



3/23/2020

MEMORANDUM

DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS

Business / Small Business Outreach

TO: Members of the West Branch Community Development Group (CDG)

FROM: Redmond Jones II, City Administrator

Many of you are aware that Governor Kim Reynolds has declared a State of Emergency in response to the confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the state. I want to be clear that this is not a sign to panic. However, declaring an emergency has prompted the State and Federal Government to institute the following measures aimed at assisting businesses during this difficult times:

- The United States Small Business Administration (SBA) – Issued a Disaster Declaration for the entire State of Iowa. The action allows Iowa small businesses negatively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic to apply for low-interest support loans through SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program. This program can provide up to \$2m (two million dollars) in loans at very low interest rates for terms up to 30 years.

State based Disaster Assistance for small businesses. The Governor's Office has developed a three-prong plan developed by the Iowa Economic Development Authority, Iowa Department of Revenue, and the Iowa Workforce Development Department to create what will be known as the Iowa Business Relief Program. The one-stop shop program will focus efforts in the following measures:

- The Iowa Economic Development Authority will be making funding available for small grants to employers with 2 to 25 employees and these grants will range from \$5,000 to \$25,000. Business are also encouraged to complete the survey @ iowa.businessrecovery.com; Iowa business owners have been sharing needs that help prepare the government's response during this event.
- The Iowa Department of Revenue will automatically extend the sales and withholding tax deadline for any business that receives a grant. The department will also consider an extension for any business that applies for a grant.
- Iowa Workforce Development will allow businesses with fewer than 50 employees to delay their unemployment tax payments for the first quarter until July 31st.

It is hoped that these actions will provide some much-needed relief for struggling small businesses as well as some help with cash flow issues. Small business only need to show it has experience disruption due to the pandemic, have 2 to 25 employees before the March 17th. To be eligible for tax deferral of sales and use, or withholding taxes must only show business disruption. The first application deadline is

March 31st at noon. As a personal message on behalf of the City of West Branch I would like to extend a special acknowledgement to our local restaurants, solons, barber shops, tattoo shops, and chiropractic therapy businesses for their leadership and compliance in these difficult times. Governor Reynolds has stated that this is a critical time for our state, but she has faith in Iowans and their ability to be responsible for their own health and the health of their fellow Iowans.

I believe we can achieve this by adopting strategies of social distancing. This protects us and our most vulnerable citizens. As a reminder, it is critical that if you are not feeling well, you should stay at home and avoid public places. If you find yourself in this situation, the Iowa Public Health Department instructs those who become ill (from anything) to stay at home. Additionally, you should stay at home 3 days beyond experiencing your any symptoms. For those who need to make purchases, when possible please buy local. As a reminder our carry-out, drive-through, and delivery services are still available with many of our local businesses and citizens are encouraged to use these services if offered.

Further information will be communicated on the city's website: westbranchiowa.org or the City of West Branch Facebook Page.