



Your Chamber In Action

IMPORTANT! – [Federally Mandated Paid Family and Medical Leave](#) (Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)) - As of April 1st, all employers are required to provide two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at the employee's regular rate of pay where the employee is unable to work because the employee is quarantined and/or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis; or two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at two-thirds the employee's regular rate of pay because the employee is unable to work because of a bona fide need to care for an individual subject to quarantine, or care for a child (under 18 years of age) whose school or child care provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19. For more information see the [FAQs](#).

- You are also required to inform your employees of this requirement. If your employees are teleworking, you can email the poster link - [POSTER](#)
- **Small businesses with fewer than 50 employees may qualify for exemption** from the requirement to provide leave due to school closings or child care unavailability if the leave requirements would jeopardize the viability of the business as a going concern. [See Questions 58 and 59 on the FAQs.](#)

Federal Stimulus Package: The CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) was signed into law on March 27th. The CARES Act provides loans, grants, and tax credit programs for eligible businesses. The Act is 335 pages long so there are a lot of details to sift through, however, Senator Ben Cardin provided a great overview of the various programs – [The Small Business Owner's Guide to the CARES Act.](#)

- **Payroll Protection Loan (Potential Grant):** The loan amount is equal to 2.5 times your average monthly payroll through an SBA approved lender. The purpose of this program is to encourage continued employment and the loan may be forgiven if you maintain your full staffing compliment.
 - Current lenders through the Small Business Administration 7(a) are authorized to make determinations on borrower eligibility and creditworthiness without going through the SBA. For eligibility purposes, lenders will not be determining eligibility based on repayment ability, but rather whether the business was operational on February 15, 2020, and had employees for whom it paid salaries and payroll taxes, or a paid independent contractor.
 - The SBA is required to issue implementing regulations within 15 days (from 3/27/20) and the U.S. Department of Treasury will be approving new lenders. There are several GGCC members who are SBA Approved. We will make sure you know who they are.

- **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.

- **Small Business Debt Relief Program:** This program will provide immediate relief to small businesses with non-disaster SBA loans, in particular 7(a), 504, and microloans. Under it, SBA will cover all loan

payments on these SBA loans, including principal, interest, and fees, for six months. This relief will also be available to new borrowers who take out loans within six months of the President signing the bill into law.

Montgomery County Public Health Emergency Grant Program: We are expecting the Montgomery County Council to approve Expedited Bill 16-20 which will create a Public Health Emergency Grant Program. The **DRAFT PROPOSAL** includes a grant program for small local businesses and nonprofits with 100 or fewer full-time employees for up to \$75,000, and a small micro-grant for \$2,500 to cover expenses associated with employee teleworking. Once the bill is approved it will take some time to get the infrastructure in place to process application. Please stay tuned for the final package, eligibility, and instructions to apply.

Support Local Restaurants: See the list of [Gaithersburg](#) and [Germantown](#) restaurants that continue to provide take out or delivery.

Please let me know if you have any questions, concerns, ideas. We're all in this together.

Marilyn

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