Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Announces the First Phase of the Small and Micro Business PPE Access Program

08/11/2020

TRENTON – Governor Murphy today announced the first phase of the New Jersey Small and Micro Business PPE Access Program, designed to ensure that the State's small businesses and non-profits have access to the fairly priced personal protective equipment (PPE) necessary to facilitate safe working conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic. The phase was approved by the NJEDA's Board today, advancing this initial step of a $15 million initiative to address ongoing demand for PPE.

In May 2020, Governor Murphy established the Restart and Recovery Commission and Restart and Recovery Council to guide New Jersey's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Both the Commission and the Council highlighted the need for readily available, reasonably priced, and equitably distributed PPE to accelerate a safe and robust economic recovery. The NJEDA also received input on the PPE Access Program from the Senate Fiscal Strategists Committee.

"Business owners and company leaders have enough on their plates as they navigate operating with new protocols in place to safeguard the health of their customers and staff," **said Governor Murphy.** "We are taking this step to make finding and securing PPE and other safeguarding supplies easier for business owners, so they can focus on rebuilding their businesses and ensuring their future success."

Under the Program's first phase, the State will launch a new website that provides micro and small businesses with the information needed to make easier and better PPE sourcing decision. The website will also offer a vetted list of online retailers that have agreed to verify the quality of the PPE they are selling and offer at least a 10% discount to businesses who enter through the State's website. Online retailers will be vetted on a first-come, first serve basis by the NJEDA, and must agree to certain performance standards for their site (e.g., transparent pricing, high-quality products, etc.). Vetted online retailers will also be eligible to access an NJDEA grant pool of up to $3.5M to support the purchase of PPE that is manufactured in New Jersey or sourced from a small wholesaler based in a historically underserved community.

Assuming the first phase of the program is successful, the NJEDA intends to expand the program with a $11M of support for micro and small businesses PPE purchases. The intent is for this support to flow directly through the vetted online vendors, allowing users to access the grant funds at the time of their online checkout. Through this innovative public-private approach, the State anticipates that it could support more than $45 million in PPE purchases and more than 50,000 small and micro businesses.

"The NJEDA's top priority throughout the COVID-19 pandemic has been helping the smallest of businesses face the unique challenges posed by this public health and economic crisis, including keeping their employees and customers safe," **said NJEDA Chief Executive Officer Tim Sullivan.** "Ensuring sufficient access to quality, affordable PPE is essential to allowing businesses of all sizes to reopen safely."

During March and April, New Jersey saw an unprecedented spike in the demand for PPE, largely driven by the healthcare sector. Today the availability of PPE has improved, but as more parts of the economy reopen and other U.S. States face spikes in COVID-19 cases, demand for PPE to protect employees and customers has surged. The resulting shortages and increased prices disproportionately effect small businesses and organizations and those in historically underserved communities.

"Dependable, convenient access to PPE supplies is a key determinant of our ability to manage the spread of COVID-19 and the viability of any plan to reopen the state's small businesses," **said New Jersey Department of Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli.** "This proactive approach will help to alleviate the burden on business owners of

finding reliable providers so they can focus on getting back to work."

In June the NJEDA issued a Request for Information (RFI) to gather input and suggestions that could help to shape a possible program to ensure small businesses had sufficient access to PPE. Taking this feedback into account, the NJEDA crafted the NJ Small and Micro Business PPE Access Program to ensure access to affordable PPE, help business owners understand the specific safety equipment they need, and support the state's manufacturing sector by encouraging PPE suppliers to manufacture products in New Jersey.

"The NJ Small and Micro Business PPE Access Program will help businesses identify and acquire the safety equipment they need while providing a much-needed boost for New Jersey's manufacturers and smaller wholesalers," **said Tony Coscia, Partner and Executive Committee Member, Windels Marx Lane & Mittendorf, LLP.** "The program will ensure increased efficiency and equity on both the distribution and procurement sides of the PPE equation."

Coscia serves as Co-Chair of Governor Murphy's Restart and Recovery Commission Economics and Fiscal Policy Working Group.

"While we have all faced daunting challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, small business owners and their employees have undoubtedly been hit the hardest. As we take steps toward recovery, it is important that we make sure these businesses are able to reopen and operate safely**," said Senator Paul Sarlo.** "The PPE Access Program is an important tool that will help us achieve these goals by ensuring small businesses are able to get the protective equipment they need to get back to work while keeping their employees and customers safe."

"Access to personal protective equipment, and the cost associated with it, has been one of my biggest concerns since the onset of this pandemic. Our smallest businesses are struggling as it is, and while they work to outfit their employees with PPE they're all too often faced with shipping delays and exorbitant prices, compromising the safety of their employees and further stretching their already tight budgets," **said Senator Teresa Ruiz.** "This marketplace will help to ensure access to masks and other protective equipment by offering quicker turn-around times and more reasonable prices, protecting our businesses, their employees, and their customers. I am glad the NJEDA worked with the legislature and implemented this initiative."

"I applaud the NJEDA for working cooperatively with members of the Senate Fiscal Strategists Committee to help our small businesses and nonprofits secure discounted PPE," **said Senator Troy Singleton.** "As we work to rebuild our economy, continued cooperation amongst all layers of government will be required to achieve the goal of getting New Jersey fully back to work. There is more that needs to be done, but today's announcement is another important and key step towards turning that goal into a reality."

"Small businesses on Main Streets across New Jersey need access to stable supplies of affordable personal protective equipment to ensure the health and safety of their customers and employees**," said Senator Steve Oroho.** "This new program from the NJEDA will help our local mom-and-pop shops to purchase the PPE they need at discounted rates. This will help them to comply with safety protocols that align with CDC guidelines, providing the opportunity to compete and thrive during this unprecedented crisis."

"As co-chair of the Legislative Manufacturing Caucus, I believe that the creation of the NJ Small and Micro Business PPE Access Program is an essential project for the State of New Jersey. Ensuring reliable and affordable access to PPE for the state's smallest businesses and non-profits will allow them to keep their workers and customers safe. The program will also support purchase of PPE from New Jersey-based manufacturers and from underserved communities," **said Senator Linda R. Greenstein, Chair of the Legislative Manufacturing Caucus.** "During the height of the pandemic, we became aware of the lack of access to PPE and the fact that many purchasers were going out of state to buy needed items, leaving New Jersey manufacturers without customers. This program will remedy many of these problems."

"I applaud the NJEDA for taking the initiative to create a program to meet the need for PPE at this time," **said Senator Vin Gopal.** "The NJ PPE Access Program will streamline the process to obtain PPE at fair prices and help businesses stay afloat. Any business that wants to function has to have personal protective equipment to protect not only the consumers but the staff as well. Thank you to the NJEDA for listening to the concerns of the businesses in our state."

Applications for the online retailers to participate in the program are expected to launch as soon as possible. The public facing website, including small business decision-making tools and vetted discounted retailers will follow by early-to-mid September. More information can be found on the State's COVID19.nj.gov website.

To support the expansion of local PPE manufacturing in New Jersey, the NJEDA will provide grant funding to subsidize up to 20% of the purchases of PPE that has been (i) manufactured or assembled in New Jersey or (ii) sources from a wholesaler with less than 25 employees and is located in a historically underserved community

(Opportunity Zone Eligible census tracts). Throughout the pandemic, NJEDA has been working closely with the New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program (NJMEP) to identify and support companies that make or have pivoted to make PPE, many of which could supply New Jersey-made goods to the Program's vetted online vendors.

The NJEDA is setting aside an additional $0.5 million for program development, marketing, administration, and compliance.

To read Governor Murphy's full economic plan, please visit: https://nj.gov/economicplan (https://www.njeda.com/about/Public-Information/Economic-Plan)

.

Governor Phil Murphy

Home (/governor/)

Administration

Governor Phil Murphy (/governor/admin/about/)

Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver (/governor/admin/lt/)

First Lady Tammy Snyder Murphy (/governor/admin/fl/)

Cabinet (/governor/admin/cabinet/)

Boards, Commissions & Authorities (/governor/admin/bca/)

Internship Opportunities (/governor/admin/internship.shtml)

Governor's Residence - Drumthwacket (http://drumthwacket.org/)

Key Initiatives

Economy & Jobs (/governor/initiatives/#Economy)

Education (/governor/initiatives/#Education)

Environment (/governor/initiatives/#Environment)

Health (/governor/initiatives/#Health)

Law & Justice (/governor/initiatives/#Justice)

Transportation (/governor/initiatives/#Transportation)

News & Events

Press Releases (/governor/news/news/562019/approved/news_archive.shtml)

Public Addresses (/governor/news/addresses/)

Executive Orders (//nj.gov/infobank/eo/)

Statements on Legislation (/governor/news/statements/approved/statements_archive.shtml)

Administration Reports (/governor/news/adminreports/approved/archive.shtml)

Transition Reports (/governor/news/reports/approved/reports_archive.shtml)

Press Kits (/governor/news/press/)

Social

Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy/)

Twitter (https://twitter.com/GovMurphy)

Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/)

Snapchat (https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy)

YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice)

Contact Us

Scheduling Requests (/governor/contact/scheduling/)

Contact Us (/governor/contact/all/)

Statewide

NJ Home (//www.nj.gov)

Services A to Z (//www.nj.gov/nj/gov/njgov/alphaserv.html)

Departments/Agencies (//www.nj.gov/nj/gov/deptserv/)

FAQs (//www.nj.gov/faqs/)

Contact Us (//www.nj.gov/nj/feedback.html)

Privacy Notice (//www.nj.gov/nj/privacy.html)

Legal Statement & Disclaimers (//www.nj.gov/nj/legal.html)

Accessibility Statement (//www.nj.gov/nj/accessibility.html)

(//nj.gov/opra/)

(https://my.state.nj.us/openam/UI/Login)

Copyright © State of New Jersey, 1996-2021
Office of Governor PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625
609-292-6000

(https://tech.nj.gov/)