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Lincoln County wants to ensure that its local businesses have every resource at their disposal during the COVID-19 crisis. We have compiled a list of several resources for businesses to aid them in answering questions about workplace health issues, employees, loans, and more. Please reach out to us with any questions or concerns. We will be updating information as it becomes available.

SBA (Small Business Administration)

Federal Disaster Assistance Loan

SBA Disaster Declaration Approved - Loans Now Available

The U.S. Small Business Administration has just approved Missouri's COVID-19 disaster declaration, meaning assistance is now available for struggling small businesses across the state.

Disaster assistance loans for small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 public health crisis will soon be available to companies in Lincoln County and throughout Missouri, thanks to the emergency declaration and application submitted by Missouri Governor Mike Parson to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

More information about their disaster loan program is online at:

<https://www.sba.gov/disaster-assistance/coronavirus-covid-19#section-header-1>

<https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance>

Economic Injury Disaster Loans & Emergency Economic Injury Grants

These grants provide an emergency advance of up to \$10,000 to small businesses and private non-profits harmed by COVID-19 within three days of applying for an SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL). To access the advance, you first apply for an EIDL and then request the advance. The advance does not need to be repaid under any circumstance, and may be used to keep employees on payroll, to pay for sick leave, meet increased production costs due to supply chain disruptions, or pay business obligations, including debts, rent and mortgage payments.

<https://covid19relief.sba.gov/#/>

The St. Louis District Office for the U.S. Small Business Administration can be reached at 314-539-6600

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act

Paycheck Protection Program

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act allocated \$350 billion to help small businesses keep workers employed amid the pandemic and economic downturn. Known as the Paycheck Protection Program, the initiative provides 100% federally guaranteed loans to small businesses. The program would provide cash-flow assistance through 100 percent federally guaranteed loans to employers who maintain their payroll during this emergency. If employers maintain their payroll, the loans would be forgiven, which would help workers remain employed, as well as help affected small businesses and our economy snap-back quicker after the crisis. PPP has a host of attractive features, such as forgiveness of up to 8 weeks of payroll based on employee retention and salary levels, no SBA fees, and at least six months of deferral with maximum deferrals of up to a year. Small businesses and other eligible entities will be able to apply if they were harmed by COVID-19 between February 15, 2020 and June 30, 2020. This program would be retroactive to February 15, 2020, in order to help bring workers who may have already been laid off back onto payrolls. Loans are available through June 30, 2020.

Am I ELIGIBLE?

You are eligible if you are:

- A small business with fewer than 500 employees
- A small business that otherwise meets the SBA's size standard
- A 501(c)(3) with fewer than 500 employees
- An individual who operates as a sole proprietor
- An individual who operates as an independent contractor
- An individual who is self-employed who regularly carries on any trade or business

How much can I BORROW?

Loans can be up to 2.5 x the borrower's average monthly payroll costs, not to exceed \$10 million.

Will this loan be FORGIVEN?

Borrowers are eligible to have their loans forgiven.

How Much? A borrower is eligible for loan forgiveness equal to the amount the borrower spent on the following items during the 8-week period beginning on the date of the origination of the loan:

- *Payroll costs (using the same definition of payroll costs used to determine loan eligibility)*
- *Interest on the mortgage obligation incurred in the ordinary course of business*
- *Rent on a leasing agreement*
- *Payments on utilities (electricity, gas, water, transportation, telephone, or internet)*
- *For borrowers with tipped employees, additional wages paid to those employees*

The loan forgiveness cannot exceed the principal.

Importantly, these loans may be forgiven if borrowers maintain their payrolls during the crisis or restore their payrolls afterward.

The administration soon will release more details including the list of lenders offering loans under the program.

Questions regarding employees and unemployment benefits

To assist businesses and workers impacted by the public health crisis, Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DOLIR) is adjusting the administration of the state's unemployment insurance program.

The following flexibility measures will be temporarily implemented:

- Relax the work search requirement for COVID-19 related claims
- Waive waiting week for unemployment insurance claims filed due to COVID-19, decreasing processing time
- Waive charging COVID-19 related claims on employers' unemployment insurance accounts, helping employers avoid negative impact on their payroll tax rate

These measures will reduce the process time of claims while still maintaining the due process requirements for both employers and workers. Employers are still notified that a claim has been filed, and they have the opportunity to protest the reason for the claim.

Workers and businesses can find more information and file a claim at www.labor.mo.gov

If you are an employer and need additional information on the following services available through the Missouri Division of Employment Security (DES):

- Filing a Contribution & Wage Report
- Shared Work Program - a lay-off aversion program
- Filing a Mass Claim – Expedite filing multiple claims on behalf of your employees
- Questions regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Unemployment Insurance Benefits

Tax representatives are available to assist employers by phone Monday – Friday from 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM by calling 573-751-1995.

Or to contact a tax representative by email: esemptax@labor.mo.gov

<https://labor.mo.gov/coronavirus>

Additional information for Businesses - Topics:

Health and Safety

CDC Guidance

Plan, Prepare and Respond to Coronavirus Disease

OSHA Guidance

Steps all employers can take to reduce workers' risk of exposure

Cleaning Recommendations for Lodging Establishments

Recommendations for lodging establishments and similar institutions to prevent the spread of disease

<https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/businesses.php>

Local Health Information

As the COVID-19 situation continues to unfold in our region, things seem to be changing daily. As circumstances continue to change, best practice is to log onto the LCHD and the CDC website for the most up to date information.

Lincoln County Health Department - <https://lchdmo.org/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - <https://www.cdc.gov/>