



Matt Smith
County Manager
www.dakotacounty.us

Mary Beth Schubert
Director of Communications
651-438-8179

Scott Wentz
Communications Specialist
651-438-4244

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Mary Beth Schubert, marybeth.schubert@co.dakota.mn.us

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Dakota County provides \$10 million in COVID-19 relief to small businesses *Grants up to \$10,000 available for eligible applicants*

The Dakota County Board of Commissioners has approved the Small Business Relief Grant program to provide \$10 million from the county's allocation of federal CARES Act funds to assist small businesses that have suffered financially due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Grants of up to \$10,000 will help businesses cover payroll, rent, mortgage payments, utility bills and other operational expenses since March 1, 2020.

"Small businesses are the threads that keep our communities connected and provide important jobs and resources for residents," said Dakota County Board Chair Mike Slavik. "Through this program, we hope to stabilize businesses hit hardest during temporary closures and business changes as a result of COVID-19."

The county is partnering with the Dakota County Community Development Agency (CDA) and program administrator NextStage to provide the small-business grants.

"I encourage all businesses who may be eligible for these grants to apply," said Commissioner Chris Gerlach, who also serves as CDA board chair. "We know our businesses have suffered tremendously, and every job we can save means more economic security for all us during these challenging times."

To qualify, businesses must:

- Be able to demonstrate financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Employ the equivalent of 50 or fewer full-time workers.
- Be a private for-profit business that has a permanent physical location in Dakota County.
- Be majority-owned by a permanent Minnesota resident.
- Be in good standing with the Minnesota Secretary of State and Minnesota Department of Revenue as of March 1, 2020.
- Be in good standing with Dakota County and the city where the business is located.

The online application will be available Monday, July 27. The application deadline is 4:30 p.m. Friday, Aug. 14. Only one application needs to be submitted per business. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. If the number of applications exceeds available funding, a randomized selection process will be used.

A business that has applied for the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development grant program should also apply to the Dakota County program in case they aren't selected in the state process.

For complete grant information, visit: www.dakotacda.org. For questions, call 651-675-4481 or email smallbusiness@dakotacda.state.mn.us.

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