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Gov. Lee Announces Expanded Small Business Relief; New Relief Programs for Agriculture, Tourism, and Workforce Development

Nashville, Tenn. – Tennessee Governor Bill Lee and the Financial Stimulus Accountability Group announced today new and expanded financial relief programs for small businesses, agribusinesses, displaced workers, and the tourism industry through the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF). The Tennessee Small Business Relief Program will expand to include additional industries adversely impacted by reductions in commercial activity in April, with \$83.5 million added to the program’s initial \$200 million allotment.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has placed enormous strain on businesses and industries of all types,” said Gov. Lee. “We’ll continue to distribute federal resources prudently to address the pressing needs of Tennessee businesses to get our economy back on track.”

Expansion of Tennessee Small Business Relief Program - \$83,517,500

The Tennessee Small Business Relief Program will expand to include additional businesses provided they have less than \$10 million in annual gross sales and fall within an industry impacted by executive order limitations on activities, gatherings, and other non-essential businesses and activities; or a retail industry that experienced a 25% reduction in taxable sales in the month of April due to the public health emergency.

In addition to the [original list](#) of eligible businesses, below are the categories of small businesses that will be eligible under this expansion:

- Caterers, Mobile Food Services, and Food Service Contractors
- Wedding and Event Planners
- Convention and Trade Show Organizers
- Wedding and Banquet Hall and Similar Property Rental
- Linen Supply Services
- Photography Studios
- Travel Agencies and Travel Arrangement Services
- Car, Truck, Trailer, and RV Rental
- Sightseeing and Tour Operators
- Taxi, Limousine, Bus, and Other Transportation Services
- Recreational Vehicle and Vacation Camps
- Sports and Recreation Instruction
- Fine Arts Instruction, Exam Prep, Driving Schools, and Other Similar Instruction
- Motion Picture and Video Production and Distribution Services
- Music Production, Distribution, and Publishing Services
- Sound Recording Studios

The expansion list will also include, among others, the following businesses that are now eligible if their sales were reduced by at least 25%, as shown on their April sales tax returns (filed in May):

- Florists
- Party and Banquet Equipment and Other Supply Rental
- Formal Wear and Costume Rental
- Consumer Electronics and Appliances Rental
- General Rental Centers and Other Consumer Goods Rental
- Gasoline Stations and Convenience Stores
- Warehouse Clubs and General Merchandise Stores
- Home Centers, Hardware Stores, and Paint Stores
- Household Appliance and Electronics Stores
- Nurseries, Garden Centers, and Outdoor Power Equipment Stores
- Pharmacies and Drug Stores
- Optical Goods Stores
- Cosmetics, Beauty Supply, and Perfume Stores
- Supermarkets and Other Grocery Stores
- Baked Goods and Other Specialty Food Stores
- Beer, Wine, and Liquor Stores
- Food Supplement Stores
- Vending Machine Operators
- New and Used Car Dealers
- Recreational Vehicle, Boat, and Other Vehicle Dealers
- Automotive Parts and Accessories Stores
- Tire Dealers

- Online Stores (selling from a Tennessee location)
- Other Direct Selling Establishments

A full list of and instructions for eligible businesses will be available from the Tennessee Department of Revenue.

Agriculture and Forestry Economic Relief - \$50 million

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture will establish an economic support program for agricultural businesses and forestry businesses to help ensure stability of the food supply chain and agribusiness economy. The department will accept applications for funding between August 17 through August 31 to make grant awards the week of September 14.

Tourism Industry Recovery Support - \$25 million

The Tennessee Department of Tourist Development will utilize \$25,000,000 from the CRF to remarket and support the State's tourism industry recovery from the public health emergency. Of the total funding, \$15,000,000 will be directly designated for destination marketing organizations (DMOs) in all 95 counties.

Workforce Development - \$9.5 million

Tennessee will allocate \$7.5 million to two established workforce development programs: Reemployment Service and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program Expansion and Career and Training Services, and \$2 million to the Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Virtual American Jobs Center. These funds will provide reemployment services to a proposed 17,000 participants to return them to gainful, sustainable employment.

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