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GOVERNOR ANDREW M. CUOMO

**GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCES \$3.5 BILLION IN ASSISTANCE FOR RENTERS
AND SMALL BUSINESSES**

***\$2.7 Billion Rental Assistance Program to Provide Funding for Eligible
Households Experiencing Financial Hardship; Online Applications
Accepted Starting June 1***

***\$800 Million Small Business Recovery Grant Program to Provide Funding to
Small Businesses to Help Them Recover From the Economic Impact of the
Pandemic; Online Applications Accepted Starting June 10***

***Phase Two of the Reimagine, Rebuild, Renew Campaign Will Launch Tuesday,
May 25 to Make Small Businesses and Residents Aware of the Many Relief and
Recovery Programs Available***

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced \$3.5 billion in assistance for renters and small businesses experiencing financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The rental assistance program makes up to \$2.7 billion in emergency rental assistance available for struggling New Yorkers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Applications for the program will be accepted starting June 1 for eligible New Yorkers who are behind on their rent and have suffered financial hardship due to COVID-19. Administered by the state Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, the New York State Emergency Rental Assistance Program will provide assistance with up to 12 months of past-due rent, 3 months of prospective rental assistance and 12 months of utility arrears payments to eligible New Yorkers, regardless of immigration status. The program is expected to serve between 170,000 and 200,000 households.

The small business recovery grant program makes up to \$800 million in funding available for small businesses to help them recover from the economic impact of the pandemic. Applications for the program will be accepted starting June 10 for small and micro businesses and small for-profit independent arts and cultural organizations to help them recover from the economic impact of the pandemic. Flexible grants up to \$50,000 will be made available to eligible small businesses and can be used for operating expenses, including payroll, rent or mortgage payments, taxes, utilities, personal protective equipment, or other business expenses incurred during the pandemic. Over

330,000 small and micro businesses are potentially eligible for this program, including 57 percent of the State's certified MWBEs.

Governor Cuomo also announced that starting Tuesday, May 25, phase two of the [Reimagine, Rebuild, Renew campaign](#) will launch to make small businesses and residents who have been financially impacted by the pandemic aware of the many relief and recovery programs that are available in New York State. Print ads will run in local community newspapers across the state and social media ads will be featured on Facebook and LinkedIn with additional digital video ads advertised across the internet.

"New Yorkers and small businesses in every corner of the State were devastated by the pandemic, and as we continue to recover and rebuild we need to make sure they have the resources they need get back on their feet and succeed in a new, reimagined economy," **Governor Cuomo said.** "This critical funding will help ensure New Yorkers who are experiencing financial hardship through no fault of their own will not be thrown onto the streets, while also providing stability for small businesses so they can help play a role in New York's economic resurgence."

Rental Assistance Program

The rental assistance program will assist households behind on their rent and that have experienced financial hardship, that are at risk of homelessness or housing instability and that earn at or below 80 percent of area median income.

During the first 30 days, the program will prioritize the unemployed, those with income at or below 50 percent of area median income and other vulnerable populations. After the first 30 days, applications will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis, as long as funds remain available. For more information, applicants and landlords should visit otda.ny.gov/erap.

Once approved, eligible households will receive up to 12 months of past due rent. Those eligible could also receive up to 3 months of additional rental assistance, if the household spends 30 percent or more of its gross monthly income on rent. The program also will provide up to 12 months of utility arrears for eligible applicants.

In addition to fiscal relief, ERAP will provide significant tenant protections. In order to receive assistance, the landlord must agree to waive any late fees due on past-due rent; and not increase the tenant's monthly rent or evict them for one year, except in limited circumstances.

The program is funded by \$2.6 billion in federal resources and \$100 million of state funding and is structured to help the state and the local governments that received funds directly from the federal government to collaborate and coordinate their efforts, thereby leveraging resources, gaining efficiencies and preventing fraud.

OTDA is organizing an unprecedented effort to establish partnerships with local governments across the state to ensure that community-based organizations will

provide outreach and direct application assistance in multiple languages to potential recipients. This effort will mobilize substantial resources in order to ensure tenants from all across the state are aware of ERAP and able to apply.

In addition, the agency will undertake fraud prevention efforts to identify unreported income and to prevent duplicate rental payments.

Seven communities that received funding for emergency rental assistance directly from the federal government opted to administer their own programs. Residents of the City of Rochester and Monroe County, the City of Yonkers, Onondaga County and the towns of Hempstead, Islip and Oyster Bay must apply with their local programs for emergency rental assistance and are ineligible for assistance from the state-administered Emergency Rental Assistance Program. The \$2.7 billion program includes the \$168 million provided directly to these localities.

Small Business Recovery Grant Program

The small business recovery grant program will provide funding to small and micro businesses and small for-profit independent arts and cultural organizations to help them recover from the economic impact of the pandemic, with priority being given to socially and economically disadvantaged business owners, including minority- and women-owned business enterprises, service-disabled veteran-owned businesses and veteran-owned businesses, and businesses located in economically distressed communities.

Grants will be for a minimum award of \$5,000 and a maximum award of \$50,000 and will be calculated based on a New York State business' annual gross receipts for 2019. Reimbursable COVID-19 related expenses must have been incurred between March 1, 2020 and April 1, 2021 and can include:

- Payroll costs
- Commercial rent or mortgage payments for NYS-based property
- Payment of local property or school taxes
- Insurance costs
- Utility costs
- Costs of personal protection equipment (PPE) necessary to protect worker and consumer health and safety
- Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) costs
- Other machinery or equipment costs
- Supplies and materials necessary for compliance with COVID-19 health and safety protocols

ESD has created a website -[NYSBusinessRecovery.ny.gov](https://www.nysbusinessrecovery.ny.gov) - to highlight the various resources available to support small businesses seeking pandemic relief. The website will be continuously updated as more details and funding information as it becomes available.

The ESD Board of Directors approved \$10 million in technical assistance grants for New York's statewide Entrepreneurship Assistance Centers and Small Business Development Centers to help small businesses and for-profit independent arts and cultural organizations secure COVID-related financial assistance and grants available through existing state and federal programs.

This network of service providers will work directly with small businesses, guiding them through available funding sources and helping them navigate the application process. Recognizing that pandemic-induced economic hardship has disproportionately affected micro and small businesses, and that application processes can be difficult to navigate - especially due to a language barrier - the partners will use these funds to hire or contract more staff for one-on-one, direct counseling services. Education materials and applications will be offered in 12 languages in addition to English. This support, along with increased technical assistance staffing, will position these providers to better assist businesses and organizations in applying for funding through the New York State's COVID-19 Pandemic Small Business Recovery Grant Program, the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, or any other available federal economic recovery program, catalyzing our state and local economies as more businesses and communities reopen.