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County of Orange Awarded Over \$3 Million to Support Underserved Small Businesses Impacted by COVID-19

SANTA ANA, Calif. (February 7, 2022) – Awarded by the California Office of the Small Business Advocate (CalOSBA), the Orange County Workforce Development Board (OCWDB) has received \$3,975,481 in California Microbusiness COVID-19 Relief Grant Program funding to support underserved microbusinesses and entrepreneurs impacted by COVID-19.

“This grant opens doors for some of the hardest to reach business owners who are typically confronted with obstacles preventing them from receiving funding, and this award can make a difference in helping them succeed,” said Chairman Doug Chaffee, Fourth District Supervisor.

The County will provide payments of \$2,500 to microbusinesses and entrepreneurs facing barriers to accessing capital including businesses owned by women, minorities, veterans, individuals without documentation, individuals with limited English proficiency, and business owners located in low wealth communities.

“Many businesses are still suffering from COVID-19 impacts, and this funding is an example of how we are continuing to find and provide opportunities supporting our community,” said Vice Chairman Don Wagner, Third District Supervisor.

To be eligible, microbusinesses must meet the following requirements:

- The microbusiness began its operation prior to December 31, 2019.
- The microbusiness is currently active and operating or has a clear plan to reopen when the state permits reopening of the business.
- The microbusiness was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The microbusiness had less than fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in gross revenues in the 2019 taxable year.
- The microbusiness currently has fewer than five full-time equivalent employees and had fewer than five full-time equivalent employees in the 2019 and 2020 taxable years.
- The microbusiness is not a business excluded from participation in the California Small Business COVID-19 Relief Grant Program, as specified in paragraph (2) of subdivision (f) of Section 12100.82.

“Orange County’s small business owners and entrepreneurs are the backbone of our economy,” said Supervisor Andrew Do, First District. “Supporting small businesses is central to our county’s



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recovery. The grant program will help alleviate some of the costs associated with new equipment, permits, debt and so much more.”

If awarded, microbusinesses can use the funding for the purchase of new equipment; investment in working capital; application for, or renewal of, a local permit; payment of business debt built up during the COVID-19 pandemic; or costs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and related health and safety restrictions, or business interruptions or closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The culture and quality of life in Orange County would not be the same without our microbusinesses and entrepreneurs, and it is important we meet their needs with the resources the County has available,” said Supervisor Katrina Foley, Second District.

Interested microbusiness owners can apply at conestop.com/grant-relief-programs beginning February 14, 2022, at 9 a.m. For questions about the program or assistance submitting an application, call the Orange County Business and Economic Recovery Call Center at (714) 480-6500. Microbusiness owners who do not have access to a computer or internet may contact the Call Center mentioned or visit OC Public Libraries, Garden Grove Workforce Solutions Center, or the [Mobile Unit](#). Applications will be reviewed for eligibility, and submission does not guarantee receipt of payment.

“Entrepreneurs and microbusinesses bring tremendous value to our community. They create pathways for many Orange County residents, whether it be job opportunities or development skills,” said Supervisor Lisa Bartlett, Fifth District.

The County of Orange would like to thank the following Orange County community partners: Orange County Workforce Development Board (OCWDB), U.S. Small Business Administration, Orange County Small Business Development Center, SCORE, Orange County Public Libraries, City of Garden Grove, City of Irvine, City of Laguna Niguel, City of Mission Viejo, City of Rancho Santa Margarita, City of Santa Ana, La Habra Area Chamber of Commerce, Orange Chamber of Commerce, and San Clemente Chamber of Commerce.

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The Orange County Workforce Development Board, through the Orange County Business Service Center and Orange County Workforce Solutions, offers comprehensive services such as hiring assistance, career transition services, and employment services to businesses and job seekers at no cost.

This WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. If you need special assistance to participate in this program, please call 949-341-8000. TDD/TTY users, please call the California Relay Service at (800) 735-2922 or 711. Please call 48 hours in advance to allow Orange County Workforce Solutions to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this program.