Press Releases

Grants to help businesses make up for pandemic-related losses

PROVIDENCE — Rhode Island Governor Gina M. Raimondo this week announced a relief program for restaurants, bars, and other such businesses that have been ordered to close earlier than usual because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Using federal Coronavirus Relief Funds, the Governor authorized the payment of grants to these impacted businesses.

Under the program, the Rhode Island Department of Revenue's Division of Taxation will provide grants to bars and restaurants adversely impacted by COVID-19.

Each such grant will range from a minimum of $2,000 to a maximum of $10,000.

Governor Raimondo developed the relief program to coincide with her Executive Order that will mandate early shutdown for bars and restaurants: Effective on Sunday, November 8, 2020, all restaurants, bars, and certain other facilities must end service at 10:00 p.m. on weeknights and 10:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. (Restaurants may stay open after the new closing hours for take-out and drive-in only.)

The new provisions involving closing hours will remain in effect for two weeks, she said. They are part of a range of measures aimed at limiting the spread of the coronavirus and reducing the rising number of coronavirus cases. "We're not alone. Cases are spiking all over the world," Governor Raimondo said.

The relief program is a recognition that "businesses are really struggling, particularly our smallest businesses," and that the hospitality industry in particular "has been hit hardest all over the world," she said.

The relief program will be paid for through federal funds that have been made available to the states for pandemic relief. The Division of Taxation will soon post an application form that the affected businesses must complete in order to apply for a grant, and will post other details on its website, www.tax.ri.gov

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