



News from the Office of
Adam J. Bello
Monroe County Executive



For Immediate Release

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Monroe County Executive Adam Bello Extends Application Deadline for Small Business Grants

ROCHESTER, NY — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello today announced an extension for the application window for *Fast Forward Monroe 2.0*. The deadline to apply is now 5 p.m. Friday, October 29, 2021.

Since the second phase of *Fast Forward Monroe* launched September 8, 921 small businesses have applied for help. Money will be disbursed to eligible businesses by the end of the year.

“Small businesses are the lifeblood of our local economy and it’s critical we support them as we continue to deal with the ongoing pandemic,” said Monroe County Executive Adam Bello. “That’s why I launched the Fast Forward Monroe Small Business Grant Program last year. Through no fault of their own, many small businesses have not yet fully recovered from COVID-related economic hardships. Fast Forward 2.0 helps ensure our small businesses have the support they need to weather these uncertain times. I’d like to thank Congressman Joe Morelle, Sen. Charles Schumer and Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand for their help in securing CARES Act funding for our this program.”

Monroe County collaborated with community organizations including the Urban League of Rochester, PathStone Enterprise Center and the Ibero-American Action League to make the program more accessible by providing business owners with comprehensive application help and support, including assistance for limited English proficient individuals.

The county Department of Planning and Development hired additional employees to process applications.

“Small businesses are still contending with major challenges including mask requirements, PPE deployment, having fewer workers on hand, issues with supply chains, and trouble meeting customer demand,” said Monroe County Director of Planning and Development Ana Liss. “Local restaurants, shops, salons, and service providers are the backbone of our communities, making Monroe County such a great place to live, work, and raise a family. The Fast Forward Monroe 2.0 grant program is another lifeline to these entrepreneurs during the uphill climb towards recovery and reopening.”

Fast Forward 2.0 is funded with an additional \$20 million in CARES Act money, which must be distributed by the end of this year.

The initial Fast Forward program, launched in October 2020, helped well over 1,500 local small businesses survive the pandemic with \$22 million of funds from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Eligible businesses can receive grants of either \$10,000, \$15,000, or \$20,000 depending on the number of full-time employees. The money can be used for rent, payroll, operating expenditures, or COVID-related business expenses and other funding shortfalls.

Businesses which received funds in the first round of the program are still eligible to receive funds through Fast Forward Monroe 2.0. Businesses that did not receive funding in the first version of the program will be given priority under Fast Forward 2.0.

To apply, visit www.monroecounty.gov/fastforwardmonroe.

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