State of Delaware, New Castle County Launch $100M Grant Program for Small Businesses and Nonprofits Statewide

DE Relief Grants will assist Delaware businesses affected by COVID-19

WILMINGTON, Del. – Governor John Carney, New Castle County Executive Matt Meyer and the Delaware Division of Small Business on Wednesday announced grant program of at least $100 million to assist Delaware small businesses and nonprofit organizations affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

The DE Relief Grants program announced on Wednesday is a joint initiative of the State of Delaware and New Castle County, and is funded by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

The program is expected to reach more than 3,000 small businesses and nonprofit organizations with grants of up to $100,000. The Division of Small Business is administering the program and will begin accepting applications in early September at delbiz.com/relief.

> *"Delaware small businesses are the backbone of our economy and they have made considerable sacrifices during the COVID-19 crisis. We owe them our gratitude and support," said **Governor Carney**. "These relief grants will help Delaware small businesses begin the process of recovering and will help make investments necessary to create safer spaces for their customers and staff."*

"Small businesses and nonprofits are facing expensive costs as they retrofit their workplaces," said **New Castle County Executive Matt Meyer**. "We're pleased to be able to join with the State of Delaware in supporting this important program."

DE Relief Grants can be used for:

- Purchasing equipment to make a workplace suitable for COVID-19 safety (such as PPE, plexiglass, air purifiers, etc.)
- Refinancing of debt incurred due to COVID-19 (including State of Delaware HELP loans)
- Advertising efforts undertaken as a result of COVID-19
- Fixed expenses the applicant accrued during COVID-19

"I've seen small businesses across Delaware do some amazing things to adapt and stay afloat under the extraordinary circumstances of the last six months, but so many are hanging by a thread as the pandemic drags on," said **Representative Bill Bush, who chairs the House Economic Development, Banking and Insurance Committee**. "This grant funding represents a lifeline that will help our small business community overcome the next phase of this crisis."

"This is about much more than making up for lost revenue," said **Senator Trey Paradee, chair of the Senate Banking, Business and Insurance Committee.** "It's about helping keep the doors open at the small businesses in Kent County and across the state that provide Delawareans with the paycheck**s** and health care their families are relying on now more than ever. It's about making our businesses safe."

“Delaware small businesses and nonprofits have been remarkably resilient in dealing with this pandemic,” said **Secretary of State Jeff Bullock**. “They are the backbone of Delaware’s economy, and we feel it is imperative that the state continues to support them.”

“Multiple programs are necessary to address the challenges Delaware’s small businesses face,” said **Damian DeStefano, Director of the Division of Small Business**. “We believe this assistance, coupled with other efforts, including the Hospitality Emergency Loan Program (HELP) and the COVID-19 Customer Protection Standards, help make the difference for some of our small businesses.”

The Division of Small Business will begin accepting applications in early September and will follow with funding rounds in early October and November.

“DE Relief Grants are a welcome commitment by the state to help support our small business community and the valuable jobs they offer to so many Delawareans,” said **Carrie Leishman, President & CEO of the Delaware Restaurant Association**. “The effects of the pandemic have and continue to hit the food services industry particularly hard. While no single effort is a panacea, this program will certainly help restaurants as they work to stabilize revenues while protecting the health and safety of customers and employees.”

“Enhanced financial support for small businesses was a key recommendation of the business subcommittee of Governor Carney’s Pandemic Resurgence Advisory Committee, and has been advocated for by the state chamber,” said **Katie Wilkinson, chair of the PRAC Business Subcommittee and Chair of the Board of Directors for the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce**. “These grants can make the difference for the survival of some of our small businesses over the next few months.”

The Division of Small Business’ team of Regional Business Managers is available to help companies prepare their applications. Small businesses can connect with the manager for their part of the state at delbiz.com/contact. For more information on DE Relief Grants, visit delbiz.com/relief.

The size of the relief grant will be based on the business or nonprofit’s 2019 revenue:

- $0-$500,000: Up to $30,000
- $500,000-$1 million: Up to $50,000
- $1 million-$2.5 million: Up to $72,500
- $2.5+ million: Up to $100,000

Anyone with a question about COVID-19, whether related to medical or social service needs, should call Delaware 2-1-1. Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing can text their ZIP code to 898-211. Hours of operation are 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Questions can also be submitted by email at DPHCall@delaware.gov.

DPH will continue to update the public as more information becomes available. For the latest on Delaware’s response, go to de.gov/coronavirus.

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