



Illinois governor files for administration loans for small businesses

SPRINGFIELD (WGEM) — The Illinois governor, JB Pritzker, announced that his administration will file for statewide eligibility in a federal loan program for small businesses facing hard times financially.

The governor said in a statement: “I have directed my administration to do everything in our power to support our working families, and we are also working expeditiously to mitigate the challenges small businesses are facing. My Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity has secured the necessary documentation to declare a statewide Economic Injury Declaration with the U.S. Small Business Association. The SBA is offering coronavirus disaster assistance loans to help impacted companies get through this period of instability, and this will ensure that all of our counties qualify for assistance.”

These low-interest loans offer up to \$2 million in assistance to eligible small businesses or to non-profit organizations that apply.

These loans can be used to help pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that cannot be paid due to the impact of COVID-19.

According to the Small Business Administration: Up to a maximum of 30 years, loans are available with long-term repayments to keep payments affordable.

The Office of the Governor also offered additional economic assistance:

- **UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE:** Individuals without access to paid sick leave or unable to work due to COVID-19 can apply for unemployment insurance under the administration’s expansion. The governor’s executive order waives the 7-day waiting period for residents to apply for unemployment benefits, meaning anyone who qualifies can file and become immediately eligible instead of experiencing a week-long lag during this challenging time. Gov. Pritzker is working with the federal delegation and congressional leadership to push the Trump administration to allow the state to increase the length of benefits beyond 26 weeks, as this crisis continues to provide significant fiscal challenges for Illinois families.

- **UTILITY RELIEF:** Gov. Pritzker and Attorney General Raoul have urged the Illinois Commerce Commission to immediately institute a moratorium on shutoffs for all utility companies across Illinois - including energy, telecommunications and water - until the state disaster proclamation has been lifted. The administration is also requesting changes to payment and collection policies to ensure Illinoisans aren’t saddled with utility debt as a result of COVID-19. Several have announced plans to maintain services and waive late payment fees.
- **FOOD ACCESS:** The Pritzker administration is working directly with the eight major food banks across Illinois to expand services. The administration is reaching out to food manufacturers to ensure food banks are prioritized and can provide our vulnerable residents with the food they need. ISBE obtained a waiver from the federal government to continue distributing meals to all children who qualify for free and reduced lunch. The Governor is also encouraging schools to expand their meal distribution program to all children under 18 or to any student enrolled in an Illinois school, regardless of their age.
- **MEDICAID WAIVER:** The administration is in the process of filing a federal waiver to expand Medicaid coverage, beginning work on the waiver application as soon as the federal government declared a national emergency and activated the Stafford Act. If the federal waiver is approved, the state will be able to expand Medicaid services through the addition of new medical providers, increased access across the state and ramped up services to many of the state’s most vulnerable populations.

There is a statewide COVID-19 hotline and website from The Illinois Department of Public Health to help answer any questions you might have or to report a suspected case: call **1-800-889-3931** or visit **IDPH.illinois.gov**.

Source: WGEM Staff

<https://wgem.com/2020/03/17/illinois-governor-files-for-administration-loans-for-small-businesses/>

To find out more about SBA Disaster Loans, visit: **<https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/information/index>**.