COVID-19 Relief Programs Available for Maryland Restaurants, Artists, and Entertainment Venues

Financial assistance comes from Governor Hogan's latest $250 million relief package

BALTIMORE, MD (November 5, 2020) – As part of Governor Hogan's latest $250 million relief package for those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, new financial assistance is now available to restaurants, independent artists, arts organizations, entertainment venues, and Main Street businesses across the state.

"As we work to recover from the ongoing pandemic, the Governor's 'Maryland Strong: Economic Recovery Initiative' will provide much needed assistance to numerous small businesses that are working to reopen and adapt to the current climate throughout Maryland," said Maryland Commerce Secretary Kelly M. Schulz. "We are hopeful that these new opportunities provide extra financial relief, and we are grateful to our county partners for

helping us reach those businesses that are truly in need."

The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC), an agency of the Maryland Department of Commerce, has received an additional $3 million to reinvest in its Emergency Grant Program, aimed at helping those in the arts community that have experienced losses because of programming, operations, and events that have been modified or canceled. New applications are being accepted until November 13 for impacted county arts agencies, Arts & Entertainment District management entities, arts organizations, and independent artists through the MSAC website.

For restaurants across Maryland, a new grant opportunity is available. The state will distribute a total of $50 million across each county and Baltimore City based on the number of restaurant establishments located in each of the 24 jurisdictions. Restaurants interested in this new grant **must apply through their local jurisdiction**, which will each launch their own relief programs. This direct relief can be used for rent, payroll, and job training; equipment purchases to expand outdoor dining (including tents, heaters, and carts); infrastructure improvements (such as HVAC upgrades and technology for carryout and delivery); personal protective equipment (PPE) and disposable containers and utensils; and more. It is important to note that applicants should check with their jurisdiction on the allowed uses for funds, as final criteria and guidelines will be decided and released by the individual jurisdictions.

The chart below is the funding expected to be allocated throughout the state.

Allegany County	$649,548
Anne Arundel County	$5,019,627
Baltimore City	$6,571,385
Baltimore County	$7,081,047
Calvert County	$646,295
Caroline County	$144,223
Carroll County	$1,201,501
Cecil County	$663,645
Charles County	$1,099,568
Dorchester County	$233,143
Frederick County	$2,052,745
Garrett County	$319,894
Harford County	$1,758,876
Howard County	$2,506,018
Kent County	$238,565
Montgomery County	$8,230,497

Prince George's County	$6,105,099
Queen Anne's County	$443,514
Somerset County	$113,861
St. Mary's County	$779,674
Talbot County	$531,350
Washington County	$1,352,231
Wicomico County	$840,400
Worcester County	$1,417,294

Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO) will receive $2 million through the governor's initiative to to support hometown tourism efforts that promote local restaurants, attractions, and shops. Each local jurisdiction's DMO will receive funds specifically earmarked for marketing purposes, to help drive visitors to local venues and stores. This new funding greatly enhances the annual marketing assistance that Maryland Commerce's Office of Tourism provides directly to the local tourism offices. Additional information is anticipated to be sent out to DMOs early this month.

Lastly, $50 million will be used to fund the remaining applications submitted for the Maryland Small Business COVID-19 Emergency Relief Grant Fund. While new applications are not being accepted for this program, this additional funding will help clear the backlog of approximately 5,000 remaining small business applications submitted in March and April earlier this year. Similarly, an additional $5 million will go towards the Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority (MSBDFA), for COVID-19 relief loans for businesses owned by economically and socially disadvantaged entrepreneurs that applied earlier this summer.

New applications are also being accepted for state programs at our partner state agencies. Both the Maryland Department of Labor and the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development will receive $20 million to reinvest in their coronavirus relief programs. Labor began accepting applications on October 28 for its COVID-19 Layoff Aversion Fund, which is designed to prevent or minimize the duration of unemployment resulting from layoffs. DHCD has launched its webpage with resources for Main Street businesses, entertainment venues, and tourism nonprofit organizations, with more details coming soon.

For more information about financial assistance available to businesses across Maryland, please visit the Maryland Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information for Business webpage housed on the Maryland Business Express.

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