive Order prohibits medically unnecessary, non-urgent or non-emergency procedures or surgeries.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

- At the direction of Governor DeSantis, State Surgeon General Dr. Scott Rivkees declared a Public Health Emergency for COVID-19 in Florida.
- Governor DeSantis announced that the State ordered an additional 2,500 test kits to supplement the adequate resources already available to test for COVID-19. These additional test kits will enable the Department of Health, working with Florida health care providers, to test up to an additional 625,000 individuals. The Governor also suspended non-essential in state and all out-of-state travel for state employees for 30 days.
- Established an Incident Management Team to coordinate response operations.
- Defined a high-level phased response strategy for COVID-19.
- Activated a dedicated incident command post for on-site response activities.
- Conducted three public health and health care stakeholder conference calls to provide statewide updates on the current outbreak situation, response actions and guidance for pandemic planning. Over five hundred participants joined the calls.
- Established a public call center for questions regarding COVID-19. The call center launched Monday, March 2.
- Developed and distributed COVID-19 presentation materials to County Health Departments (CHD) for use at community meetings.
- Activated the Joint Information Center in coordination with the Division of Emergency Management.
- Developed and implemented protocols for investigation, surveillance and monitoring for COVID-19 to rapidly detect and contain cases.
- Established mechanisms for monitoring and coordination with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding epidemiological activities.

- Distributed CDC Interim Guidance for public health personnel evaluating Persons Under Investigation (PUI) and asymptomatic close contacts of confirmed cases at their home or non-home residential settings to CHDs.
- Approved and disseminated an updated Clinician Screening Tool for identifying COVID-19 PUIs.
- Distributed a health care provider letter regarding enhanced surveillance and preparedness for COVID-19 to associations, licensed providers, Health Care Coalitions and CHDs.
- Implemented testing at all three State Public Health Laboratories.
- Distributed updated CDC guidance for schools to CHDs and the Department of Education.
- Distributed updated laboratory guidance regarding implementation of testing at State Public Health Laboratories.
- Developing a laboratory surge plan.
- Developing a clinician-level briefing for medical audiences.
- Identifying and monitoring close contacts of presumptive cases. Any close contacts with symptoms will be tested.
- Implemented private lab testing.
- Developed and disseminated pandemic planning guidance.
- Advised CHDs and HCCs to retain expired personal protective equipment until further notice.
- Continued development of public information resources.
- Developing infographics for first responders (fire, law enforcement and EMS) regarding infection control and personal protection for COVID-19.
- At the Governor's direction, a public-private partnership has been put in place between Memorial Healthcare in Broward and the National Guard to set up a mobile testing unit.
- At the direction of Governor DeSantis hiring additional epidemiologists from university health programs to help with workload.
- Governor DeSantis directed the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) to extend all existing nursing home and assisted living facility licenses for 90 days to remove distraction from patient care.

THE DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- The State Emergency Operations Center is activated at a Level 1.
- To support communities responding to COVID-19, Governor DeSantis has directed FDEM Director Jared Moskowitz to expedite the delivery of more than \$170 million in Hurricane Irma reimbursements to cities, counties and hospital districts that have now reached the 50-percent auditing threshold to receive funds.
- After conducting a thorough assessment of needs, Director Moskowitz has requested the following supplies through Direct Federal Assistance. Supplies are being delivered on a rolling basis, and inventory is being distributed throughout the state 24 hours a day.
- 5 mobile intensive care units
- 5,000 ventilators
- 5,000 hospital beds
- 50,000 two oz. bottles of hand sanitizer
- 250,000 coveralls
- 500,000 gloves

- 500,000 gowns
- 500,000 collection kits
- 100,000 16 oz. bottles of hand sanitizers
- 150,000 Personal Protective Equipment kits, including coveralls, gowns, and goggles
- 2 million N95 face masks
- Yesterday, the Florida Division of Emergency Management sent collection kits out to the following areas:
- Baptist health in Jacksonville: 600
- Orlando health: 600
- City of Tampa test site at Raymond James Stadium (partnership with County and city): 900
- Martin County Cleveland Clinic: 300
- Duval County Health Department: 300
- Miami-Dade County Health Department: 1,200
- Volusia County Health Department: 300
- Johns County Health Department: 600
- Collier County Health Department: 600
- Manatee County Health Department: 600
- Okaloosa County Health Department: 300
- Brevard County Health Department: 600
- Citrus County Health Department: 300

AGENCY FOR HEALTH CARE ADMINISTRATION

- AHCA worked with the Agency for Persons with Disabilities to develop a Frequently Asked Questions webpage for home and community-based waiver providers.
- AHCA highlighted current testing requirements and criteria for the elderly and medically vulnerable in a health care provider alert.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

- DBPR shared information with all agency staff statewide pertaining to the declaration of a state public health emergency, state response protocols as ordered in EO 20-51, and FDOH information and resources available on the dedicated FDOH COVID-19 webpage. DBPR communication with staff has emphasized the best practices and preventive steps recommended by FDOH for impeding the spread of respiratory illnesses.
- DBPR added a web banner with information on COVID-19 and link to the Florida Department of Health's dedicated COVID-19 webpage at www.floridahealth.gov/COVID-19.
- DBPR is incorporating informational comments on all on-site inspection reports issued to public lodging, public food service, and alcohol and tobacco license holders that will promote situational awareness of the current public health emergency and will direct parties to the FDOH COVID-19 webpage for guidance and resources related to prevention best practices. Copies of informational flyers from the FDOH COVID-19 toolkit will also be available for inspectors to distribute when interacting with managers of these premises.
- DBPR has suspended all official business visits, including inspections, that involve licenses located at a facility covered under the visitation restrictions implemented pursuant to FDEM Emergency Order 20-002.

- DBPR hosted a senior management meeting with all program directors to discuss the latest departmental actions and preparations associated with COVID-19 in Florida.
- DBPR is providing guidance to appointed professional licensing boards related to procedural considerations and available technology options for remote, web-based or telephonic board meetings.
- DBPR issued an emergency order, [EO 2020-01](#) to extend license renewal deadlines and renewal requirements for a period of 30 days for licenses with an existing renewal deadline occurring in the months of March or April, 2020.
- DBPR has distributed the Governor's Executive Order ([EO-20-68](#)) regarding bars, nightclubs, beaches, and restaurants to all known e-mail addresses of record for alcoholic beverage, public food service, and public lodging license holders. DBPR will continue to push information and guidance relating to the directives of EO 20-68 to impacted parties through the DBPR Emergency Information Page, social media channels, and outreach to industry and public sector partners.
- DBPR has launched a dedicated emergency information page (<http://www.myfloridalicense.com/dbpr/emergency/>) with direct links to the FDOH COVID-19 webpage as well as information on agency emergency orders, schedule and meeting changes for divisions and boards, business resources and other emergency information. It also includes links to: the Florida Business Damage Assessment Survey, Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program, Reemployment Assistance Program, and U.S. Small Business Administration Disaster Loans.
- DBPR has distributed a document titled [Frequently Asked Questions Related to Restaurant, Bars and Nightclubs](#) pursuant to Executive Order ([EO-20-68](#)). This document helps to clarify the agency's role in the enforcement of the Executive Order as well as guidelines for restaurants per the Governor's directive.
- DBPR has implemented the DMS restrictions on public access at DMS-managed facilities and has adopted the same approach for all DBPR offices in privately-leased facilities. DBPR will continue to provide customer service and licensing support by phone and other electronic means to enable continuity of operations during these facility restrictions.
- DBPR has distributed the Governor's Executive Order ([EO-20-71](#)) regarding alcohol sales, restaurants and gyms to all known e-mail addresses of record for alcoholic beverage, public food service, and public lodging license holders. DBPR will continue to push information and guidance relating to the directives of EO 20-71 to impacted parties through the DBPR Emergency Information Page, social media channels, and outreach to industry and public sector partners.

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

- DCF is coordinating with specific providers to issue provisional licenses for child care services to support Florida's first responders during this pandemic.
- DCF, DOH, and DOE are developing guidance for child care providers to assist with COVID-19 prevention in facilities and safe operations.
- DCF has consolidated all entrances to state and contracted mental health treatment facilities into one entrance to ensure all staff, vendors, and providers are screened prior to entrance. Visitation has also been suspended at all facilities until April 15.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

- Florida Department of Corrections (FDC) has no known or suspected cases of COVID-19 within its correctional institutions at this time.
- FDC Community Corrections officers are working with offenders on supervision to adjust reporting schedules to minimize congregating at probation offices and prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- FDC's Office of Health Services coordinates with the Department for guidance on any type of outbreak and is closely monitoring new information as it is disseminated from the Department and the CDC.
- FDC has suspended visitation at all correctional institutions statewide through April 5, 2020. The decision to reinstate the normal visitation schedule will be evaluated in consultation with the Department.
- Inmates will continue to have access to mail, email, phone calls and video visitation.
- Legal visits will not be impacted.
- FDC has partnered with vendors to provide some complimentary phone and video visitation services.
- Volunteer activities within correctional institutions statewide have been suspended.
- Anyone entering a correctional institution will be screened, and entrance will be restricted if they:
 - Have traveled internationally or on a cruise within the last 14 days.
 - Have signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection such as fever, cough or shortness of breath.
 - Have had contact with someone who has been or is under investigation for COVID-19.
- All non-critical inmate transfers have been suspended.
- New commitments and intakes have been restricted.
- Outside inmate work squads have been restricted.
- FDC has a plan in place and dedicated staff members trained in the prevention and containment of infectious diseases.
- FDC initiated its Incident Command System in response to COVID-19.
- Education has been provided to staff, inmates and visitors to prevent the spread of any infectious disease, including COVID-19.
- Precautions are in place at facilities to protect inmates and staff from exposure to flu, COVID-19 or any other respiratory illness; preventative measures are being followed per CDC recommendations.

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

- The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) has approved the first two Small Business Emergency Bridge Loans to businesses impacted by COVID-19.
- Governor DeSantis directed DEO to Waive Job Search Requirements for claimants (i.e., individuals who file for Reemployment Assistance). Claimants are not required to submit to DEO the information on the number of employers they contact each week.
- Additionally, Governor DeSantis directed DEO to waive the online work registration requirement, enabling DEO to suspend the requirement that requires a claimant to register with the state job search portal (Employ Florida).

- Governor DeSantis directed DEO to waive benefit charges for employers, by waiving the benefit charges, employers may be relieved of charges for benefits paid to employees.
- Governor DeSantis' request to the federal U.S. Small Business Administration to make the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program available for Florida's small businesses impacted by COVID-19 has been granted. Small businesses are eligible to apply for the SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans that offer up to \$2 million in economic assistance to help small businesses overcome the temporary loss of revenue resulting from COVID-19.
- The DEO has created a Frequently Asked Questions document for individuals whose employment has been negatively impacted by mitigation efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- Governor Ron DeSantis activated the Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program to support small businesses impacted by COVID-19. The bridge loan program, managed by DEO, provides short-term, interest-free loans to small businesses that experienced economic injury from COVID-19. The application period is open and runs through May 8, 2020. Interested businesses should visit [FloridaDisaster.Biz](https://floridadisaster.biz) for more information.
- The Business Damage Assessment survey is activated to assess the impact of COVID-19 on Florida's local business operations. The survey, managed by DEO, will evaluate businesses affected by COVID-19 and the impacts the virus has had on the local economy so actions to implement appropriate relief programs can begin. The survey can be taken online at <https://floridadisaster.biz/>.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- Commissioner of Education Richard Corcoran directed public and private K-12 and career and technical center campuses to closed through April 15, 2020, and institute distance learning by March 30th.
- Schools are encouraged to operate virtually or through other non-classroom-based means to the greatest extent possible to implement distance learning.
- School districts should be prepared to extend their educational calendars through June 30, 2020, to the extent feasible and necessary.
- For Collier, Duval, Sumter and Union county school districts, which are all completing their extended spring break on March 20, 2020, school campuses will remain closed through April 15, 2020, although they will begin instruction virtually on March 23.
- To support students with identified IEP-related services who may have a disruption in services, school districts are given flexibility for the remainder of the school year to provide alternative services or delay services until later in the summer months, in coordination with a student's parents and IEP team.
- Duval, Union, Sumter and Collier school districts have implemented distance learning which will begin on March 23rd upon the conclusion of extended spring break. All other school districts will begin distance learning on March 30th.
- Governor Ron DeSantis and Commissioner Corcoran cancelled all remaining assessments for school readiness, voluntary prekindergarten and K-12 assessments for the 2019-2020 school year.
- Requirements for graduation and promotion, and final course grades will be evaluated as though those assessments which were cancelled did not exist.

- K-12 school grades will not be calculated for 2019-2020 and schools in turnaround may continue their current status for 2020-2021 to avoid disruption to school leadership and operations.
- Eligibility for Florida Bright Futures scholarships shall be based on available data and results. Tests that were not available to be taken shall not be counted.
- The Commissioner of Education may reduce required instructional hours as necessary to accommodate for closures.
- The Florida Department of Education and K-12 school districts were instructed to redirect unspent 2019-2020 funds from Reading Scholarship Accounts, the Reading Instruction Allocation, the Digital Classroom Allocation and the Teachers Classroom Supply Assistance Program to help low-income students purchase digital devices and establish Internet services.
- In order to facilitate the remote connection between teachers and students, K-12 school districts are further permitted to redirect unspent Title 2 funds to help low-income students purchase digital devices and establish Internet services.
- K-12 school districts are permitted to redirect unspent 2019-2020 funds from the Safe Schools and Mental Health allocations to virtual and telephonic mental health counseling services for students who need emotional support due to COVID-19.
- All school readiness, voluntary prekindergarten, K-12, career and technical centers and state college programs will receive their full allocation of funding, and therefore staff and contractors can be paid fully, through June 30, 2020, as though there was no disruption in education.
- For the next 120 days, exam fees for teacher certification-related examinations will be waived, and test takers who were unable to take an exam due to test site locations closing will be granted an extension to meet these requirements.
- Commissioner Corcoran urged adherence to the CDC's guidance for higher-risk populations by cancelling any mass gatherings, community events and extracurricular activities, including sports of more than 10 people in a single occupied space at any educational program, school readiness, voluntary prekindergarten, public and private K-12, career and technical centers, and public and private colleges and universities.
- Commissioner Corcoran strongly recommend school readiness and voluntary prekindergarten programs adhere to the CDC's guidance for higher-risk populations by limiting students and employees to no more than 10 people convening in a single occupied space, therefore breaking students into groups as necessary, maintaining social distancing best practices and proper hygiene.
- All services provided by the divisions of Vocational Rehabilitation and Blind Services to clients shall be provided solely through virtual and telephonic methods to the extent possible.
- The Department will work with appropriate federal authorities to seek waivers for any federal requirements that may be impacted.
- All public state colleges, and private college and campuses and buildings are closed for the remainder of the spring semester.
- Colleges are encouraged to operate virtually or through other non-classroom-based means to the greatest extent possible.
- Colleges should be prepared to extend their educational calendars through June 30, 2020, to the extent feasible and necessary.

- Education Commissioner Corcoran is in constant communication with Florida Superintendents and districts to provide guidance on COVID-19 preparedness and response and will be holding daily calls to update districts on preparation efforts.
- FDOE has established a resource website for educators, parents, and students to utilize free resources that help students during distance learning at <http://www.fldoe.org/em-response>.

DEPARTMENT OF ELDER AFFAIRS

- Participated in a conference call with the Executive Director from The Area Agency on Aging in Southwest Florida to assist in food procurement and meal services through local Emergency Operations Centers and additional community food bank resources in three counties. All needs also communicated at the state EOC level.
- Received information on USDA waiver request allowing non-congregate meals and meals outside of set hours to be provided to clients in the Adult Care Food Programs. The process may start immediately and allows providers to offer meals for pick-up, drive thru, or delivery to clients. This is especially important in the light of Adult Day Care closures throughout the state.
- Provided ongoing technical assistance to the all eleven Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) regarding meal procurement, distribution, telephone reassurance, and feeding elders not currently enrolled in food programs.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

- Most Florida State Parks remain open for day use; however, all Florida State Parks have changed day-use visitation hours to 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- DEP will continue to keep the public updated on park operational status through the Florida State Parks web page and social media channels.
- In order to address staffing shortages and balance necessary resources, the following two (2) parks are currently closed, effective March 21:
 - Florida State Caverns State Park
 - Fanning Springs State Park
- Following the Governor's direction and CDC guidance, effective March 21, the Department is closing state beach parks as crowds continue to gather in large groups along the beaches of Florida. While these beach parks will be closed, we have many other state parks currently open for day-use recreation, including hiking and biking. It is extremely important that visitors continue practicing social distancing while enjoying the beautiful nature outside. To locate other state parks in their region, visitors can use the "Find A Park" feature at floridastateparks.org. This is a rapidly evolving situation, and the Department will continue to provide daily updates on social media and the state parks webpage.
- The 42 beach parks currently closed include:
 - Amelia Island State Park
 - Anastasia State Park
 - Anclote Key State Park
 - Avalon State Park
 - Bahia Honda State Park

- Bald Point State Park
- Big Talbot Island State Park
- Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park
- Caladesi Island State Park
- Camp Helen State Park
- Cayo Costa State Park
- Curry Hammock State Park
- Deer Lake State Park
- Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park
- Don Pedro Island State Park
- Julian G. Bruce St. George Island State Park
- Von D. Mizell-Eula Johnson State Park
- Egmont Key State Park State Park
- Fort Pierce Inlet (includes Jack Island) State Park
- Fort Clinch State Park
- Fort Zachary Taylor Historic State Park
- Gamble Rogers Memorial State Recreation Area at Flagler Beach
- Gasparilla Island State Park
- Grayton Beach State Park
- Henderson Beach State Park
- Honeymoon Island State Park
- Hugh Taylor Birch State Park
- John D. MacArthur Beach State Park
- John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park
- Little Talbot Island State Park
- Long Key State Park
- Lovers Key State Park
- North Peninsula State Park
- Oleta River State Park
- Perdido Key State Park
- Sebastian Inlet State Park
- Andrews State Park
- Lucie Inlet Preserve State Park
- Stump Pass Beach State Park
- H. Stone Memorial St. Joseph Peninsula State Park
- Topsail Hill Preserve State Park
- Washington Oaks Gardens State Park
- All DEP administrative offices remain open and operational from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Based on guidance from the Department of Management Services to help protect our visitors and employees, DEP will temporarily close all DMS-managed facilities to the public beginning March 19 until Sunday, April 19. We look forward to continuing to assist residents by phone or email. DEP Regulatory District Office contact information can be found here: <https://floridadep.gov/districts>.
- DEP continues to work to identify ways to develop a safe and sustainable work environment for all of our employees that will also ensure we are able to perform all of our core functions and meet our agency's mission. DEP has developed initial plans that will

enable staff to begin teleworking beginning March 20, 2020. These plans are designed, and are expected to be, adaptive to meet any new guidance or circumstances that may arise, as well as ensure that unique staffing needs are appropriately addressed.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAY SAFETY AND MOTOR VEHICLES

- At the direction of Governor Ron DeSantis, the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor has issued an [Emergency Order](#) extending all Florida driver licenses, commercial driver licenses and identification cards that will expire now through April 15, 2020.
- FLHSMV continues to encourage Floridians through social media and other channels to use convenient [online options](#) to complete transactions for driver licenses, ID cards, motor vehicle or vessel registrations, and more.
- FLHSMV has been in regular communication with the Florida Tax Collectors Association as well as Tax Collectors across the state to provide the latest COVID-19 information and guidance from the Florida Department of Health and other state partners.
- Pursuant to Executive Order 20-52 issued by Governor Ron DeSantis, FLHSMV Executive Director Rhodes has waived commercial truck hours of service regulations and other related regulations so that emergency supplies, equipment, commodities and resources can be moved more quickly and efficiently throughout the state.
- FLHSMV has been in close communication with the Florida Sheriffs Association, Florida Police Chiefs Association, and all other state law enforcement partners regarding the department's emergency orders impacting Florida driver licenses and commercial vehicles.
- The Florida Highway Patrol has deployed personnel and equipment to assist ongoing drive-thru testing efforts in Pembroke Pines and Jacksonville.
- The Florida Highway Patrol is mobilizing personnel and equipment to assist with upcoming drive-thru testing efforts in Miami and Orlando.

OFFICE OF INSURANCE REGULATION

- OIR has issued [Informational Memorandum OIR-20-03M](#) directing all insurers and other entities regulated by OIR to review and update their business continuity and/or continuity of operations plans. Companies are directed to immediately contact OIR if their continuity plans are activated and/or if business operations become compromised so it can work with insurers to avoid any disruption in consumer services.
- OIR Insurance Commissioner David Altmaier is actively engaged with insurers and key partners at the state and national level regarding COVID-19. Commissioner Altmaier is collaborating with other state insurance commissioners and the National Association of Insurance Commissioners to share information and resources.
- OIR has issued [Informational Memorandum OIR-20-01M](#) to all health insurers and health maintenance organizations, directing them to:
 - Use every channel available to them to communicate with their policyholders and share official CDC and DOH information;
 - Devote resources to inform consumers of available benefits, quickly respond to inquiries, and avoid and dispel misinformation;
 - Work with public health officials to do everything possible to prepare and respond; and

- Consider all practicable options to reduce the barriers of cost-sharing for testing and treatment of COVID-19. OIR has issued [Informational Memorandum OIR-20-02](#) as a reminder to all health insurers, health maintenance organizations, and other health entities to allow for early prescription refills following the Governor's Executive Order 20-52 declaring a state of emergency in Florida.
- OIR has spoken with multiple insurers who are voluntarily waiving cost-sharing for consumers in an effort to remove barriers to testing for COVID-19.
- OIR is reaching out to insurers regarding their response to COVID-19 and working with insurers to make sure they are properly communicating to consumers.
- OIR has issued notices to all of its employees providing resources regarding COVID-19 and outlining the steps recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Florida Department of Health to take preventative health measures.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

- The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice's Office of Health Services developed COVID-19 guidance for all facilities serving DJJ youth. This guidance included Center for Disease Control criteria on how to assess and care for youth who are exhibiting fever and respiratory symptoms and environmental cleaning and disinfection recommendations.
- The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice has modified screening protocols and procedures for youth taken into custody by law enforcement who are brought to juvenile assessment centers and detention screening units to now include precautionary coronavirus screening questions and protocols. This modified screening protocol was shared with law enforcement partners statewide.
- The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice has issued an emergency order that will suspend visitation at all state-operated juvenile detention centers and juvenile residential commitment programs until April 15, 2020 and then will evaluate the health and safety of resuming normal visitation protocols. DJJ has also instituted additional screening measures for outside vendors who work within juvenile facilities. Clinical personnel are still permitted to visit youth for treatment purposes, instructional personnel are permitted to provide educational services, and attorneys are permitted to conduct legal visits with youth.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

- FDLE is coordinating with the FBI and the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact Council to obtain a federal rule and establish a process to perform name-based criminal history record checks. This will enable regulatory agencies the ability to quickly background screen critical occupations such as nurses and doctors that are coming out of retirement to support the COVID-19 pandemic.
- FDLE is working with state and local agencies and the Florida National Guard to set up testing collection sites in multiple locations across Florida.
- The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Regional Operations Centers are working with Regional Domestic Security Task Forces to prepare for any responses needed.

- FDLE's Office of Mutual Aid prepared and distributed a law enforcement guide on COVID-19 for law enforcement partners and state agencies and FDLE's General Counsel prepared a law enforcement guide for protocols in a quarantine.
- FDLE has distributed a COVID-19 legal guidance document to all its law enforcement partners in reference to Governor DeSantis' Executive Order and continues regular communication with them.
- FDLE Commissioner Rick Swearingen sent an email to all members outlining simple ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19 as well as links to the Florida Department of Health and CDC websites. Signs have been posted in all FDLE Regions and at Headquarters with prevention information.

FLORIDA LOTTERY

- As of today, all Florida Lottery offices remain open to the public. We are continuing to limit public access to a maximum of 10 people at a time in accordance with the CDC's social distancing recommendations.
- Security Agents at each office are screening anyone who does attempt to enter, mirroring the screening questions required to gain entry into the EOC.
- We have also reduced the seating in district office lobbies to ensure at least 6 feet of space is between each chair.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT SERVICES

- At the direction of Governor DeSantis, DMS Secretary Jonathan Satter issued an emergency order that waived rules to allow for state employees to use any type of accrued leave for instances related to COVID-19, including self-isolation after potential exposure, staying home with children due to child care or school closures, and time needed to take care of dependents like an elder parent. The order also waived rules to expand the ability for employees to donate leave to fellow employees.
- DMS' Emergency Support Function-7 (ESF-7) Logistics team continues to coordinate with the Department of Health and the Division of Emergency Management on identifying the equipment or supplies necessary for a mass response to COVID-19.
- DMS' Division of Human Resource Management has provided guidance to agencies on implementing preventive actions in the workplace, reporting symptoms, using leave, utilizing health insurance benefits, and applying travel restrictions and telework policies.
- DMS' Division of State Group Insurance continues to coordinate with health plan providers to ensure that state employee health plan members receive the health benefits that can assist them and their dependents if needed.
- DMS' Division of Real Estate Development and Management continues to provide guidance to agency facility managers across the state on steps to take to prevent workplace contamination and to pre-position environmental vendors to mobilize in the event a viricidal cleaning is needed.
- DMS' Division of Real Estate Development and Management continues to identify, purchase, and distribute additional hand sanitizing gel and cleaning supplies to state-maintained facilities.

- DMS' Division of State Technology-Public Safety Unit continues to coordinate with users and vendors of the Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS) to ensure the continuation of mission critical services if a reduction of staffing resources occurs.
- DMS' Division of State Technology-Public Safety Unit continues to coordinate with statewide public safety communications personnel on their plans to ensure emergency communications systems are not impacted by potential reductions to staffing.

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS

- There are 1026 Florida National Guardsmen activated in support of COVID-19.
- The Florida National Guard continues to support the State's COVID19 response as we expand our operational support in coming days with Community Based Testing Sites augmentation in Broward, Orlando, and Miami. The CBTS in Broward continues public testing assisting in the sampling of 1446 patients in the last two days. Development of CBTS operations in Miami-Dade and Orange counties continue to progress. Today Miami will initiate limited operations for first responders and medical professionals. The Florida National Guard will conduct rehearsals and operational checks in Orange county, with a projected opening date for Wednesday, 25 March.
- The Florida National Guard has activated our medical professionals, Army Combat Medic Specialists and Air Force Medical Technicians in support of the Florida Department of Health's (DOH) Community Based Testing Sites. Our Guardsmen have reported in and formed Task Force Medical.
- The Florida National Guard has activated Guardsmen to augment the State Logistics Readiness Center, the State's Logistics Branch, as well as facilitate state wide logistics needs of the Florida National Guard formations on mission.
- The Florida National Guard has activated Guardsmen to augment the State Emergency Operations Center and local emergency management offices across the state.

AGENCY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

- APD posted Provider Frequently Asked Questions and Answers on its website, apdcares.org, to provide guidance during this state of emergency.
- APD and AHCA sent information to all Providers on provider payment flexibility due to adjustments being made as a result of COVID-19.
- APD is implementing telework for employees throughout the state as directed by Governor DeSantis to reduce possible exposure to COVID-19.
- The agency's three state-run centers in Marianna, Gainesville, and Chattahoochee, as well as APD-licensed group homes, are restricting all visitors in compliance with the Executive Order to protect the health and safety of our customers.
- APD continues to provide an up-to-date status on COVID-19, best practices, preventative tips, and CDC guidance, in addition to CMS guidance, to APD providers, Waiver Support Coordinators, Stakeholders, and APD employees.

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

- The Property Tax Oversight (PTO) program is reminding county property appraisers of their existing statutory authority to grant a 30-day extension beyond the April 1 deadline for taxpayers to file tangible personal property tax returns. PTO is also advising taxpayers who contact the Department about this deadline to contact their county property appraisers' offices for more information about requesting the extension.
- The Department of Revenue has temporarily closed all offices in Florida to the general public. The Department is encouraging taxpayers and child support customers to use the alternative electronic options detailed below while in-person services are suspended.
- The Department has added a dedicated COVID-19 webpage for child support customers at [com/childsupport/coronavirus](https://com.childsupport/coronavirus). The new page provides comprehensive information for alternative options for handling many routine child support case activities without visiting a local child support office. Efforts also include rescheduling genetic testing sample collection appointments and postponing other types of appointments.
- The Department of Revenue is advising child support customers who are scheduled for court hearings related to their child support cases to check with the local courts where the hearings are scheduled in case the courts have new requirements, such as appearing telephonically.
- The Department of Revenue has established a dedicated team to address tax-related issues pertaining to COVID-19 and has created an email address, COVID19TAXHELP@floridarevenue.com, where taxpayers can send questions and concerns. The Department encourages all taxpayers to use our e-services applications to [file and pay taxes](#) or contact the call center at (850) 488-6800.
- The Department of Revenue's General Tax Administration (GTA) program is working with its tax processing vendor to ensure continuity in tax data and payment processing.
- The Department has increased messaging on preventative measures through the deployment of DOH/CDC posters, ensured hand sanitizer is available, and increased cleaning of high-traffic areas in the public areas of service centers.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE

- The Florida Department of State is working to solidify its telework policy and to identify essential employees. Additionally, with the closures of building to the public, we are continuing plans to develop and share valuable resources to the public digitally via social media, email, and online.

CAREERSOURCE FLORIDA

- Email communication from Board Chairman Kevin Doyle and President and CEO Michelle Dennard to the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors with a status update on state workforce system issues related to COVID-19 March 20 and on a recurring basis.
- In collaboration with the Department of Economic Opportunity, survey to be distributed March 20 to local workforce development board leaders requesting information on needs related to Reemployment Assistance processing and other COVID-19 related issues.
- Weekly (or more frequently as needed) email message to LWDB chief executives, board chairs, COOs and communications professionals with messaging appropriate for business partners, links to the most current digital tools and resources provided by state partners.

- Development and distribution March 19 of digital toolkit with a list of social media accounts to follow and draft social media posts to support local partners in expanding messaging to local employers and career seekers as well as sample email copy to draft broader messages to stakeholders.
- A mobile-friendly landing page (com/covid-19/) with links to the Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program managed by DEO in partnership with the Florida SBDC Network, the Florida Business Damage Assessment survey and other state and federal programs as they become available. This resource is to complement existing websites that may not be mobile responsive.
- CareerSource Florida is adjusting its board-approved outreach budget for digital advertising to direct employers and career seekers, when appropriate, in hardest-hit counties to this landing page, as we did after Hurricane Michael and other recent hurricanes. As the COVID-19 situation evolves, this outreach can quickly be expanded statewide and updated in real time with appropriate messaging depending on programs that may become available.
- Outreach will be digital and will direct to online resources.

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

- The SUS has directed all state universities to continue remote instruction through the end of the Spring semester.
- All students who can return home should return home.
- The SUS has directed that traditional on-campus commencement ceremonies will not be held in May. Instead, each university is directed to develop an alternate schedule or method of delivery.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

- FDOT has provided roadway equipment and is coordinating with other state and local agencies to help ensure mobility around the temporary testing site in Orange County. FDOT will continue publicizing testing site information regularly on its social media channels.
- In accordance with Executive Order 20-71 issued by Governor DeSantis, FDOT has discontinued food services at all of its service plazas. Fuel stations, public restrooms, dog walks and convenience stores will remain open at this time.
- Effective Monday, March 23, FDOT is closing its SunPass Customer Service Walk-In Centers located throughout the state, including:
 - Snapper Creek, Milepost 19, Florida Turnpike, Miami
 - Miami, 7902 NW 36th Street, Unit 203, Doral
 - Boca Raton, 7941 Glades Road, Boca Raton
 - Tampa, 10137 E. Adamo Drive, Suite 800A, Tampa
 - Pinellas Bayway Administration Center, 4501 54th Avenue S, St. Petersburg
 - Ocoee Walk-In Center, 9405 W. Colonial Drive, Ocoee
 - Mid-Bay Bridge, 1200 White Point Road, Niceville
 - Garcon Point Bridge, 555 Avalon Boulevard, Milton
- FDOT is coordinating with USDOT, the Florida Trucking Association, the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles and the Florida Highway Patrol to help mitigate the impacts on the transportation and logistics industries.

- To help keep toll collectors safe and distanced from customers, FDOT is not accepting cash payments for tolls temporarily. Toll collection will be conducted via SunPass or Toll-By-Plate until further notice.
- FDOT coordinated with transit agencies throughout the state to ensure the safe return of the Florida residents who were quarantined in Georgia and had previously been aboard the Grand Princess voyage outside of California.
- FDOT has provided portable roadway signage and is coordinating with other state and local agencies to help ensure mobility around the temporary testing site in Broward County. FDOT is publicizing testing site information regularly on its social media channels.
- FDOT has worked with Pinellas County and provided signage to assist with temporary closure messages within the county.
- FDOT completed a request to provide necessary supplies to harbor pilots working at seaports.
- At the direction of Governor DeSantis, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Secretary Kevin J. Thibault, along with Surgeon General Dr. Scott Rivkees, hosted a conference call with all Florida ports and their governing bodies as well as all public use airports to discuss Florida's ongoing response to the COVID-19 virus.
- Staff from the department continue to host weekly conference calls with all passenger seaports and public use airports to provide updates related to COVID-19.
- FDOT is monitoring temporary lane closures near hospitals and Department of Health facilities. If congestion near these facilities and lane closures occur, FDOT will remove lane restrictions to help ensure mobility within the area.
- Pursuant to Executive Order 20-52 issued by Governor DeSantis, FDOT Secretary Thibault has suspended size and weight restrictions for divisible loads on any vehicles transporting emergency equipment, services, supplies, and necessary agricultural commodities on state roads.
- COVID-19 educational materials have been posted in FDOT facilities, which include welcome centers, service plazas and rest areas across the state.
- COVID-19 materials have been posted at all FDOT work sites across the state to help educate contractors, vendors, and stakeholders.
- SunRail has posted COVID-19 educational materials inside all trains and on all platforms, focusing on areas near entrances and bathrooms.
- SunRail trains continue to be cleaned and sanitized daily and SunRail staff have been provided sanitizing towelettes and encouraged to wash their hands frequently throughout the day.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

- Effective March 11, 2020, FDVA restricted visitor access to its State Veterans' Nursing Homes and Domiciliary until further notice, with the exception of essential visitors, such as family members of those residents undergoing end-of-life care. In addition, we are temporarily suspending admissions in our network of state veterans' homes. Thank you for your understanding.
- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has also temporarily restricted access to their nursing and community living center facilities to only essential visitors until further notice.

- The VA Sunshine Healthcare Network (VISN 8) is taking additional steps to slow the spread of COVID-19 to protect healthcare system's capabilities, healthcare workers and veterans. Facilities within the VISN 8 Network include the Bay Pines VA Healthcare System, James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital and Clinics, Miami VA Healthcare System, North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System, Orlando VA Healthcare System, VA Caribbean Healthcare System, and the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center. These actions include:
- VISN 8 facilities are transitioning to virtual appointments to the fullest extent to allow veterans to stay at home, avoid exposure to others and reduce their risk; Veterans with appointments will be contacted several days beforehand to discuss virtual appointment options available to them.
- Veterans can help with this transition by visiting the VA Video On-Demand webpage for more information: <https://mobile.va.gov/content/getting-started-0>.
- Veterans enrolled for care within VISN 8 can continue to use the VISN 8 Clinical Contact Center for 24/7 virtual urgent care by calling 1-877-741-3400 (toll free) or by using the VA Health Chat App. Veterans who are concerned they may have symptoms of Coronavirus, flu or cold should contact the center first before coming to a VA facility.
- VISN 8 facilities will cease non-urgent elective procedures. Any impacted veterans will be contacted directly by their health care team to reschedule. Urgent and emergent elective procedures will continue during this period.
- VISN 8 facilities are further restricting visitations. Only one visitor will be permitted per veteran if required to provide assistance moving a patient to and from an appointment, providing support to an inpatient in a palliative or hospice care unit, or for veterans who have major procedures. Visitors who screen positive will not be granted access to the medical centers.
- These newly announced actions do not supersede or replace activities announced by VISN 8 last week. All VISN 8 facilities continue to use mandatory and enhanced screening protocols for all patients, employees and visitors, have restricted visitations to certain units, and have taken many other actions to mitigate the infection and spread of the virus.
- All VA Vet Centers in Florida, which provide readjustment counseling and outreach services to veterans and families, are open and implementing enhanced screening protocols. At this time, veterans may appear in person or opt in advance for an optional phone consultation.
- All U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) national cemeteries are open and will continue to provide interments for veterans and eligible individuals. However, effective March 23 — as part of the agency's response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) — committal services and the rendering of military funeral honors will discontinue until further notice. Immediate family members (limited to no more than 10 individuals) of the deceased may witness the interment if requested. Families choosing to continue with interment may schedule a committal service for a later date. Families wishing to postpone an already scheduled interment to a later date should contact the cemetery as soon as possible to convey their wishes. Although VA national cemeteries remain open to visitors, guests are strongly urged to obey local travel restrictions and avoid unnecessary travel. Certain portions of a cemetery typically open to the public, such as public information centers or chapels, may be closed to the public. Contact your [local cemetery](#) for updates regarding closures. For more information, contact NCA at 202-891-9987. Veterans can call the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 800-535-1117 or [schedule a burial arrangement online](#).

- All Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) Regional Offices are closed to the public. The St. Petersburg Regional Office will close to staff on March 23 and employees will be asked to telework. Veterans can continue to get information about benefits or file a claim for benefits by visiting our website at va.gov. Veterans with claims specific or other questions may request information via Inquiry Routing & Information System (IRIS) or telephone at 1-800-827-1000. VBA benefits and services provided to veterans, families and survivors will continue to be delivered throughout the duration of COVID-19 impacts.
- The Board of Veterans' Appeals (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs) has suspended Travel Boards until May 1, 2020, due to COVID-19 response efforts. As of March 23, the Board is suspending all video, travel board, and VA Central Office hearings through at least May 1, 2020.
- GI Bill Benefits to Continue During COVID-19 Pandemic- President Trump signed into law [3503](#), March 21, which will enable the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to continue providing the same level of education benefits to students having to take courses online due to the [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#). The law gives VA temporary authority to continue GI Bill payments uninterrupted in the event of national emergencies, allowing for continued payment of benefits even if the program has changed from resident training to online training. Thanks to the law, GI Bill students will continue receiving the same monthly housing allowance payments they received for resident training until Dec. 21, or until the school resumes in-person classes. Students receiving [GI Bill benefits](#) are not required to take any action. Benefits will continue automatically. VA will work closely with schools to ensure enrollments are accurately certified and processed timely. Students with specific questions can contact the Education Call Center at: 888-442-4551 between 8 a.m. - 7 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday-Friday.
- To contact a VA Homeless Veteran Coordinator in Florida, call toll free 1-800-827-1000.
- All Honor Flights have been postponed nationwide until May 31, 2020.
- All FDVA and VA facilities remain fully operational. Visit FloridaVets.org for the latest information.

VISIT FLORIDA

- VISIT FLORIDA is wholly focused on providing health and safety information to travelers and Floridians. This includes the activation of Florida Now, which includes the latest updates from state emergency response professionals hosted on VisitFlorida.com. All promotional media has been paused.
- VISIT FLORIDA is planning for future marketing campaigns to ensure that Florida's tourism industry has a strong, unified voice following COVID-19
- To protect the health and safety of the traveling public and staff, VISIT FLORIDA's four welcome centers will be closed until further notice.
- VISIT FLORIDA is tracking traveler sentiment across online platforms and social media to monitor how COVID-19 may impact travel and travel booking to Florida. VISIT FLORIDA remains in close contact with industry partners and travel organizations and is communicating all new information as it becomes available.

VOLUNTEER FLORIDA

- As the lead agency for volunteerism and service, Volunteer Florida is working to support voluntary organizations across the state and nation by pushing resources, surveying needs and requesting that continuity of operations plans be created to avoid any service delivery disruption.
- Volunteer Florida is continuing to work with Mass Care on the anticipated need of volunteers and safety guidelines that should be taken to protect volunteers and clients.
- Volunteer Florida is having preliminary conversations with warehousing partners (should the need arise).
- Volunteer Florida encourages volunteers to screen themselves for COVID-19 (per CDC and Florida Department of Health guidelines) before volunteering/serving.
- Volunteer Florida is asking service organizations to track volunteer hours.

FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE CONVERSATION COMMISSION

- FWC officers are assisting Bay County SO with beach patrol related to social distancing (EO 20-68).

###

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/FLDEM/bulletins/2829b2b>

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This service is provided to you at no charge by the [Florida Division of Emergency Management](#).

This email was sent to cparedes@oevforbusiness.org using GovDelivery Communications Cloud on behalf of: Florida Division of Emergency Management · 2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard · Tallahassee, FL 32399-2100



Attachment 03 State and Federal Legislative Responses

With the rapid spread of the novel coronavirus in spring 2020, the Florida Legislature and Congress have enacted several pieces of legislation to aid people and industries affected by the virus. As of the publication of this agenda item, Congress continues to negotiate additional legislation to provide relief to the nation's economy and its communities. Following is a summary of state and federal legislation enacted to date with regard to the coronavirus.

State Legislation:

The Florida Legislature passed its FY 2020-21 budget on Thursday, March 19. As of the publication of this agenda item, the budget bill (HB 5001) awaits the Governor's signature. The budget provides \$27.3 million in federal funds (allocated by Congress in H.R. 6074, the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act – discussed in greater detail below) and another \$25.1 million from the state's general revenue to the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) to combat the coronavirus. The state budget also allocates \$300 million in additional reserves to support state government operations in anticipation of an economic slowdown. While the state budget takes effect on July 1, 2020, the funds appropriated to FDOH will be available for the remainder of the current fiscal year.

Federal Legislation:

Congress initially reacted to community spread of the virus by passing H.R. 6074, the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, enacted on March 6. This "Phase 1" legislation provides \$8.3 billion in emergency supplemental appropriations to prepare for and mitigate the spread of the virus. It also includes funds for federal agencies working on diagnostic tests to identify the virus, therapeutic interventions to reduce its impact and a vaccine to stop coronavirus spread. The bulk of the funding in the Phase 1 legislation was allocated to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (\$6.5 billion) for public health preparedness and response. With regard to small business assistance, H.R. 6074 provided \$20 million to the U.S. Small Business Administration for administrative expenses related to increased loan volume to help businesses affected by the outbreak.

Following the passage of H.R. 6074, Congress immediately transitioned to working on a second bill to ease the economic impacts of the coronavirus. H.R. 6201, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, was enacted on March 18. This "Phase 2" bill includes food safety support needed in the wake of school and business closures, enhanced unemployment insurance benefits, new federal emergency paid leave benefits and refundable tax credits for small businesses to defray the cost of the paid leave, an increase in Medicaid matching funds to support healthcare providers, and policies to ensure that COVID-19 testing is significantly expanded and free to everyone in the U.S.

Highlights of H.R. 6074 (the "Phase 2" legislation) include the following:

- \$250 million for U.S. Department of Health and Human Services nutrition programs that aid elderly Americans
- \$1 billion for nutrition assistance to children and families
- Up to \$1 billion for emergency transfers to states to process and pay unemployment benefits

As of the publication of this agenda item, Congress is working on a third ("Phase 3") bill which would provide in excess of \$1 trillion of economic stimulus in response to the financial fallout related to the coronavirus pandemic. This package is expected to provide direct economic assistance to families and sectors of the economy impacted by the public health emergency. The U.S. Senate convened bipartisan

negotiations on the Phase 3 bill on Friday, March 20. As of Monday, March 23, Senate and White House negotiators continue working to reach an agreement on the provisions of the legislation. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has indicated that the Senate will not adjourn until it passes a broad stimulus bill, which will also need to be approved by the U.S. House of Representatives.

At this time, the Phase 3 legislation is reported to include direct financial assistance to individuals; a \$500 billion lending program for businesses, local governments, and states; and another \$350 billion to help small businesses meet payroll costs. While the Phase 3 legislation will have components to assist both businesses and individuals, the overall strategy is to provide income replacement for those directly affected by the coronavirus outbreak. Broadly, this strategy seeks to get federal dollars to affected businesses quickly and to keep employees whole and on the books, which will help people get back to work quickly once the crisis subsides. This will provide income for affected people, keep them employed, and creating economic activity to buffet the downturn, and avoid a prolonged re-hiring period which will greatly reduce the duration and severity of the decline.

BUSINESS RESOURCE GUIDE FOR COVID-19

MARCH 21 AT 3PM EST

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC VITALITY
OEVFORBUSINESS.ORG



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A Message From Our Director

COVID-19 is a challenge for our local businesses and the whole community, and the Office of Economic Vitality's team is focused upon the continued success of our local businesses. To support our businesses, workers, and the community-at-large, we will be launching a single, best resource for businesses, Open for Takeout. This interactive map will be populated by our restaurants and other local organizations whose doors may be closed but very much remain open for business. The map will be updated daily.

Your OEV team is working around the clock with our state and federal partners to monitor the changing legislation and business resources to serve as your local resource for information and access to programs to strengthen your business. We are actively monitoring the development of state and federal programs to support our businesses, and our team is reachable at any time. We are your most vital source for business resources during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We understand this is a difficult time for local businesses, the Office of Economic Vitality Team is committed to working with you to ensure that our community remains vibrant and resilient. I encourage you to reach out to me with any questions that you may have regarding business support and resources:

CParedes@oevforbusiness.org

Best, Cristina Paredes
Office of Economic Vitality, Director

Our Team Is Ready To Assist

Drew Dietrich

Deputy Director, Office of Economic Vitality

DDietrich@OEVforBusiness.org

850.766.4329

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Guidance for Businesses and Employers

To prevent stigma and discrimination in the workplace, use the guidance described below and on the [CDC's Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#) web page.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers the most up-to-date information on COVID-19. This interim guidance is based on what is currently known [about the coronavirus disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#). For updates from CDC, please see the following:

- [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Preventing Stigma Related to COVID-19](#)
- [Share Facts about COVID-19](#)
- [CDC Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Web page](#)
- [Information on Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Prevention, Symptoms and FAQ](#)



Business Outreach Survey

We understand this is a difficult time for local businesses. With the limitations on customer engagement, many businesses are no doubt feeling the impact on their employees, customers, and operations.

The [Office of Economic Vitality \(OEV\)](#) takes these concerns seriously and is ready to assist local businesses in whatever capacity they need. With over 8,000 businesses in Tallahassee-Leon County, OEV has outlined a broad outreach initiative to reach as many businesses as possible.

Your feedback is critical to identifying the needs of our business community, and the best ways in which our office and that of our partner organizations can leverage resources for your business and employees. We appreciate all that you do for our community, and our mission is to help you weather this storm. We welcome any and all feedback and want to ensure your success. We encourage you to complete this survey and to follow our news and social media feeds, to keep informed as to the latest developments locally.

SURVEY LINK

Open For Takeout Initiative

To continue to support our local businesses in Florida's capital, the **Tallahassee-Leon County Office of Economic Vitality** developed "Open for Takeout," a spin on our Hurricane Michael "Open for Business" initiative that encourages residents to support local businesses by ordering takeout, getting delivery, or buying a gift card online while practicing social distancing and minimizing the spread of Coronavirus. OEV has also developed the Open For Business Interactive Map that shows which businesses are open and offer takeout and delivery options. For a PDF of our toolkit or graphics, please contact KBrown@OEVforBusiness.org.

OPEN FOR TAKEOUT INTERACTIVE MAP

DOWNLOAD THE OPEN FOR TAKEOUT CAMPAIGN TOOLKIT



Small Business Technical Assistance

The [Florida Small Business Development Center Network](#) and Florida Department of Economic Opportunity disaster specialists can assist small businesses in developing a preparedness plan and with other strategies to safeguard their employees and customers, and ensure the continued operation of their business.

Business Damage Assessment Survey for Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Governor Ron DeSantis has announced the activation of the Business Damage Assessment survey to assess the impact of COVID-19 on Florida's local business operations. The survey, managed by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), will evaluate businesses affected by COVID-19 and the impacts the virus has had on the local economy so actions to implement appropriate relief programs can begin.



The Business Damage Assessment Survey can be taken at FloridaDisaster.biz.

With proper reporting through the [Business Damage Assessment Survey](#), Florida can activate this vital program providing up to \$2 million to help eligible small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, and most private nonprofit organizations meet financial obligations and operating expenses that could have been met should the pandemic not have occurred.

Reemployment Assistance Program

If your employees have been negatively impacted as a result of the mitigation efforts in Florida to stop the spread of COVID-19, they may be eligible to receive reemployment assistance through the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. The Reemployment Assistance (RA) program provides temporary, partial wage replacement benefits to qualified workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own. It is funded solely by employers who pay federal and state payroll taxes and is provided at no cost to the workers who receive the benefits. For more information, click [here](#).

Temporary Layoff

The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's Temporary Layoff program is for employees that are temporarily laid off from work may be eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits. A temporary layoff occurs when the employee is separated from their job due to lack of work, and the **employee has a return-to-work date within eight weeks of the separation.**

Visit the Florida
Department of Economic
Opportunity's [website](#) for
frequently asked
questions on
Re-employment
Assistance for Employers



Still unsure how this may apply to you and your employees? Here is an example of a temporary layoff or for more information, click [here](#):

Susie worked for ABC Restaurant as a cook. Due to the mitigation response of the COVID-19 event, ABC Restaurant temporarily had to close and had no work available for Susie. Susie would not be receiving any pay during the closure. Prior to closing, ABC Restaurant told Susie they would be re-opening in five weeks and would need her to return to work at that time. This may be considered a temporary layoff, and Susie may be eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits.

Short Time Compensation Program For Employers

The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's [The Short Time Compensation program](#) helps employers retain their workforce in times of temporary slowdown by encouraging work sharing as an alternative to layoff. The program permits prorated reemployment assistance benefits to employees whose work hours and earnings are reduced as part of a Short Time Compensation plan to avoid total layoff of some employees. To apply for the Short Time Compensation Program, please follow this link to the Employer Login page of [CONNECT](#).

Short Time Compensation Program Goals:

- Employees retained during a temporary slowdown can resume high production levels when business conditions improve and are spared the hardships of full unemployment.
- Employers avoid the expense of recruiting, hiring, and training new workers when business conditions improve.
- Employers who must permanently reduce their workforce can use the program as a transition to layoff. Affected employees may continue to work at reduced levels with an opportunity to find other employment before the expected layoff.

Eligibility Requirements:

- The employer must describe a plan for giving notice, if feasible, to an employee whose workweek is to be reduced, together with an estimate of the number of layoffs that would have occurred absent the ability to participate in STC.
- If you are a client company trying to apply for a plan for leased employees, contact the leasing company. They will need to file a plan separately on behalf of their employees.
- Reduced hours must be used as a temporary solution to avoid a layoff. The employer must submit a Short Time Compensation plan application to the Short Time Compensation Coordinator, Reemployment Assistance Services
- Individuals participating in an employer-sponsored training may also be eligible to participate in the short-time compensation program.
- Participating employees must be full-time (at least 32 hours per week prior to Short Time Compensation reduction), permanent employees (not seasonal) and the employees must have a set number of hours (excluding overtime) that they work each

week in order to participate. Employees paid piece rate, on commission, or who are hired to do certain jobs regardless of the time required are not eligible for participation.

- Short Time Compensation benefits are payable when normal hours of work are reduced from 10-40 percent. If normal work hours exceed 40, the percentage will be based on 40 hours.
- Each week that Short Time Compensation benefits are claimed, at least 10 percent of the employees from the total staff or within a particular unit must be working reduced hours. (Two employees is the minimum for a staff or unit of less than 20 employees.)

USBG National Charitable Foundation's Bartender Emergency Assistance Program

If you are a bartender, brewery staffer, or cocktail server who needs financial support, you can apply to the USBG National Charitable Foundation's Bartender Emergency Assistance Program. A USBG membership is not required to receive funds. To apply, visit the USBG website [here](#).

DISASTER LOAN ASSISTANCE

U.S. Small Business Administration

The SBA works directly with state Governors to provide targeted, low-interest loans to small businesses and non-profits that have been severely impacted by the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loan program provides small businesses with working capital loans of up to \$2 million that can provide vital economic support to small businesses to help overcome the temporary loss of revenue they are experiencing. Find more information on the SBA's business guidance and loan resources [here](#).

Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program

Governor Ron DeSantis activated the Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program to support small businesses impacted by COVID-19 administered by the [Florida Department of Economic Opportunity](#) in partnership with the [Florida SBDC Network](#). The application period opens March 17, 2020 and runs through May 8, 2020. For more information on the program, visit [FloridaDisasterLoan.org](#) and connect with your local [Florida SBDC at FAMU](#) Team.

Loan Details

- **Designated Disaster Areas:** All Florida counties statewide per Executive Order 20-52.
- **Qualified Applicant:** Applications will be accepted by qualified for-profit, privately held small businesses that maintain a place of business in the state of Florida. All qualified applicants must have been established prior to March 9, 2020, and suffered economic injury as a result of the designated disaster. Qualified small business applicants must be an employer business with 2 to 100 employees.
- **Amount:** Up to \$50,000 per eligible small business. Loans of up to \$100,000 may be made in special cases as warranted by the need of the eligible small business.
- **Term:** 1 year.

-
- **Limitation:** Only one loan may be made per eligible business. All previous bridge loans received MUST be paid in full.
 - **Interest Rate:** Loans will be interest-free for the loan term (1 year). The Interest rate will be 12% per annum on the unpaid balance thereafter, until the loan balance is repaid in full. Loan default is subject to a normal commercial collection process.
 - **Application Period:** Applications will be accepted by qualified Florida small businesses under this program through May 8, 2020, contingent on the availability of funds.

For questions regarding the Emergency Bridge Loan Program, please contact the Florida Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network Headquarters. Email: Disaster@FloridaSBDC.org. Phone toll-free: (866) 737-7232.

Supply Chain Disruption Planning courtesy of FloridaMakes:

[Checklist Link](#)

[Additional Information](#)

EDO Disaster Plan templates that can be easily customized for your organization and service area:

[EDO Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan \(CEMP\) PDF](#)

[EDO CEMP Customization Guide](#)

Comprehensive And Updated FAQs For Employers On The COVID-19 Coronavirus

Fisher Phillips has assembled a cross-disciplinary taskforce of attorneys across the country to address the many employment-related issues facing employers in the wake of the COVID-19 coronavirus – especially now that the World Health Organization has declared the outbreak as a pandemic. The COVID-19 Taskforce has created a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document, which has been continually updated since first published on March 3 and will continue to be updated as events warrant. It has been completely updated to address the many additional workplace law rights and responsibilities given the pandemic designation. You can contact your Fisher Phillips attorney or any member of the Taskforce with specific questions, and a full listing of the Taskforce members and their practice areas is at the end of this publication.

To access the FAQs, click [here](#).

Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce

The Importance of Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers

Functioning critical infrastructure is imperative during the response to the COVID-19 emergency for both public health and safety as well as community well-being. Certain critical infrastructure industries have a special responsibility in these times to continue operations. This guidance and accompanying list are intended to support State, Local, and industry partners in identifying the critical infrastructure sectors and the essential workers needed to maintain the services and functions Americans depend on daily and that need to be able to operate resiliently during the COVID-19 pandemic response. This document gives guidance to State, local, tribal, and territorial jurisdictions and the private sector on defining essential critical infrastructure workers. Promoting the ability of such workers to continue to work during periods of community restriction, access management, social distancing, or closure orders/directives is crucial to community resilience and continuity of essential functions.

Considerations for Government and Business

This list was developed in consultation with federal agency partners, industry experts, and State and local officials, and is based on several key principles:

1. Response efforts to the COVID-19 pandemic are locally executed, State managed, and federally supported
2. Everyone should follow guidance from the CDC, as well as State and local government officials, regarding strategies to limit disease spread.
3. Workers should be encouraged to work remotely when possible and focus on core business activities. In-person, non-mandatory activities should be delayed until the resumption of normal operations.
4. When continuous remote work is not possible, businesses should enlist strategies to reduce the likelihood of spreading the disease. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, separating staff by off-setting shift hours or days and/or social distancing. These steps can preserve the workforce and allow operations to continue
5. All organizations should implement their business continuity and pandemic plans, or put plans in place if they do not exist. Delaying implementation is

not advised and puts at risk the viability of the business and the health and safety of the employees.

6. In the modern economy, reliance on technology and just-in-time supply chains means that certain workers must be able to access certain sites, facilities, and assets to ensure continuity of functions.
7. Government employees, such as emergency managers, and the business community need to establish and maintain lines of communication.
8. When government and businesses engage in discussions about critical infrastructure workers, they need to consider the implications of business operations beyond the jurisdiction where the asset or facility is located. Businesses can have sizeable economic and societal impacts as well as supply chain dependencies that are geographically distributed.
9. Whenever possible, jurisdictions should align access and movement control policies related to critical infrastructure workers to lower the burden of workers crossing jurisdictional boundaries.

To review a list of sectors and identified essential critical infrastructure workers, click [here](#).

Local Resources for Businesses

- [Leon County](#) – As the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to spread globally, Leon County Emergency Management is committed to actively monitoring the disease and coordinating preparedness efforts with local health officials, healthcare providers, first responders, and other critical emergency response functions.
- [City of Tallahassee](#) – The City of Tallahassee remains engaged to prepare and address any local impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The City's main priority is the health, safety and welfare of its citizens. The resource provides updates on school closures, event cancellations/postponements, service impacts, and prevention techniques.
- [Florida Department of Health](#) – The Florida Department of Health is actively updating their website on what you need to know about Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Florida. To contact the COVID-19 Call Center, call 1-866-779-6121 or email COVID-19@flhealth.gov. The call center is available 24/7.
- [SBDC at Florida A&M University](#) – SBA works with a number of local partners to counsel, mentor, and train small businesses. The SBA has 68 District Offices, as well as support provided by its Resource Partners, such as SCORE offices, Women's Business Centers, Small Business Development Centers and Veterans Business Outreach Centers. When faced with a business need, use the [SBA's Local Assistance Directory](#) to locate the office nearest you. To contact the FAMU SBDC, please give them a call at 850.599.3407.
- [CareerSource Capital Region](#)
- [Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Big Bend Minority Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Capital City Chamber of Commerce](#)

Contact Us

Website

Access our website [here](#)

Social Media Platforms

- Facebook: [@OEVforBusiness](#)
- Twitter: [@OEVforBusiness](#)
- LinkedIn: [Office of Economic Vitality](#)

Newsletter

Subscribe to our newsletter [here](#)

Appendix

1.A COVID-19 SBA Disaster Assistance Loans Fact [Sheet](#)

1.B COVID-19 Economic Injury Disaster Loan Fact [Sheet](#)

1.C Reemployment Assistance COVID-19 Frequently Asked [Questions](#)



MEMORANDUM

TO: Ben Pingree, PLACE Director
FROM: Cristina Paredes, Director
SUBJECT: COVID-19 Response and Recovery Efforts
DATE: March 23, 2020

This memo highlights the Office of Economic Vitality’s marketing and communications through COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. During these times, our team has provided vital business information, engaged with local businesses, and supported the preservation of our community enterprises.

Strategic Communication Report:

Strategic Plan, 3.A.3, Six Cornerstones

Frequent and sustained staff activities throughout the community, the ongoing success of programs and community-wide initiatives, along with efforts to support local businesses and attract new businesses to the community are often recorded via earned media. These include activities on the following channels:

Social Media:

Facebook (March 16, 2020 – March 22, 2020)

- Increased page likes from 853 to 1,026 (net gain of 173 likes)
- 52 total Facebook posts.
- Cumulative organic reach of 28,434.
- During this time period, our highest performing post was the “Open For Takeout” post that featured the interactive map and a way for businesses to contact us. This post garnered over 1,300 post clicks, 569 reactions, 29 comments, 158 shares and reached more than 18,500 people organically.

Twitter (March 16, 2020 – March 22, 2020)

- Increased number of page followers from 404 to 433 (an increase of 29)
- 22 total Tweets.
- Over 32.8k total impressions

- Our top-5 tweets in this time period generated over 17,000 impressions

Earned Media: During this reporting period (March 16, 2020 – March 22, 2020) the following stories were published by local media partners:

- Tallahassee-Leon County Office of Economic Vitality creates ‘Open For Takeout’ map
 - Date: March 18, 2020
 - Source: WTXL
- Looking for something to eat? Here’s who’s open for takeout.
 - Date: March 18, 2020
 - Source: WTXL
- Office of Economic Vitality creates ‘Open For Takeout’ interactive map to help local restaurants
 - Date: March 19, 2020
 - Source: WCTV
- Leon County’s Resources to Stay Busy During COVID-19
 - Date: March 19, 2020
 - Source: WCTV
- Looking for something to eat? Here are the local businesses that are open for takeout.
 - Date: March 19, 2020
 - Source: WTXL
- COVID-19 cripples local, statewide economic health of sports landscape
 - Date: March 19, 2020
 - Source: Tallahassee Democrat
- Leon County closes all public offices
 - Date: March 20, 2020
 - Source: WTXL
- City Rewind – Week of March 16, 2020
 - Date: March 21, 2020
 - Source: WCOT
- Local restaurants fighting to stay afloat after forced closure of dining rooms
 - Date: March 21, 2020
 - Source: WTXL
- Helping each other through this: a practical guide | Opinion
 - Date: March 22, 2020
 - Source: Tallahassee Democrat

Newsletters

- Plan and Prepare for COVID-19
 - Date: March 10, 2020
- Resources For Your Business Coronavirus (COVID-19)
 - Date: March 13, 2020
- BREAKING: Governor DeSantis Activates Emergency Loan Program

- Date: March 16, 2020
- COVID-19 Business Update
 - Date: March 17, 2020
- COVID-19: Business Update on Unemployment Assistance
 - Date: March 19, 2020
- COVID-19: Small Business Loan Programs
 - Date: March 20, 2020
- COVID-19: Business Update Reemployment Assistance Resources
 - Date: March 21, 2020
- COVID-19: Reemployment Assistance Resources #ICYMI
 - Date: March 23, 2020

TALLAHASSEE-LEON COUNTY COVID-19 ECONOMIC DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAM (CEDR)

Submit completed grant application and a copy of supplemental documentation to:

Tallahassee-Leon County Office of Economic Vitality: 315 S. Calhoun Street, Suite 450, Tallahassee, FL 32301

Please read through the Selection Criteria and Eligibility Requirements for the Tallahassee-Leon County COVID-19 Emergency Disaster Relief (CEDR) Program prior to completing your application. Please ensure you have attached all required supporting documentation to your application submission. If you need assistance or have any questions please contact the Tallahassee-Leon County Office of Economic Vitality (OEV) staff at (850)219-1060 or by e-mail at Covid-19Grant@oevforbusiness.org.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

In order to qualify for grant assistance from CEDR Program, the recipient must satisfy all of the following requirements:

- Be a for profit corporation/business based in Leon County (Corporate, Regional, Division, Registered Office or Franchise) and registered with the Florida Division of Corporations, with more than 1 and fewer than 50 employees.
- Demonstrate a minimum reduction of 50% in revenue as a result of COVID-19 - supply an affidavit stating this.
- Have an active Utility Account with the City of Tallahassee Utilities, Talquin Electric Cooperative or Progress Energy Florida in good or current status as of the date of COVID-19 Emergency Declaration, March 18, 2020.
- Provide proof of application for either the [Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan](#) or the [U.S. SBA Disaster Loan Assistance](#) program.
- Pledge in good-faith to remain in business for at least 45 days following the receipt of CEDR funding and provide estimated average monthly operating expenses.

SELECTION CRITERIA

CEDR Grant recipients will be selected solely on the basis of the eligibility requirements above and available funding. Each grant applicant will be screened for compliance with the eligibility requirements on an objective and nondiscriminatory basis by OEV staff or other persons designated by the OEV Director.

Grants will be made in the form of lump sum distributions to the recipient in the amount of \$2,500, or as determined by the Tallahassee-Leon County OEV, based on the needs of the particular recipient. Each grant recipient will be required to provide OEV with documentation that the grant was used in a manner consistent with the terms of the grant. All data is kept confidential and secure.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Who is filling out this application? (Please chose one) Applicant ☐ Agent of Applicant ☐ Please provide authorization ☐

Business Name: _____ Years in Service to Community _____

Business Address: _____, Tallahassee, Florida 323 _____

Business Phone: _____ Business E-Mail: _____

Business EFT Info (Bank, Routing Number and Account Info): _____

Number of Employees: _____ Estimated Annual Revenue: _____ # of Locations _____

Is your business currently operational? Yes ☐ No ☐ Briefly describe your business services/product: _____

Brief Description of Hardship: _____

Certification

☐ I certify that all information is valid and complete and hereby authorize the Tallahassee-Leon County Office of Economic Vitality to verify any of the above information as deemed necessary. I certify that I have reviewed the Tallahassee-Leon County CEDR Eligibility Requirements and Selection Criteria and that, to the best of my knowledge, the above-mentioned recipient is eligible to receive a grant from the OEV. I understand that, in the event the OEV awards a grant to the above-mentioned recipient, I may be required to provide subsequent documentation regarding the use of the grant funds.

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Disaster #:
FL-00152

Effective Date:
UPON APPROVAL

Incident Period:
March 18, 2020 - Ongoing
(Per emergency declaration)

Attachment 07 - Average Commercial Utility Bill (Non-Demand Users)

According to FY 2020 documentation of utility bills by service, the average monthly breakdown of utility bill costs for commercial, non-demand customers is as follows:

Commercial Utility Bill		
Electric (non-demand)	\$	211.00
Gas	\$	462.00
Water	\$	162.00
Sewer	\$	419.00
Stormwater	\$	138.00
Fire Service	\$	51.00
Solid Waste	\$	90.00
Total	\$	1,533.00

*From FY 2020 Summary to date

Attachment 08 CEDR Grant Logistics for Internal Management

Logistics Plan

Step One – Grant Infrastructure

OEV creates online google form application for businesses.

OEV creates a new email address for application component submission

OEV provides grant overview and training to partner divisions assigned to assist with grant processing.

Step Two – Activation and Application

Business fills out form and puts together documentation

Business submits form to Google Forms and emails the following to OEV email address:

1. Registration documents filled with **Florida Department of State Division of Corporations** showing headquarter location
2. Revenue sheet showing week-to-week revenue declines and year-over-year decline
3. A copy of most recently paid Utility bill with company information attached.
4. Proof of Application for Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan or US SBA Disaster Loan program application.
5. Good faith letter stating Business's intent to remain open for 45 days, **and amount needed to do so, given current losses, which would cover non-payroll overhead.**

Step Three – Review, Approval, Payment

Drew Dietrich, Deputy Director of Vitality, Can oversee review, triage, and approval.

Application review is triaged and sent to staff from any of the participating review and processing City/County entities (e.g. Planning, Library, etc.).

Staff determines “yes/no” eligibility according to:

- Sufficient documentation of 1-5, above;
- Full and complete information provided on the google form

And sends decision to OEV

OEV Admin approves disbursement and sends to City Treasury for Processing.

Form letter sent to applicant notifying of decision – Approved / More Information Requested / Denied

- This will take 20-30 minutes per application.
- Full application processing and payment disbursal is anticipated to require 7-10 days.

For approved applications, a 45-day “follow-up” report surveying business status required.

Payment make take 1-2 days per applicant.

Attachment 09 - Budget: OEV Unallocated Funds and Disaster Response

According to current budget figures, \$550,000 exists as Unallocated and \$2.8 million total unspent that could be dedicated toward a COVID small business assistance grant. Of note, this is utilizing the “Pre-COVID” projection of sales tax receipts for the year. Actual collection may be lower.

The following projects are funded in FY 2020, and “Amount Available” conveys the balance currently remaining.

		FY 2020 YTD (includes encumbrances)	Amount Available
Economic Vitality Capital Projects and Programs			
Qualified Target Industry Tax Refund *	14,000.00	-	14,000.00
Target Business Program*	194,705.00	21,896.40	172,808.60
Urban Vitality Job Program	25,000.00	-	25,000.00
ARPC EDA Revolving Loan Fund	225,000.00	-	225,000.00
Magnetic Technologies Recruitment	121,000.00	115,080.61	5,919.39
Business Development: Attraction & Expansion	48,000.00	7,729.28	40,270.72
FSU Partnership for Business Intelligence	10,000.00	-	10,000.00
Tallahassee International Airport	528,750.00	528,750.00	-
Workforce Development	100,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00
Business & Workforce Engagement	40,000.00	-	40,000.00
MWSBE Industry Academies and B2B Outreach	10,000.00	1,550.00	8,450.00
Economic Vitality Sponsorships	35,000.00	30,750.00	4,250.00
BRIF Fund Balance* Remaining Balance, Not FY20 Budget	665,000.00	448,496.27	216,503.73
Repayment of Advance Funding	1,000,000.00	-	1,000,000.00
Convention Center Cost Feasibility Study	500,000.00	-	500,000.00
Unallocated to Projects **	550,000.00		550,000.00
Estimated Total Available Funds	4,066,455.00	1,204,252.56	2,862,202.44

**Note: These funds are previously committed funds for company expansions projects.*

***Estimated based on original FY 2020 budget revenue projections*

FY20 Revenue will be significantly less than projected due to COVID-19

The following are items that are to be considered by the IA Board during their next regularly scheduled meeting.

Projects	Amount
(1) Alabama Street Project	250,000
(2) FAMU Stadium Project	10,000,000
Additional Expenses for OEV Renovations (asbestos abatement, FFE, technology needs relating to onboarding with the City IT)	75,000
Competitive Projects Fund and Future Leveraging	
(4) Opportunity Fund	TBD
	<u>10,325,000</u>

Other Considerations Regarding the Convention Center

Convention Center professional fees (\$4-5 million) must be prefunded prior to bonding (over two years) and debt service will be significantly higher in later years due to later bond issuance.

The recommended manner for creating and managing expenditures associated with a COVID Response grant is to create a project from this program and allocate funding from the Unallocated to Projects

estimated balance for FY 2020. This \$550,000 estimated balance results from revenue projections at September 2019 less projected operating expenses and amounts allocated to other capital projects. It is likely that revenue will fall below the initial projection due to business closures, college and university moves to distance learning, and a decline in legislative session and tourism revenue due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Currently, it is estimated that OEV's FY 2020 sales tax revenue will decline by 13-25%, or by \$1,020,000 for the year. This is because OEV only began receiving sales tax revenue in January 2020 and it is anticipated that the actions taken to reduce the spread of COVID-19 will have economic impacts in Leon County through the end of the fiscal year. Projections will be updated as economic information and sales tax deposits from the Florida Department of Revenue are received.

Applications that are approved will be processed for payment according to existing policy from the funds appropriated to the COVID small business assistance grant project.

Each award will require a purchase order, invoice, associated documentation, and proper vendor registration with City of Tallahassee. As such, temporary additional (e.g. re-assigned from a separate department) staff would be requested to assist with processing applications and payment.