



County Of Dane
Office Of The County Executive

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Dane County Announces \$4 Million for Small Businesses Most Impacted by COVID-19 Pandemic

Grants Available up to \$50,000 for Local Small Businesses Under Partnership Between Dane County and Dane Buy Local

Today, Dane County Executive Joe Parisi joined Dane Buy Local's Executive Director Colin Murray to announce \$4 million in new funding to continue their Small Business Pandemic Support Grant Program partnership. This new round of funding will focus on businesses hardest hit by 2020's fall COVID-19 surge and subsequent public health orders to keep hospitals from reaching capacity. With this \$4 million, Dane County and Dane Buy Local hope to help more local businesses survive the economic hardships the COVID-19 pandemic has brought as the community waits for more support from the federal government.

"Local businesses are pivotal to the overall health of our economy and play a key role in our community's identity and culture," said Dane County Executive Joe Parisi. "So many of our local businesses are struggling to hang on as we wait for more assistance from the federal government. This \$4 million in new funding will help more of our local businesses stay afloat in the months to come. We are eager to get this funding out the door to our local businesses and thank Dane Buy Local for their continued partnership in this program."

Funds will be targeted to businesses that were especially hard hit during the pandemic, including restaurants, retail stores, independent contractors, start-up businesses (in operation prior to March 15th of 2020), the service industry, gyms, fitness facilities, and studios for yoga, dance, ballet, Pilates, etc. Applications from other businesses will be considered based on need.

Businesses will be able to apply for grants up to \$50,000. Funding allocations will be based on request and the needs of the business for the next three months of expenses. To be eligible, businesses must be independently owned, local businesses with their main office in Dane County. Funding must be used for COVID-19 related expenses (rent, payroll, utilities, etc.) or business development opportunities to save or pivot the business.

"With winter now upon us as the pandemic marches forward, local businesses find themselves in an even more precarious position in trying to remain open," said Colin Murray, Executive Director of Dane Buy Local. "Dane Buy Local is honored to again work with Dane County to administer this second round of grants. After the initial round, numerous business owners expressed gratefulness and said that without it they may not have survived. As their struggle continues, this additional round will surely be key in saving them."

Dane Buy Local will administer the new round of grants and will have information about the County's grant program on its website www.danebuylocal.com in the coming days. There, business owners will be able to learn more about the program and fill out the application to apply.

Dane County's Small Business Pandemic Support Grant Program was first announced in April and started out at \$250,000, before later being increased to \$800,000. In May, Dane County announced it would add \$10 million to the grant program through CARES funding to help even more local businesses make ends meet. In total, the program helped about 2,700 local businesses with an average grant amount of \$4,000 per business.

A resolution to add \$4 million to the Small Business Support Grant Program will be introduced at Thursday's County Board meeting. It is expected to be approved in the coming weeks.

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