

CITY OF RENTON FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City of Renton increases support to small businesses

City expands offerings from Startup 425 and adds assistance from Business Impact NW

RENTON, WA – The City of Renton has increased its support of local businesses through a re-focused partnership with Startup 425.

“Since the start of the pandemic we’ve implemented several initiatives to help our local businesses,” said Cliff Long, Renton’s director of economic development. “This expansion of our relationship with Startup 425 will provide even more valuable free resources.”

Startup 425 is a collaborative effort of five Eastside cities--Renton, Bellevue, Kirkland, Issaquah and Redmond—to connect small business owners, non-profits and sole proprietors with support resources. Renton has worked with Startup 425 since 2016.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Startup 425 has rebranded itself as [\(re\)Startup 425](#) and is providing free support to small businesses, non-profits, sole-proprietors, contractors, artists, gig workers, "essential" businesses and recently laid-off workers. The business response team support includes one-on-one help with financial assistance programs, a calendar of relevant webinars and other resources, and a map identifying Renton restaurants and cafés open for carry-out.

The cities have also contracted with Business Impact NW to add staff to (re)Startup 425’s business response team. This additional support will provide more free one-on-one consultations to help businesses and will assist in:

- Identifying and applying for city, state, federal and private economic relief programs
- Completing grant and loan applications
- Helping non-English speaking applicants through an interpretation service

Renton is using business support money from the Port of Seattle to fund these services.

“We’re in a new and ever-changing business model,” said Long, “and it’s incumbent on the city to provide all the support we can to our small businesses.”

Since the start of the pandemic, the city has been working with local business to provide additional business outreach, including:

- Assignment of three economic development staff members to conduct regular contact with businesses to help with their needs.
- Assistance with access to federal [CARES Act](#) resources.

- Dedicated small business hotline and email address.
- Online [resources guide](#).
- [Facebook discussions](#) designed to share resources and information in real time.
- “[Renton Business Minute](#),” an opportunity for businesses to tell their story via video on the city’s social media channels and publications.
- Deferral of [B&O, utility and gambling tax returns](#) due March 31, 2020 through May 31, 2020 until June 30, 2020.
- Waiver of A-frame and signage fees to make it easier for businesses with customer pick-up services.
- Issuance of [Emergency Order #2020-2](#) suspending the city’s late night vehicle noise ordinance allowing deliveries to businesses involved in retail, grocery, pharmaceutical and food.

About the City of Renton

The City of Renton, Washington, with a population of 104,700 (2019), is located on the southeast shore of Lake Washington, just south of Seattle. Renton's strong economic base, diverse marketplace and favorable business climate have attracted the attention of nationally recognized companies that are providing employees and their families an outstanding quality of life. Renton is the home of Boeing, PACCAR, IKEA, the Seattle Seahawks, and the eternal resting place of Jimi Hendrix. More information can be found on our [website](#), [news releases](#), or [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Nextdoor](#) sites.

About Startup 425

[Startup 425](#) is a collaborative of five cities on Seattle’s Eastside (Bellevue, Kirkland, Issaquah, Redmond, and Renton) dedicated to supporting and promoting small business and entrepreneurship. The program has expanded to add business assistance in response to COVID-19.

About Business Impact NW

[Business Impact NW](#) is a non-profit Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) dedicated to serving under-banked entrepreneurs. They provide coaching, classes and access to capital to community small businesses, with an emphasis on working with traditionally underserved populations – entrepreneurial low/moderate income earners, women, people of color, veterans, immigrants or members of the LGBTQ community. They have been serving the community since 1997.

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