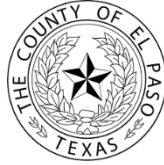


# EL PASO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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## El Paso County Shares Resources for Small Businesses in the Wake of Stay Home Work Safe Order

*Economic Development Department continues to help businesses identify ways to mitigate impact of Covid-19*

**April 27, 2020, EL PASO, TX:** The County has issued a Stay Home, Work Safe order which continues to be in effect. The Economic Development Department is aware that in these uncertain times local businesses are looking for answers to help them understand how Covid-19 will impact them.

Here is a list of resources which may help business understand and plan for the impact of the virus:

### U.S. Department of Commerce

- Congress awarded \$1.5 billion to the Economic Development Administration to support economic development grants for states and communities suffering economic injury as a result of the coronavirus.
- Was also awarded \$300 million to provide direct financial assistance to all manner of fishers, fishery participants, and communities that have been affected by the coronavirus. Guidance to apply for this assistance will be forthcoming from the U.S. Department of Commerce - <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/noaa-fisheries-coronavirus-covid-19-update>

### Small Business Administration

- Congress awarded the SBA \$17 billion for small business debt relief, and as such would require the SBA to pay all principal, interest, and fees on all existing SBA loan products, including 7(a), Community Advantage, 504, and Microloan programs, for six months to provide relief to small businesses negatively affected by COVID-19. Guidance on available SBA programs is available at: <https://www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources>
- **Economic Injury Disaster Loans:** At the request of Governor Greg Abbott, the Small Business Administration (SBA) issued an Economic Injury Disaster Declaration on March 20, 2020 for all 254 Texas Counties in response to COVID-19 for the provision of Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) to businesses and private non-profits in affected communities. Information on how to apply is available at: <https://www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources>
  - Emergency loans up to \$10,000 within 3 days

- The CARES Act established several new temporary SBA programs to address the COVID-19 outbreak, among them are:
  - **Paycheck Protection Program** –This loan program provides loan forgiveness for retaining employees by temporarily expanding the traditional SBA 7(a) loan program. <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirusrelief-options/paycheck-protection-program-ppp>
  - **SBA Express Bridge Loans** –Enables small businesses who currently have a business relationship with an SBA Express Lender to access up to \$25,000 quickly. <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirusrelief-options/sba-express-bridge-loans>

The Office of the Governor has compiled a comprehensive list of resources and important Covid-19 updates. You can also sign up to receive email updates for business. <https://gov.texas.gov/coronavirus>

The Texas Department of Insurance has created a page to guide and update the industry on Covid-19 related matters. <https://www.tdi.texas.gov/news/2020/coronavirus-updates.html>

The Texas Department of Agriculture has created a website to give the public Covid-19 updates on school meals, rural hospitals, licensing and more. <https://www.texasagriculture.gov/NewsEvents/COVID19CoronavirusResponsePage.aspx>

They have also compiled a Covid-19 resource guide available [here](#).

El Paso Electric has suspended service disconnections for nonpayment although regular billing will continue for all customers. They have also made some operational changes in response to Covid-19. <https://www.epelectric.com/message-to-customers>

Texas Gas Service has temporarily suspended service disconnections due to nonpayment through May 15, 2020. <https://www.texasgasservice.com/coronavirus>

El Paso Water suspended service disconnections for non-payment on March 18, 2020 for at least 60 days. <https://www.epwater.org/cms/one.aspx?portalId=6843488&pageId=16553772>

The Paso del Norte Health Foundation, in partnership with United Way of El Paso, has created an El Paso Covid-19 Response Fund. The fund is available to nonprofit organizations serving vulnerable populations in the community. <https://pdfoundation.org/give-to-a-fund/covid-19-response-fund>

The local Workforce Solutions office is prepared to respond to workers who have been laid off or dislocated. They are also prepared to provide employers with services if they are going to lay off large groups of people so that they are entered quickly into the system, or to assist employers who want to temporarily hire groups of workers who have recently been displaced. They can be reached

at 915.887.2600 and online at [www.borderplexjobs.com](http://www.borderplexjobs.com).

The Small Business Development Center is available to meet by phone or online. To review the advising services available to small businesses, visit <https://elpasosbdc.net>.

[The El Paso County Economic Development Department](#) administers programs which seek to enhance the business operating climate and promote heritage tourism throughout El Paso County. These efforts serve to enhance the quality of life for all residents.

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