

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**LeeCARES Business Rehire program begins July 6**

Fort Myers, FL, July 2, 2020 – Businesses have an opportunity to apply for help through the LeeCARES Business Rehire grant program beginning at noon Monday, July 6.

Assistance is available to eligible businesses (and some nonprofits; see below) that are rehiring employees laid off or furloughed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Grants of \$5,000 are available for each full-time employee (or FTE equivalent) rehired. Funds can only be used for operating expenses not covered by other resources. Businesses receiving the federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) may be eligible if their covered loan period has expired.

Businesses must have 250 or fewer employees, and the business owner must be a Lee County resident.

The program will:

- Provide grant funding to eligible small businesses for rehiring full-time equivalent (FTE) positions that were on the payroll as of March 1, 2020. Eligible positions must be rehired on or after July 6, 2020.
- Provide grants of \$5,000 per full-time equivalent positions rehired, up to \$10,000 for businesses with 10 or fewer employees or up to \$20,000 for larger qualified businesses with fewer than 250 employees. Note: all 501(c)3 and 501(c)19 organizations are eligible.
- Allows grants to be used for operating expenses not covered by other resources, including working capital, professional services or employee training.
- \$2,000 of each job grant may be accessed once the FTE position is back on the payroll on July 6 or afterwards. The other \$3,000 of each job grant may be accessed once the FTE position has been retained for 60 days.

Applications and additional eligibility requirements will be available online at [www.LeeFLCares.com](http://www.LeeFLCares.com) or by appointment by calling 239-533-2273.

The Business Rehire program is part of the Lee Board of County Commissioners plans to allocate about \$134.5 million from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The funding includes:

- \$45 million to Human Services programs including the Individual Assistance
- \$25 million to Business Relaunch and Rehire programs and PPE.
- \$23,950,000 for Public Safety and Medial expenses, including contact tracing, EMS transport, quarantine housing, etc.
- \$20 million for Governmental COVID-19 direct expenses for Lee County and Constitutional Offices, including PPE, facility safety, public education and messaging, data collection, elections, telework, etc.
- \$20.5 million for general reserves for COVID-19 costs.

A dashboard that shows assistance statistics is available at [www.LeeFLcares.com/transparency](http://www.LeeFLcares.com/transparency).

Visit [www.LeeFLcares.com](http://www.LeeFLcares.com) for additional information about all available 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. Please note, county offices are closed Friday, July 3, for Independence Day weekend.

Updates about the county's response to coronavirus can be found at [www.leegov.com/COVID-19](http://www.leegov.com/COVID-19).