



DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

Hawai'i small businesses to get \$25 million in grants to adjust to COVID-19-related marketplace changes

State of Hawai'i and Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i launch Business Pivot Grant program

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HONOLULU – The State of Hawai'i, in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i, today announced the launch of the Hawai'i Business Pivot Grant program. The grants will distribute \$25M in financial and training support to struggling small businesses in Hawai'i to help them adjust to marketplace changes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The program will provide approximately 2,500 small businesses with reimbursement grants to cover expenses up to \$10,000 that they incurred implementing changes to their operations, products and services.

“Small businesses are the backbone of our state’s economy, and I’ve seen the determination and creativity these businesses have demonstrated as they pivoted from one way of working, to doing business in a completely different way,” said

Gov. David Ige. “Companies that can pivot successfully will not only survive but thrive. This grant takes some of the pressure off these businesses and helps them to find new ways to operate in a drastically different environment.”

Funded by federal CARES Act appropriations, the program provides qualifying businesses reimbursement for eligible expenses incurred since March 20, 2020, including investing in e-commerce, reconfiguring workspaces, adding safety equipment and implementing new business processes.

The grant application period starts on October 22, 2020 and will remain open until November 23, 2020, as funds are available. The Chamber of Commerce Hawai‘i will administer the program.

“Small businesses employ tens of thousands of people in our state and have been among the hardest hit since the start of the pandemic,” said Sherry Menor-McNamara, president and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawai‘i. “We hope these grants will not only provide relief to these businesses but allow them to reimagine new approaches to add to resilience to their businesses.”

In addition to the grant reimbursement, the Chamber of Commerce Hawai‘i will offer technical assistance to companies through workshops, training, and consultant resources as they adjust their operations. The Chamber will also provide an online marketplace for companies to access products and services to support operational changes, and these costs will be eligible for reimbursement under the grant program.

Overview of eligibility requirements

To qualify for the grant, businesses and non-profits must meet the following criteria:

- Be registered in the State of Hawai‘i and have fewer than 100 employees;
- Operate in a physical commercial space in Hawai‘i; home-based businesses are not eligible;
- Have suffered economic injury due to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Been in business prior to March 20, 2020.

Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses for reimbursement may include the following, if they were related to pivoting operations or processes:

- Web development, design, social media and e-commerce
- Consulting services
- Professional services related to pivoting your business
- Related equipment and supplies
- Physical distancing measures (expenses incurred after Oct.1)

More details on the program, including frequently asked questions and the application for the Hawai'i Business Pivot Grant, are available at

www.HawaiiBizPivot.org

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