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For Immediate Release

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Shenandoah Valley Workforce Board to Award Small Business Layoff Aversion Grants

Virginia Rapid Response funding is designed to prevent or minimize the duration of unemployment resulting from COVID-19.

Harrisonburg, VA (March 25, 2020). The Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board plans to award 18 grants of up to \$5,000 to small business employers eligible to remain open during the COVID-19 emergency. Small businesses in the counties of Rockbridge, Augusta, Rockingham, Bath, Highland, Shenandoah, Page, Frederick, Clarke, and Warren and the cities of Lexington, Buena Vista, Waynesboro, Staunton, Harrisonburg, and Winchester are eligible to apply. A small business is defined as 250 or fewer employees.

Grant funding is first come, first served, and will be awarded to small businesses on a reimbursement basis once documentation is submitted to verify expenditures. Reimbursement process, timeline, and required documentation will be discussed and finalized during the application process. Performance measures including the number of jobs saved, estimated amount of annual wages saved, and project-specific results will also be required as part of the grant award.

Priority will be given to targeted industries including manufacturing, health care, transportation and logistics, and construction; to leveraging additional funding resources; and to innovative solutions. Layoff aversion funds may be used for a variety of projects, including mitigating COVID-19 impacts on workers such as increasing cleaning and sanitization services or purchasing software, supplies, laptops, or smartphones to facilitate remote work. Innovative layoff aversion strategies are encouraged such as the conversion of brewery operations to the production of hand sanitizer.

Exceptions to the funding cap may be made based on the number of jobs to be retained, proposed innovative strategies for layoff aversion, and the use of leveraged resources. Grants will be awarded until funding is depleted or withdrawn during the period of availability. Funding is available March 1, 2020 to August 31, 2020.

For more information and to start the application process, contact Joan Hollen, SVWDB Representative, jhollen@vcwvalley.com, 540-442-7134, Ext. 100.

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