



COVID-19 Summary of Resources

Free Webinar - General Services Administration Update September 16, 4-5 PM

Join us via webinar as we have a conversation and demonstration with the GSA on some of the new capabilities within the beta.sam.gov page, as well as updates to the GSA's Integrated Awards Environment (IAE). This is part of the 3rd annual National PTAC Day outreach event. Training topics include Central Contractor Registration, Government Contracting, Selling to Government, Subcontracting. Primary Training topic is *Selling to the Government*. PTACers and business clients alike are welcome to attend! This webinar is free, but you must register at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1711481517326489872>

Registration Deadline is by 8:00 a.m. on September 15.

Bringing the World to Pennsylvania

Learn what it takes to sell your products and services around the world. Global business connection highlights and information provided virtually by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. **Register now, first session is September 14th.** <https://dced.pa.gov/WorldtoPA/>

First Session is focused on Canada:

<https://dced.pa.gov/event/canada-business-opportunities-for-pa-exporters/>

Small Business Advantage Grant

Pennsylvania Businesses with fewer than 100 full-time equivalent employees are eligible to apply for the Small Business Advantage Grant from Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. The grant provides 50% matching grants, up to a maximum of \$7,000 to enable Pennsylvania small businesses to purchase energy efficient or pollution prevention equipment or adopt waste reduction processes. Applicants must be for-profit entities, be located in Pennsylvania and registered with the Pennsylvania Department of State. Eligible projects must save the applicant a minimum of \$500 annually and reduce their costs by a minimum of 25%. An overview of the program and application instructions can be found [here](#).

Hazard Pay Grants Now Available for Front-Line Workers in Life-Sustaining Industries

Governor Tom Wolf announced the availability of [\\$50 million in grant funding](#) to help employers provide hazard pay to employees in life-sustaining occupations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Hazard pay is intended to keep front-line employees working in vital industry sectors across Pennsylvania.

Created through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, this reimbursement-based grant is available to employers offering hazard pay during the eligible program

period and will be administered by the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). Businesses may apply for grants up to a maximum of \$3 million.

Penn State Project ECHO – Supporting Employers, Supporting Employees in Recovery

The Supporting Employers, Supporting Employees (SESER) ECHO series will launch September 16, 2020 with sessions taking place every other week. Sessions are one hour in length for a total of 10 sessions. In partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry and Pennsylvania CareerLink®, the Penn State Project ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) is taking steps to equip employers with the resources and strategies needed to support employees in recovery. For more information go to [Project ECHO](#).

Gov. Wolf Announces \$225 Million Grant Program for Small Businesses Impacted by COVID-19

Governor Tom Wolf announced a \$225 million statewide grant program to support small businesses that were impacted by the COVID-19 public health crisis and subsequent business closure order.

The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) will distribute the funds to the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), which will then administer the funding in the form of grants.

Eligible businesses will be able to use the grants to cover operating expenses during the shutdown and transition to re-opening, and for technical assistance including training and guidance for business owners as they stabilize and relaunch their businesses. The funds will be available through three programs. A full press release can be viewed [here](#).

Forgivable Loans for Small Businesses in Pennsylvania through the PA 30 Day Fund

Pennsylvania businesses that qualify for assistance from the fund are small businesses that employ three to 30 people, are based in Pennsylvania and have been operating for at least one year; are owned and operated by a Pennsylvania resident. Funds dispersed to small business by the PA 30 Day Fund do not have to be repaid. Apply [here](#).

PA CareerLink® Expanding Virtual Services, Offering Limited On-Site Appointments for Job Seekers and Businesses

PA CareerLink® offices are increasing virtual services and are offering limited in-person appointments for job seekers and employers in counties in the Northern Tier region. Virtual services have been provided continuously for job seekers and employers since mid-March when statewide mitigation efforts began to slow the spread of COVID-19. A list of both virtual and limited on-site services can be found [here](#). On-site services will be provided by appointment only until further notice.

Employer Tax Credits: Businesses that have been severely impacted by the coronavirus may qualify for two new employer tax credits, Credit for Sick and Family Leave and the Employee Retention Credit. More information can be found online at the [IRS Coronavirus Tax Relief Page](#).

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance System

PUA Claimants will be receiving their PUA and FPUC benefit payments via paper checks for the foreseeable future as an added precaution. The Notice of Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Filed

was mailed to all PUA claimants in the system due to the recent discovery of attempts by scammers using personal information obtained from sources other than L&I to apply for PUA. Learn more [here](#).

The PUA system is now fully functional and claimants may begin filing weekly certification. You do not need a Personal Identification Number (PIN) with the PUA system, you will have a username and password that you create. You will not receive a confirmation email after submitting your initial PUA claim, but you can go to the PUA dashboard to check on your claim status, upload documents and see payments.

PUA provides up to 39 weeks of unemployment benefits to individuals not eligible for regular unemployment compensation including self-employed, independent contractors and gig economy workers. You can file your initial PUA claim or weekly PUA certification [here](#).

Farmers Market Grant Opportunity

A grant opportunity exists providing free wireless point-of-sale equipment for farmers markets and direct-marketing farmers who would like to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits but do not have the technology to do so. To receive equipment, interested farmers market vendors can [apply online](#) to be an authorized SNAP retailer

Paycheck Protection Program

The SBA resumed taking applications for the Paycheck Protection Program on April 27. The [Paycheck Protection Program](#) is a loan designed to provide a direct incentive for small businesses to keep their workers on the payroll. SBA will forgive loans if all employees are kept on the payroll for eight weeks and the money is used for payroll, rent, mortgage interest, or utilities. This loan program provides loan forgiveness for retaining employees by temporarily expanding the traditional SBA 7(a) loan program.

Unemployment Compensation

UC-1921W Refusal of Suitable Work

Section 402(a) of Pennsylvania Unemployment Compensation Law states that an employee shall be ineligible for compensation for any week in which their unemployment is due to failure, without good cause, to accept suitable work; providing that the employer who offers the work notifies the department of the refusal within seven days from when the offer is made. The department requests that employers notify the department **within seven days** of offer refusal by completing the [UC-1921W](#) form. *If you prefer to send the form via facsimile, please complete, print, and fax the form with any additional documentation to UIAS at 717-772-0378.*

Unemployment Compensation FAQ's can be found here [UC FAQs](#). You can also ask questions by calling the UC virtual assistant at 877-978-1295. Work search and registration requirements for unemployment compensation have been temporarily waived.

The Federal CARES Act provides additional benefits for individuals unemployed due to COVID-19. Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) includes an additional \$600 a week available through July 2020. Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) is available for Self-employed, Individual Contractors and Gig workers. A separate online platform has been developed for this group to apply at

[PUA](#). Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) provides for an additional 13 weeks of UC benefits beyond the regular 26 weeks already provided, for a total of up to 39 weeks of coverage.

All initial and bi-weekly claims for regular unemployment can be done at [Unemployment Compensation](#).

Shared Work

Shared-Work is an alternative to layoffs that may be used when the work available to employees decreases. Instead of a layoff, employees share the available work by working reduced hours and collecting a portion of their unemployment compensation benefits. To receive approval for a Shared-Work plan, an employer must certify that the plan is in lieu of layoffs that would involve at least 10 percent of the employees in the affected unit and would result in an equivalent reduction in work hours. More information can be found at [Shared Work](#)

Rapid Response Assistance Program

If you are a business that has had to close temporarily, considered layoffs, or is financially at-risk for permanent closure the [Rapid Response Assistance Program](#) is available to assist you with a variety of services and resources to help you and your employees.

Workers Compensation

If you believe you may have been exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace, you may be eligible for Worker's Compensation (WC). For more information visit [Worker's Compensation](#)

PA Manufacturers Call to Action Portal

The Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) – in collaboration with its strategic partners – wants to mobilize manufacturers that can produce critical medical supplies and products in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you are a current manufacturer of supplies and products or can pivot your existing manufacturing capabilities to meet the necessary demand, we want to hear from you.

The [Portal](#) welcomes Pennsylvania's manufacturers, distributors, and other suppliers to inform us of your critical supply chain capabilities, needs, or workforce gaps or innovative opportunities – allowing us to help identify opportunities and solutions.

Critical Medical Supplies Procurement Portal

The departments of Community and Economic Development, Health, General Services, and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency have developed the [Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Critical Medical Supplies Procurement Portal](#) (the "Portal") to source the most needed medical supplies.

This Portal is for manufacturers, distributors and other suppliers to inform us of supplies available for purchase and will allow us to more quickly and efficiently procure these supplies for hospitals and medical facilities across Pennsylvania.

Catalyst Connection has partnered with MAC Safety to provide you with a ["Back-to-Work" Playbook](#) that covers everything you need to know about creating and communicating effective measures and

procedures that will prioritize the health, safety, and security of your manufacturing environment, workers, customers, and products.

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.

CDC Guidance: To help states, tribes, localities, and territories, as well as businesses and community organizations operate as safely as possible during the COVID-19 pandemic, CDC released [new resources to aide](#) in reopening.

Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

SBDC is offering a Q&A-Live Video Online Group Session on Tuesdays from 10 to 11 am and Thursdays from 1 to 2 pm! The sessions are open to ask your small business questions. Small businesses can find the Zoom link info at <http://www.scrantonsbdc.com/> (or here - via Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/942798283>)

For information and resources for small businesses and a list of available webinars:
[SBDC University of Scranton](#)
[SBDC Wilkes University](#)

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

<https://www.usda.gov/>

US Chamber of Commerce

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce offers a [coronavirus toolkit](#) with a compilation of the CDC's recommendations for businesses and workers across the country.

Internal Revenue Service

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act created a [new employee retention tax credit](#) for employers who are closed, partially closed, or experiencing significant revenue losses as a result of COVID-19.

Employers who receive a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan are not eligible for a tax credit.

PennDOT

In response to COVID-19, [PennDOT](#) has implemented a variety of operational changes. Details about those changes can be found along with frequently asked questions on their website.

PA Department of Health

For the most up to date information on COVID-19, please visit the [PA Department of Health](#)

PA Resources and Assistance

Includes [information](#) on health insurance coverage, assistance offices, food and utility assistance, child care and housing resources.

Funding Available for Technology-Based Companies

As of April 23, 2020, Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Secretary Dennis Davin announced that new funding is available to help [technology-based companies](#) impacted by the novel coronavirus, COVID-19.

The funding will be distributed by The Ben Franklin Technology Partners (BFTP). BFTP will identify eligible projects and will provide capital to existing startups clients experiencing hardships due to the impact of COVID-19.