

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### SMALL BUSINESS GRANT PROGRAM LAUNCHED

Richland County, Ohio – The Richland Area Chamber & Economic Development today announced they are collaborating with Richland County and the City of Mansfield to launch a small business grant program to assist area businesses impacted by COVID-19. At the current time, there is \$250,000 to be distributed to businesses throughout Richland County and \$250,000 to businesses within the City of Mansfield. Additional funds may be added in the future.

Eligible businesses must have 20 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees or less, have \$1,500,000 or less in revenues in 2019, have been in operation prior to September 1, 2019, and be a for-profit business. Businesses with no employees other than the owner are allowed to apply, but it must be the primary source of income for this owner. The maximum grant amounts are \$7,500 for businesses with 2-20 FTE's and \$2,500 for businesses with less than 2 FTE's. Other eligibility requirements as well as a full outline of the Grant Guidelines can be found on the Chamber's website at [www.richlandareachamber.com](http://www.richlandareachamber.com).

"We are pleased to partner with Richland County and the City of Mansfield on this important program," said Jodie A. Perry, Chamber President & CEO. "Small businesses are bearing the brunt of this crisis and the ongoing impacts, to be able to offer a program like this is essential to their survival. I appreciate the leadership at the County and the City for bringing this together."

Applications will be taken online through the Chamber's website starting at 9:00am on Wednesday, September 2<sup>nd</sup> through 11:59pm on Sunday, September 13, 2020. After that the Chamber's Grant Underwriting Committee will score them and make announcements on September 28<sup>th</sup>.

The Chamber expects a large volume of applications to the program and is having discussions with other entities about contributing additional funds to the program. Perry encourages all eligible businesses to apply. If additional monies become available, the Chamber will use the list of businesses from this round of applications to make additional awards.

"The Commissioners have heard from small businesses all over the County about the challenges they are facing in this environment and we know how important they are to our economy," said County

Commissioner Marilyn John. “We felt it was extremely important that some of the CARES money that was received by the County be used to assist our small businesses. We thank the Chamber for their willingness to partner with us to bring this program to life.”

Two online informational sessions are scheduled – on Thursday, September 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00am and Friday, September 4<sup>th</sup> at Noon. The sessions are free but require a registration, visit the Chamber’s website to sign up.

“Our small businesses are the lifeblood of Mansfield, and we know that many are struggling because of the pandemic,” said Mansfield Mayor Tim Theaker. “I’m proud that the City will be able to provide support for this program and ensure more businesses can be helped.”

Applications must be submitted by 11:59pm on Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020. For more information regarding the Richland County/Mansfield Small Business Relief Grant, visit the Richland Area Chamber & Economic Development website at [www.richlandareachamber.com](http://www.richlandareachamber.com) or call their office at 419-522-3211.

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