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Coronavirus Update

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PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Awards Nearly $174 Million in Grants to 4,043 Additional Small Businesses for COVID Relief, Increases Capacity Limits for Businesses and Other Activities

Over $450 million in direct financial support has been awarded to 9,900 small businesses; Capacity limits for most sectors increased to 40%

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

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BOSTON — Today, the Baker-Polito Administration announced approximately $173.9 million in awards to 4,043 additional small businesses in the sixth round of COVID relief grants administered by the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation (MGCC). This program is focused on serving businesses that have been most impacted by the pandemic, including restaurants, bars, caterers, personal services and independent retailers.

The Administration also announced that effective Monday, February 8th at 5:00 AM, businesses can operate at 40% capacity. This is an increase from an existing order limiting capacity to 25% for many businesses that expires Monday.

Beginning when the order expires, restaurants and close contact personal services will also be allowed to operate at a 40% capacity limit.

Additionally, the Administration announced that current restrictions limiting gathering sizes to 10 persons indoors and 25 persons outdoors would remain in place for the present time.

All other orders and safety guidance remain in place throughout the Commonwealth as the state continues to fight COVID-19 and vaccination ramps up in all regions.

COVID-19 SMALL BUSINESS GRANT PROGRAMS

To date, the Baker-Polito Administration has awarded more than $450 million in direct financial support to 9,900 small businesses. This funding has been made available through a $668 million business **relief fund** (/news/baker-polito-administration-announces-668-million-small-business-relief-package) set up in December, as well as a

$50.8 million fund for small and diverse businesses included in the **economic recovery package** (/news/baker-polito-administration-announces-partnerships-for-recovery-774-million-economic-recovery) announced in October.

In parallel with the awards announced today, MGCC is engaging with applicants to the Small Business and Sector-Specific Grant Programs that meet sector and demographic priorities but are missing certain documents that are necessary to be considered for an award. Those applicants will be contacted beginning today, February 4th, and MGCC will work with those businesses over the coming weeks to finalize their applications.

SECTOR-SPECIFIC CAPACITY RESTRICTIONS

Effective Monday, February 8th at 5:00 AM, those businesses and other sectors in Massachusetts currently limited to 25% capacity following an across the board capacity reduction on December 26, 2020 will be permitted to increase to a 40% capacity limit. Businesses and activities affected by the adjustment include:

- Arcades and Recreational Businesses
- Driving and Flight Schools
- Gyms/Health Clubs
- Libraries
- Museums
- Retail
- Offices
- Places of Worship
- Lodging (common areas)
- Golf (indoor areas)
- Movie Theaters (no more than 50 people per theater)

In addition, restaurants and close contact personal services will now be allowed to operate at a 40% capacity limit, which reflects an increase from the 25% limit imposed in December. As under the current 25% limit, workers and staff will not count towards the occupancy count for restaurants and close contact personal services.

The Commonwealth remains in Phase 3, Step 1 of the Baker-Polito Administration's reopening plan.

Phase 3, Step 2 businesses, including indoor performance venues and indoor recreation businesses like roller rinks and trampoline parks, remain closed.

GATHERING LIMITS

The current gathering limits, in place since December 26, are being extended. Indoor gatherings and events will remain limited to 10 people. Outdoor gatherings and events will remain limited to 25 people. The gathering limits apply equally to private homes, event venues, and other public spaces.

Click **here** (/doc/covid-19-order-63/download) to read the read the updated gatherings order.

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Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

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Governor Charlie Baker, Lt. Governor Karyn Polito and the Baker-Polito Administration are committed to serving the people of Massachusetts and making the Commonwealth a great place to live, work and raise a family.

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