

# News Release



**Ilene Shapiro – Summit County Executive**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Date: October 26, 2020**

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## **County Executive, Council Providing Payroll Support to University, Akron and Barberton Police Departments**

**SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO**—On Monday, October 26, 2020, Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro and County Council approved COVID-19 Local Government Payroll Support Grant funds for the University of Akron (UA), City of Akron and City of Barberton police departments. The funds will be used to cover payroll expenses of police officers deemed substantially dedicated to the COVID-19 response. Utilizing federal CARES Act funding, the County is granting \$2 million to the University of Akron and \$3.5 million for Akron and Barberton.

“Our local communities have done their best to weather the economic downturn caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, but concerns about maintaining essential services remain,” said Executive Shapiro. “Summit County has provided direct financial support and technical support to our local governments since March. We will continue to offer assistance, as we are able, to our hardest hit communities for critical services like public safety and public health.”

The COVID-19 Local Government Payroll Support Grant Program was created in June to provide local political subdivisions with funding to support COVID-19 response related activities conducted by public safety and public health employees. The program has provided over \$26 million in federal CARES Act funds to the County’s 31 local communities and the Sheriff’s Office to help offset COVID-19 costs. The economic consequences brought by the virus and necessary state mandates have intensified existing challenges for the University, Akron and Barberton. Each faced economic and budget stress prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Our police officers are on the frontlines of this pandemic and serve an important role in maintaining health and safety for our students and staff, and the residential neighborhoods we patrol. The funding from Summit County will ensure there is no disruption to the level of service our officers provide,” said UA President Gary L. Miller. “Executive Shapiro and her team have been a strong source of support since the pandemic started and we are grateful for their leadership and their partnership.”

Like cities around the country, Akron and Barberton have also experienced increased rates of violent crime, gun violence and gun related activity since the start of the pandemic. According to Executive Shapiro, the additional funds will ensure both police departments are able to maintain policing services during the pandemic. The funds offer similar support to the University of Akron Police Department, which patrols the residential neighborhoods that surround the University and plays an integral role in keeping the students who live in those neighborhoods safe.

In addition to the investment of CARES Act funds, the County is also investing \$650,000 of County funds towards an intergovernmental grant agreement with the Summit County Prosecutor's Office. The Executive's Office is providing these funds to hire additional prosecutors to address gun-related crimes.

"Our public safety operations play a key role in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Maintaining these operations benefits the health and safety of every resident in Summit County," said Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh.

In the first round of payroll support for local government public safety and public health employees, Akron received \$8 million and Barberton received \$742,000. The University did not previously receive funds.

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