

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lee County extends LeeCARES Business Rehire and Individual/Family Assistance programs deadline to Monday

Fort Myers, FL, Sept. 18, 2020 – Lee County is extending the application deadline for its LeeCARES Business Rehire and Individual/Family Assistance to 5 p.m. Monday, Sept. 21. The original deadline was to be at 5 p.m. today, Friday, Sept. 18.

The county extended it because of a known issue with Microsoft in its U.S. East region that created intermittent outages and affected people's ability to apply. The LeeCARES portal is now functioning properly, and people will be able to continue to apply this afternoon and throughout the weekend. The county's call center will remain open until 5 p.m. today and will reopen at 8 a.m. Monday.

Although Monday will be the final day for the business and individual assistance programs, it will be the launch of a new Lee Board of County Commissioners LeeCARES program. The county designed the new program to help non-profit human service agencies in Lee County address unanticipated programmatic and operational expenses incurred in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The new grant program for 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(19) human service agencies will provide up to \$50,000 of one-time grant assistance for expenses incurred in the agencies' response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligible agencies may also apply for grants for planned response actions.

Eligible expenses may include program enhancements to address increased service needs from county residents due to COVID-19 including legal services, temporary shelter and computer and technology equipment. Eligible expenses may also include the purchase and/or reimbursement of personal protective equipment, personnel costs, facility retrofit expenditures and other unanticipated administrative expenses directly related to COVID-19.

The total amount of available funding is \$10 million.

Next week the county also will continue its distribution of Personal Protective Equipment for businesses:

- Tuesday, Sept. 22, through Thursday, Sept. 24, at the North Fort Myers Recreation Center, 2000 North Recreation Park Way
- Sept. 29 to Oct. 1 at Estero Recreation Center, 9200 Corkscrew Palms Blvd.

No advance registration is necessary. County staff will ask the person representing the business for the business name, address and EIN number (Employer Identification Number). Only businesses with Lee County addresses will be eligible to receive PPE. Earlier this week, staff distributed PPE to businesses from a site at Veterans Park in Lehigh Acres.

The LeeCARES programs are funded through the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund through the \$150 billion Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES). Lee County received \$134,459,744.

Visit www.LeeFLcares.com for additional information about programs.

Application instructions also are available in Spanish by calling 239-533-2273 (or 239-LEE-CARES); applicants without internet access can also call the number. Hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

Find updates about the county's response to coronavirus at www.leegov.com/COVID-19.