

Hampton Roads Workforce Council / Greater Peninsula Workforce Board
REGIONAL BUSINESS SERVICES PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

Opportunity for COVID-19 Funding Assistance for Small Business

On March 17, 2020, Governor Northam announced new measures to combat COVID-19 and support impacted Virginians, which includes support for Impacted Employers.

Specifically, the Governor authorized rapid response funding, through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, for employers eligible to remain open during this emergency. Funds may be used to clean facilities and support other related emergency/contingency support needs. This funding is part of federally funded Layoff Aversion Strategies and Activities designed to prevent, or minimize the duration of, unemployment resulting from layoffs due to COVID-19.

Amount of Funding Available: For the greater Hampton Roads region (which includes the Peninsula market) this means **a total of approximately \$289,000** (see individual award amount below) is available for additional business support. *Note: The Governor's Office has allocated this funding to Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) Grant Recipients of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Formula Funds as administered by the two Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB).*

In the interest of wide-scale regional participation and equitable coverage, the two Boards will use this funding to award **individual funding awards of \$2,000 each** to approximately **145 eligible businesses** located in one or more of the **15 City and County jurisdictions** (i.e. including on the Southside, Chesapeake, Franklin, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, Isle of Wight County, Southhampton County, and on the Peninsula, Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson, Williamsburg, Gloucester County, James City County, York County) comprising the Greater Hampton Roads Region.

Business Focus and Eligibility:

- Small businesses (250 or fewer employees) located and doing business in one or more of the 15 Greater Hampton Roads jurisdictions.
- Priority will be given to businesses meeting one or more of the following characteristics:
 - Delivering essential services/goods to the community
 - Still open for business even with reduced hours and/or alternative work arrangements

Type of Activities/Support Eligible for Funding: The focus of this layoff aversion effort is to support small businesses that use innovative strategies to address COVID-19-related effects on small businesses (250 or fewer employees) and workers. For example:

- **Category: Sanitization**
 - A small business needs their employees to be at work, on site, but cannot afford frequent deep cleaning to help prevent potential exposure to COVID-19. Layoff aversion funds could be used to pay for a cleaning/sanitization service.

- **Category: Technology**
 - A small business whose employees use specific software or computer applications asks their employees to work from home/remotely in order to support social distancing and limit potential exposure to COVID-19. Layoff aversion funding could be used to purchase the software/programs that the employee would need to use from home to support their work, **or...**

 - A call center environment needs to have their employees work from home/remotely in order to support social distancing and limit potential exposure to COVID-19. Layoff aversion funding could be used to purchase remote access supplies, including laptop computers and/or smart phones, which the employee would need to use from home to support their work.

- **Category: Other**
 - Because of school closings, a small business has many employees being adversely affected by immediate childcare needs and decides to offer innovative solutions for its employees as a stop-gap measure to keep employees working. Layoff aversion funding could be used to assist with the additional costs of implementing such an interim solution.

 - Some other compelling and measures/actions taken by a small business for the purpose of navigating the COVID-19's effect on business operations and employee retention.

*Note: All costs must have a direct and/or indirect relationship to efforts taken by the business to address COVID-19 related impacts and work-arounds. May **not** be used for the regular costs of doing business; wages/payments to employees; employee fringe benefits and/or perks; special discounting of services/products to customers; etc.*

Business Responsibility (if awarded a \$2,000 grant): Any business receiving an award under this announcement will be required to enter into a signed Memorandum of Agreement with the awarding agency (one of the two regional Workforce Boards) and will be expected to submit clear documentation (i.e. invoices, receipts, etc.) demonstrating any incurred business expenses associated with the activities/support costs described under this award. Please note that all awards/payments under this grant are considered cost-reimbursable and can only be made with proper verification substantiating the amount being submitted for consideration. All qualifying expenses eligible for cost reimbursement must be dated/transacted March 1, 2020 to August 31, 2020.

Request for Funding Consideration - Submission Process:

- Complete the attached quick and easy, one-page form
- Submit form by close of business April 3rd using instructions at the bottom of the form
- Notification of all awards will occur no later than April 10th and published on both Board's websites

Questions about this solicitation may be directed to:

Southside, Hampton Roads Region: Jackie Rondeau, jrondeau@vcwhamptonroads.org, 757-629-4695

Greater Peninsula Region: Diana Cordero, dcordero@vcwpeninsula.com, 757-251-8935