

# News Release



**Ilene Shapiro – Summit County Executive**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Contact:** Greta Johnson  
Director of Communications & Assistant Chief of Staff  
Office of Executive Shapiro  
[gjohnson@summitoh.net](mailto:gjohnson@summitoh.net)  
330-643-2656

## **County Provides \$5 Million to 1279 Small Businesses with Final Grant Funds; State Offering Additional Grant Opportunities**

**SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO**—In the final round of COVID-19 Small Business Emergency Relief Grant funding, Summit County and the Greater Akron Chamber awarded more than \$5 million to 1,279 local small businesses. Utilizing federal CARES Act funding, Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro and County Council, working with the Chamber, have now provided over \$12 million in grants to 3,058 small businesses. The County’s program was one of the first of its kind in the nation and has been used as a model by other counties and communities.

“When we first launched this program in March, we had \$1.5 million and were able to provide relief to a few hundred businesses. After receiving our CARES Act funds and realizing the severity of our economic outlook, we quickly scaled up this program to meet the needs of our small businesses,” said Executive Shapiro. “While I am proud of what we achieved, I know many small businesses are still hurting. My team and I will continue to advocate for more state and federal funding for our community’s small businesses.”

To be eligible for a grant, the small business had to be a for-profit enterprise with its principal place of business located in Summit County, with at least 50% of employees residing in the County. Grant awards were commensurate with the number of employees at the business. Small businesses that did not previously receive a County-funded grant received priority in the final round.

Since launching the program, the County and Chamber reviewed over 4,000 applications; 1,154 applicants applied for funding for a business with fewer than 2 employees; 3,351 applicants applied for funding for a business with greater than 2 employees but fewer than 30. Of the 2,164 businesses identifying as a disadvantaged business, 73% were eligible for a grant, and all eligible disadvantaged businesses were awarded a grant. Additionally, all eligible Women Business Enterprises, Minority Business Enterprises and Black Owned Businesses received a grant. The average grant size for all businesses is \$4,139.

“The leadership shown by Executive Shapiro and her team made the difference for thousands of Summit County businesses,” said Greater Akron Chamber President and CEO Steve Millard. “Working together, we have helped to keep lights on and employees on the payroll, but small businesses are in need of more help.”

Executive Shapiro encourages local small businesses to apply for funding now available from the State of Ohio. The State’s Development Services Agency began accepting applications for its Small Business Relief Grant and Bar and Restaurant Assistance programs on November 2. Up to \$125 million has been designated for small business grants and \$38.7 million has been designated for liquor permit holder assistance payments. Application instructions for these programs are available at <https://businesshelp.ohio.gov/>.

Additional information about the Summit County COVID-19 Small Business Emergency Relief Grant Program can be found at <https://gaccovid19.org/grantprogram/>.

To learn more about how Summit County spent its CARES Act direct allocation, please visit <https://co.summitoh.net/pages/CARES>.

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