

Funds Available to Help Fairfax Businesses Recover from Covid-19

County Creates Second Grant Program To Help Local Small Businesses And Nonprofits Pivot From The Pandemic

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors voted today to create a new grant program to support businesses adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The [grant program is called "PIVOT"](#) and it will provide grants to local businesses in the hotel, food service, retail and services, and arts and culture industries. PIVOT will use \$25 million provided through the Federal American Rescue Plan Act to provide targeted assistance to the most hard-hit sectors of the Fairfax County economy. The goal of the program is to help those businesses continue their recovery by providing needed capital for ongoing operations and to sustain business sectors.

"Fairfax County is committed to helping businesses recover from the effects of the pandemic. Through the PIVOT grant we will help those businesses who saw the greatest financial impact regain their momentum so they will be able to thrive in the reopening marketplace," said Board of Supervisor Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay. "It also directs recovery towards sectors that employ disproportionately higher numbers of low income and minority workers, making it all more important that we target recovery efforts to these communities who have been hardest hit."

In early 2021, Fairfax County and the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority commissioned an [Economic Recovery Framework](#) study that illustrated that the county lost an estimated 48,200 jobs (through December 2020) and employment losses were heavily concentrated in food service, hospitality, and retail sectors. The study provided a "road map" that highlighted opportunities to create a just and resilient recovery through specific steps and programming. A small business grant program was one of the recommendations. Using this data, PIVOT will target businesses in the retail, food service, hospitality/lodging and arts sectors.

Research shows customer-facing businesses – such as retailers, hotels, and restaurants – are the most vulnerable to closures and losses in revenues because of the pandemic. In the Washington D.C. Metro area, 45% of small businesses have closed either temporarily or permanently, and for those that remain open, small business revenue is down nearly 55%. Restaurants and retailers are particularly at-risk; over half of closures across the country in these categories at the end of August were permanent. Notably, the accommodation and food services; retail and other services; and arts and entertainment sectors accounted for approximately 50 percent of total job losses in Fairfax County in 2020. According to an Americans for the Arts COVID-19 impact survey, arts organizations and artists in Fairfax had cancelled 98% of their events and 43% reported that an inability to make payroll is a major financial obstacle.

"Through PIVOT, Fairfax County will strategically invest to support businesses adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic to help them make the turn towards prosperity," said Dranesville District Supervisor John Foust.

The [Latino Economic Development Center \(LEDC\)](#) has been identified as the grant administrator of the program and is experienced in supporting small businesses and non-profits across many economic sectors. They are also experienced in administering large-scale grant programs and providing technical assistance and capital financing to businesses and non-profits.

The grant application process is expected to start by early July. Funds will be disbursed via four programs:

- Lodging;
- Food service and food trucks;
- Retail, services, and amusements;
- Arts organizations, museums and historical sites

Businesses must be located in Fairfax County, including the Cities of Clifton, Herndon and Vienna and have a commercial storefront (no online only or home-based businesses will be eligible for awards). Businesses must be open or temporarily closed, planning to reopen by August 2021 and have a valid [Business and Professional License \(BPOL\)](#). Grant award amounts, eligibility criteria and other requirements, will be available on the Fairfax County website.

Since March 2020, Fairfax County has developed a number of programs designed to support various members of the business community, the non-profit community, and its workforce. These include the COVID-19 Recovery Microloan Fund; the RISE Grant Program; the Social Safety Net Nonprofit Sustainability Grant Program, Emergency Rental Assistance Program; and the administration of vaccines.

More information on the PIVOT program can be found at [FairfaxCounty.gov/Economic-Initiatives/Pivot](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/Economic-Initiatives/Pivot)

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/economic-initiatives/pivot>

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/taxes/business/understanding-bpol-tax>