

News Release
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\$500,000 State Grant Supports Service Industry Companies Affected By COVID-19

NORTHWEST LOWER, MI – A \$500,000 Michigan Strategic Fund Grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) will support grants to businesses in the 10 counties of Northwest Lower Michigan affected by Governor Whitmer's Executive Order 2020-09. That order was issued March 16, 2020 and placed temporary restrictions on the use of places of public accommodation.

The Northwest Small Business Relief Fund Collaborative consists of [NetworksNorthwest](#), [Northern LakesEconomic Alliance](#), [Northwest Michigan Works!](#), [Traverse Connect](#), [Alliance for Economic Success](#), and [Manistee Area Economic Development](#).

Grants up to \$10,000 will be awarded to private companies impacted by Executive Order 2020-09 throughout Northwest Lower Michigan. Due to the significant number of businesses that will be impacted and limited resources available under this program, Northwest Small Business Relief Fund Collaborative will be looking to prioritize businesses previously financially viable and now at risk of closure or unable to pay working capital expenses (i.e. rent, payroll, etc.) without immediate support. With very limited funds, grants will likely range from \$5,000 to \$10,000. In addition, up to \$10 million in small business loans are available through the Michigan Economic Development Organization (MEDC).

Small Business Relief Program: Grants

Eligible businesses include:

A company in an industry outlined in [ExecutiveOrder 2020-20](#), or any subsequent Executive Order of similar intent ("EO"), or demonstrates it is otherwise affected by the COVID-19 outbreak, that meets one or more of the following:

- Provides support to impacted employees, is located in a downtown district or high impact corridor or has 50 employees or less, or is a company that provides services to companies outlined in the EO and requires additional employees to support companies or employees impacted by EO;
- The company had 50 employees or less as of March 16, 2020 ;

- The company needs working capital to support payroll expenses, rent, mortgage payments, utility expenses or other similar expenses that occur in the ordinary course of business; and
- The company is able to demonstrate an income loss as a result of the EO, or the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The company needs to demonstrate that it was profitable prior to March 16, 2020.

The grants received must be used for working capital to support payroll expenses, rent, mortgage payments, utility expenses, or other similar expenses that occur in the ordinary course of business.

Small Business Relief Program: Loans

Eligible businesses include:

- The company is an industry outlined in [ExecutiveOrder 2020-20](#), or demonstrates it is otherwise affected by the COVID-19 outbreak, or is a company that provides goods and services to companies to the aforementioned;
- The company has fewer than 100 employees as of March 16, 2020;
- The company needs working capital to support payroll expenses, rent, mortgage payments, utility expenses, or other similar expenses that occur in the ordinary course of business;
- The company can demonstrate that it is unable to access credit through alternative sources;
- The company can demonstrate an income loss as a result of Executive Order 2020-20.
- The company needs to demonstrate that it was profitable prior to March 16, 2020.

The loans received may be used for working capital to support payroll expenses, rent, mortgage payments, utility expenses, or other similar expenses that occur in the ordinary course of business.

Matt McCauley, CEO of Networks Northwest stated, "The economic and social disruption associated with the COVID-19 outbreak is having significant effects on businesses in Northwest Michigan. This grant and loan program will contribute to our region's economic resiliency and eventual recovery. This program will likely provide upwards of one million dollars to businesses in this region as a means to support households and communities alike."

We encourage your organization to help spread the word about this opportunity to businesses that would qualify. The application window will open on Friday, March 27 and close on Friday, April 3, 2020 at noon EST. The review process will begin April 7, and all decisions regarding grants will be announced by April 8, 2020. **Businesses interested in applying can do so here:** www.networksnorthwest.org/grants

Businesses that qualify for a small business loan will have their applications submitted to the MEDC for further review.

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NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by e-mailing Dan Boss at dan.boss@networksnorthwest.org and stating preferences for resolution (300 dpi?), file format (.tif? .jpg?) and file size (1MB or less?). Or, phone (231) 929-5047. Check our online Media Room at: networksnorthwest.org/media

Founded in 1974, Networks Northwest facilitates and manages various programs and services for the 10 county region. These programs include Northwest Michigan Works, Small Business Development Center, Procurement Technical Assistance Center, various business services, and many different regional planning initiatives in response to our communities' requests and needs. You will see the broad spectrum of workforce, business and community services Networks Northwest offers if you visit our web site, networksnorthwest.org

Networks Northwest's member counties are: Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.

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