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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **St. Lucie County rolls out Phase Three of Emergency Relief Grants to small businesses hardest hit by the pandemic**

*Grants of up to \$20,000 to be awarded to qualifying small business to aid in economic recovery efforts*

St. Lucie, Fla./October 19, 2020 – St. Lucie Recovers Small Business Assistance grants program opens phase three on October 19 to provide economic relief to small businesses hardest hit in St. Lucie County due to COVID-19, with some new criteria.

Grants up to \$20,000, which do not have to be repaid, will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis to qualifying businesses with 26-50 employees and total revenue of less than \$5 million. Priority is being given to businesses that did not receive funding through other federal, state, or local programs related to COVID-19. (Businesses with fewer than 26 employees are still eligible and encouraged to apply.)

Funding is available to companies experiencing business disruption and who have suffered economic injury due to COVID-19. They include but are not limited to small businesses in hardest hit industries such as hospitality, retail, entertainment, food and beverage, personal and professional services, construction trades, manufacturing and other services.

Grant funds can be used to cover mortgage, rent, utilities, reopening costs, and new operational expenses needed to ensure safety measures are in place on a reimbursement basis but will not be approved to replace lost revenue.

The process has been made as simple as possible, with a web portal [www.recoverstlucie.org](http://www.recoverstlucie.org) that contains guidelines and eligibility requirements, as well as a checklist of documents needed before completing the online application. If all necessary documentation is pulled together in advance it can take as little as 30 minutes to complete the application. Incomplete or inaccurate information could lead to a delay in processing or denial. Eligibility requirements also apply and should be reviewed carefully before spending time submitting an application.

St. Lucie County received \$13.8 million from the State of Florida's Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) as part of the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. These funds are being used to assist residents as well as businesses, with about \$3 million allocated specifically for small business assistance grants. The application process is being administered by St. Lucie County.

For more details, including eligibility requirements and the online application, go to [www.recoverstlucie.org](http://www.recoverstlucie.org) or call 772.336.6285.

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