Gov. Ricketts & State Leaders Launch Applications for Grant Programs to Get Nebraska Growing

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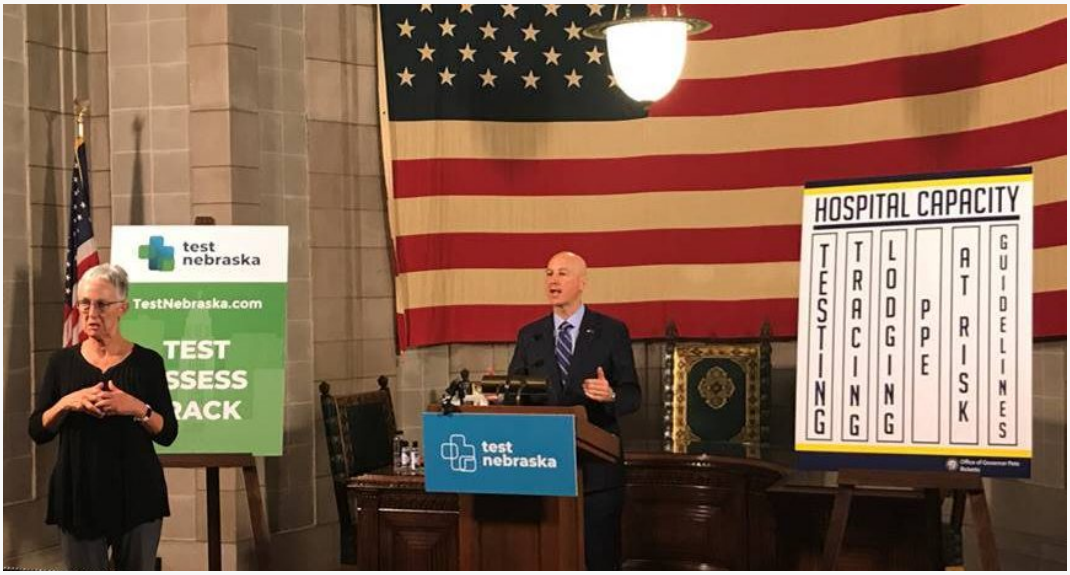

Gov. Ricketts (podium) provides an update on the State's plan to Get Nebraska Growing. Video from today's briefing will be available after 6:00 p.m. by clicking here.

Today, Governor Pete Ricketts and State officials hosted a press conference to provide updates on several new grant programs. Combined, the programs will award $387 million in grants, using federal coronavirus relief dollars, to help get the Nebraska economy growing in the coming weeks and months.

"Our Get Nebraska Growing initiatives are part of $7.8 billion in federal assistance that has come to Nebraska to aid our coronavirus response," said Gov. Ricketts. "These business,

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agriculture, and rural broadband grants will directly address the economic hardships that our state continues to face as we recover from the pandemic."

The new programs will be administered by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) in partnership with the Nebraska Departments of Labor (NDOL) and Agriculture (NDA). Each addresses a specific economic challenge or need created by the coronavirus pandemic.

- The Small Business Stabilization Grant Program will provide grants to small businesses with 5-49 employees who were impacted by the coronavirus and meet certain eligibility requirements. The Livestock Producer Stabilization Grant Program will provide grants to eligible livestock producers with 1-10 employees who have endured revenue or employment loss due to the pandemic. Grants for both programs can be used to cover business operating expenses. The application period for each program will open on June 15th, with applications due on June 26th.
- The Workforce Retraining Initiative will provide funds to all of the State's community colleges for scholarships and workforce training enhancements. In turn, the community colleges will award the scholarships to individuals who are unemployed or underemployed due to coronavirus to prepare them for employment in high-demand career fields. Prospective students can apply for the scholarships online, through Nebraska community college websites, starting on July 10th. Scholarship applications will remain open through the end of July.
- The Nebraska Broadband Grant Program will result in new internet connectivity in communities where work-from-home, tele-education, and telehealth opportunities have been limited due to inadequate or non-existent high-speed internet service. Broadband providers, with the support of local community officials, can apply for the grants from June 22-July 2, 2020.
- The Gallup Back to Business Learning Journey will fund admission to a Gallup-led leadership training course for a total of 75-100 leaders from eligible small businesses. The course promotes skills that will help businesses refocus and thrive following the pandemic. Businesses can apply from June 22-July 2, 2020.

A website has been created with information about these new grant programs, including eligibility requirements, how to apply, application deadlines, and frequently asked questions. The website is located at getnebraskagrowing.nebraska.gov. Additional questions can be directed to DED's Get Nebraska Growing information hotline at 855-264-6858.

"The impact of coronavirus has resulted in dramatically lower market prices for our farmers and ranchers," said NDA Director Steve Wellman. "As they fight through these tough economic times, I hope the stabilization grants will provide some much-needed assistance. I appreciate Governor Ricketts for realizing the importance of the agricultural industry to our state and committing funds to help our producers."

"The Workforce Retraining program will help open up pathways to employment in high-demand careers and industries," said Commissioner of Labor John H. Albin. "This collaboration between NDOL, community colleges, and employers will allow workers to build new skillsets and employers to tap into new labor pools through Registered Apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and other programs."

"These grant programs will address critical areas to help the Nebraska economy get back to being one of the fastest-growing in the nation," said DED Director Anthony L. Goins. "We're listening to the needs of people and communities whose livelihoods have been impacted or

put on hold as a result of the pandemic, and we're going to execute with a real sense of care and urgency to support and aid our fellow Nebraskans."

Full video of today's press briefing will be available after 6:00 p.m. by clicking here.

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