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Contact: Todd Walker at (614) 644-0247
Todd.Walker@development.ohio.gov

Governor, Lt. Governor Announce New Funding Opportunities for Ohio Businesses

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) — Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jon Husted today announced the creation of three programs to help small and medium-sized businesses in Ohio during the coronavirus pandemic.

“Ohio businesses are working hard to reopen responsibly, and these programs can give them a boost,” Governor Mike DeWine said. “The new funding initiatives will help sustain businesses in the short term and position them for growth in the long term.”

Two of the new programs will offer grants to businesses that either manufacture personal protective equipment (PPE) or are owned and operated by minorities or women. The third program will make loans available to businesses in Ohio’s Appalachian region.

“Ohioans have been drivers of innovation throughout our history, and we are working to support them and partner with them so they can continue to succeed, especially in difficult times,” said Lt. Governor Jon Husted.

All three programs will be administered by the Ohio Development Services Agency (Development).

“Our priority is to help Ohio businesses and the people of Ohio. These funds will help businesses weather the current crisis and keep Ohio workers on the job,” Director of Development Lydia Mihalik said.

Ohio PPE Retooling and Reshoring Grant Program

This program will provide awards of up to \$500,000 to small and medium-sized manufacturers so they can repurpose existing facilities to make PPE or reshore PPE production to Ohio. These grants will allow small manufacturers and other entities an opportunity to create new business while contributing to the fight against COVID-19.

Grant funds can be used to offset costs incurred to acquire equipment necessary to manufacture PPE, retool, or construct facilities in Ohio to manufacture PPE (including, but not limited to, building costs, design/engineering costs, facility expansion, complying with FDA requirements) and technological upgrades. Only costs incurred after March 21, 2020, (the date of Governor DeWine’s state of emergency declaration in Ohio due to COVID-19) will be eligible for reimbursement.

The grant program will be funded with \$20 million, and eligible manufacturers may be awarded grants of up to \$500,000 per facility. Up to 20 percent of available funding may be reserved for manufacturers with fewer than 25 employees and registered nonprofits.

Companies must meet program requirements, including:

- The applicant must qualify as a small business as defined by the SBA (typically 500 employees or fewer) or be an established nonprofit.
- The applicant must be able to produce the PPE solely at an Ohio facility owned and operated by applicant.
- The applicant must be one of the following:
 - An existing manufacturer that either has retooled or is planning to retool its facility or otherwise modify its manufacturing operation to produce at least one type of PPE.
 - A new manufacturing operation being established for the purpose of manufacturing at least one type of PPE.
 - A nonprofit corporation that has undertaken or will undertake activities necessary to manufacture at least one type of PPE.

Development will administer the grant program in coordination with the Ohio Department of Administrative Services, the Ohio Department of Health, the Ohio Hospital Association, the Ohio Manufacturers Association, JobsOhio, and the Ohio Manufacturing Extension Partnership.

Ohio Minority Micro-Enterprise Grant Program

The \$5 million program will provide grants to help businesses owned and operated by minorities and women in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Eligible businesses can apply for grants of \$10,000 per business on first-come, first-served basis. This will provide access to much needed capital for up to 500 minority- and women-owned businesses to continue operating now and to prepare for the future.

State-certified Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) and/or women-owned businesses with state certification in the Encouraging Diversity Growth and Equity (EDGE) Program with up to \$500,000 in annual revenue and 10 or fewer employees are eligible. Businesses that have received federal assistance through the federal CARES Act are not be eligible.

Development will administer the grant program.

Appalachian Region Loan Program

This loan program will benefit small businesses in the 32-county Appalachian region of Ohio that have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The initiative would loan \$10 million to Appalachian Growth Capital LLC, which is a U.S. Treasury-certified Community Development Financial Institution serving Appalachian counties in eastern and southern Ohio. Appalachian Growth Capital then would offer low-interest loans to small businesses in the region to help them through the current economic crisis and position them for a stronger future.

The maximum loan amount would be \$500,000, and businesses will have the ability to defer payment for up to six months. Businesses can apply at appcap.org. Development would administer the loan to Appalachian Growth Capital.

Ohio small businesses can learn more about these and other resources available through the Office of Small Business Relief and Development at [Coronavirus.Ohio.Gov/BusinessHelp](https://www.coronavirus.ohio.gov/businesshelp).

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