

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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County Executive Shapiro and Council Authorize Funds for Additional Small Business Grants, Akron-Canton Airport

SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO—In response to continued community need, Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro and County Council have authorized an additional \$5 million in federal CARES Act funding to be sent to the Greater Akron Chamber of Commerce for the COVID-19 Small Business Emergency Relief Grant Program. Established at the onset of the pandemic, the program previously provided \$7.6 million in grants to 1,889 small business.

“It has become clear that the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic will likely be with us for some time, leaving many of our small businesses with uncertain futures,” said Executive Shapiro. “This grant program has already made a difference for thousands of Summit County businesses. The additional funding will make a difference for many more and will hopefully relieve some uncertainty.”

Grant awards will be based on the number of employees; \$7,500 for 11-30, \$5,000 for 2-less than 11, \$2,500 for less than 2. Businesses that did not previously receive a grant will receive priority scoring in this round. As in previous rounds, an eligible small business must be for-profit enterprises with its principal place of business located in Summit County and at least 50% of employees must be residents of Summit County. Complete eligibility requirements and the application can be found at <https://gaccovid19.org/grantprogram/>.

Executive Shapiro and County Council also authorized legislation to aid the Akron-Canton Airport (CAK). According to Ren Camacho, President and CEO, the airport has been significantly impacted by COVID-19, with passenger numbers reduced as much as 95% of pre-pandemic levels. To help offset these losses, the County will provide CAK with a \$450,000 rebate payment for the Sheriff’s police contract.

The County will also contribute a \$50,000 match to the Commercial Air Service Restoration Program. The JobsOhio program will help CAK reestablish air service to one of the markets lost due to the pandemic. In order to receive \$1 million from the program, CAK must obtain a \$200,000

community match. Summit County joined other public and private entities to provide the matching funds.

“The Akron-Canton Airport is an economic gateway for Summit County, bringing both jobs and commerce. Like other businesses, it experienced substantial loss and a major shift in the way they do business, but it is now on a path toward recovery,” said Executive Shapiro. “The financial assistance provided by Summit County will benefit the airport as well as the residents and businesses of the Akron-Canton community that rely on their services.”

Businesses may apply for a COVID-19 Small Business Emergency Relief Grant at <https://gaccovid19.org/grantprogram/> from September 23 at 12 p.m. to October 7 at 9 a.m. The Greater Akron Chamber will announce awardees by October 30.

Program guidelines, eligibility criteria, frequently asked questions and links to the application can be found at www.gaccovid19.org/grantprogram. Inquiries about the program not outlined there can be directed to covidgrant@greaterakronchamber.org.

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