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Lee Commissioners approve expanded LeeCARES programs

Fort Myers, FL, June 16, 2020 – The Lee Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday approved a plan to allocate federal CARES Act dollars for Phase 2 of its LeeCARES Business Assistance, Food Security, and Individuals & Families assistance programs.

Lee County's COVID-19 Business Assistance Program for Job Creation (Business Rehire).

The program:

- provides grant funding to small businesses for rehiring full-time equivalent (FTE) positions that were on the payroll as of March 1, 2020. Eligible positions must rehired on or after July 6, 2020.
- Grants of \$5,000 per full-time equivalent positions rehired, up to \$10,000 for businesses with 10 or fewer employees or up to \$20,000 for larger qualified businesses with fewer than 250 employees; 501(c)3 and 501(c)19 organizations are eligible.
- Grants may be used for operating expenses not covered by other resources, including working capital, professional services, employee training.
- Businesses receiving Payroll Protection Program funding are not eligible.
- The program will go live on July 6. Applications will be available online at LeeFLCares.com or by appointment.

In addition, the Board approved Phase 2 for the Individuals & Families Assistance program, establishing a sliding scale for income limits to assist families based on size of the families. The annual income limits are:

- Families of four or fewer - \$55,100
- Families of five - \$59,550
- Families of six - \$63,950
- Families of seven - \$68,350
- Families of eight - \$72,750

Applications for individual assistance may be submitted online at LeeFLCares.com or at 239-533-2273.

In addition, programs utilizing funds from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act have resulted in:

- Individual Assistance Program – More than 6,400 applications; \$5.1 million approved.
- Business Relaunch Program – More than 2,300 applications' \$4.48 million approved.
- PPE Distribution program – More than 1,400 approved, about 1.2 million items distributed.
- Child Care Support – 63 provider locations; more being added. More than 300 scholarships approved.

The Board approved plans to allocate the balance of about \$134.5 in CARES Act funding, including:

- \$45 million to Human Services programs including the Individual Assistance
- \$25 million to Business Relaunch and Rehire programs and PPE.
- \$23,950,000 for Public Safety and Medical expenses, including contact tracing, EMS transport, quarantine housing, etc.
- \$20 million for Governmental COVID-19 direct expenses for Lee County and Constitutional Offices, including PPE, facility safety, public education and messaging, data collection, elections, telework, etc.

- \$20.5 million for general reserves for COVID-19 costs.

For updates and further information, visit www.LeeFLCARES.com or www.leegov.com/covid-19.