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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Grant Funds Available to Businesses, Nonprofits Affected by Pandemic

The Minnesota Legislature Dec. 14 voted to pass a relief package aimed at helping businesses and workers that were most adversely affected by the recent executive order pause on many in-person services.

Part of that package is \$112 million that will be directed through county governments to help struggling businesses and nonprofits. Anoka County was allocated just under \$7 million for grants, and this funding is now available to qualifying businesses of all sizes and 501c3/501c6 nonprofits.

To apply for funding through the Anoka County Business and Nonprofit Relief grant program, go to anokacountysuccess.org. An application will be available on this site beginning in early January. When the starting date for the application period begins, Anoka County will distribute a news release and post this information on the county's website, anokacounty.us.

Businesses or nonprofits applying for this funding must meet several criteria, including having a physical location in Anoka County, having incurred a financial hardship due to COVID-19, and they must be in good standing with the Minnesota Secretary of State. The full list of requirements can be found on the application.

COVID-19-impacted freelance or organized musicians or performing artists in Minnesota who work or reside in Anoka County are also eligible to apply for these grants, as are area chambers of commerce.

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Applications will be reviewed on a first-come basis, with all applications being processed by March 15, 2021. Priority will be given to applicants that were impacted by Executive Order 20-99 and applicants that did not receive a CARES Act grant. Anoka County will contact businesses or nonprofits with any questions on their applications or to notify them of approval.

As additional relief to businesses, the Anoka County Board of Commissioners Dec. 22 approved a temporary extension of business license renewals for food, beverage and lodging establishments that have been affected by COVID-19. Currently, unpaid license fees that are due Dec. 31, 2020, are now due March 31, 2020. This extension will allow businesses time to receive grant funding from the state and apply for county grants so they have resources to pay their license fees.

“The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have an unprecedented impact on businesses, especially those in the food and hospitality sectors,” said Scott Schulte, chair, Anoka County Board of Commissioners. “Thankfully, this new funding from the Legislature can help bridge the gap in the short term for struggling businesses and nonprofits, and the recent action by the board allows businesses more time to pay their license fees.”

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