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COUNTY OF ORANGE AWARDED \$700,000 TO SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESSES IMPACTED BY COVID-19

SANTA ANA, Calif. (May 20, 2020) – In partnership with the Orange County Workforce Development Board (OCWDB), the County of Orange will be launching the OCWDB COVID-19 Layoff Aversion Support Program. OCWDB received \$700,000 in Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds from the California Employment Development Division (EDD) to support local small businesses impacted by COVID-19.

“This program allows the County to offer another vital opportunity to local small businesses struggling to continue their operations,” said Chairwoman Michelle Steel, Second District Supervisor. “We are grateful to the State for awarding this funding.”

Through the OCWDB COVID-19 Layoff Aversion Support Program, eligible businesses can receive up to \$10,000 in grant funds. This funding is intended to help local small businesses mitigate layoffs and adhere to “social distancing” provisions established by state and federal public health entities.

“Some businesses will need to modify their operations before they can open their doors in accordance with state and local health orders,” said Vice Chairman Andrew Do, First District Supervisor. “This funding will help small businesses keep their workers employed, and alleviate some of the financial strain they are feeling.”

Businesses will need to submit an application on the Orange County One-Stop Centers website at oconestop.com/covid-19-layoff-aversion-program to be considered for the grant funding. Applications will open beginning May 21, 2020, at 9 a.m. PST and close on May 28, 2020, at 5 p.m. PST or until 170 applications are received, whichever comes first. Eligible applications will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis until all available funds have been committed.

“This program is a lifeline for small businesses and their employees,” said Supervisor Donald Wagner, Third District. “These businesses must be made aware of every opportunity and resource the County can offer.”

To be eligible for this grant funding, businesses must be in Orange County, have a workforce of 500 or fewer employees, and be up to date on Unemployment Insurance (UI) taxes and in good standing with the State of California. Other general criteria employers must meet to be considered for local funding include:

- Priority consideration will be given to Small Businesses located within the Orange County Workforce System (Application will be considered for small businesses operating in the Santa Ana and Anaheim Workforce Systems)



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- May only apply for one-site or location in Orange County
- Only one application may be submitted per organization
- Must pay employees minimum wage or more
- Must use the funds to help avert imminent layoffs or furloughs as a result of the COVID-19 economic crisis
- Must be able to demonstrate a need for layoff aversion support due to the impacts of COVID-19
- Must be able to enter into an agreement with Orange County that includes the conditions outlined in the application
- Must be able to complete quarterly reports for up to one year after the award

“Residents are looking forward to visiting their favorite neighborhood shops again,” said Supervisor Doug Chaffee, Fourth District. “Local small businesses are urged to apply.”

Businesses can visit the [Orange County One-Stop Center website](#) for full details on eligibility requirements for the Layoff Aversion Support Program, including allowable activities and prohibited costs.

“Small businesses are the backbone of our Orange County economy. They help stimulate local economic growth and provide job opportunities within the community,” said Supervisor Lisa Bartlett, Fifth District. “This program helps the County’s local businesses during this critical time while complying with state and federal guidelines.”

For more information on Orange County One-Stop Centers, visit [oconestop.com](#) or call the Economic and Business Recovery Call Center at (714) 480-6500.

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