



*****PRESS RELEASE*****

**MCLEAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR THE
DOWNSTATE SMALL BUSINESS STABILIZATION PROGRAM**

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) established the Downstate Small Business Stabilization Program (DSBSP) in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Businesses in McLean County's smaller cities and rural communities deemed "non-essential" in the stay-at-home order issued in March may be eligible to apply for a **grant of up to \$25,000** through this program.

Interested applicants outside of a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) direct entitlement community can apply (in this case, outside the Town of Normal and City of Bloomington).

Because businesses must apply for this grant through a unit of local government, the Bloomington/Normal Economic Development Council (EDC) is partnering with McLean County Board to coordinate the effort.

"The EDC is excited to partner with the Mclean County Board on the Downstate Small Business Stabilization Program," said Bloomington-Normal EDC Board Chairman, Bill Lawrence. "This program is one more tool in the McLean County Toolbox to assist our businesses impacted by COVID."

The grant can be used to cover the cost of 60 days of working capital to keep businesses open or assist closed businesses in reopening as soon as possible.

The program is limited to for-profit businesses with 50 or less employees. Businesses must have been in operation, with the same ownership, at least since January 1, 2017 to qualify.

Applications and a webinar explaining the process can be obtained through the DCEO website at <https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/CommunityServices/CommunityInfrastructure/Pages/DownstateSmBizStabilization.aspx>

McLean County Government will accept applications beginning Wednesday, June 10, 2020 through Friday, June 26, 2020. A Public Hearing will be held on Tuesday, June 30, 2020, as required by the DCEO's process.

Media inquiries should be directed to Camille Rodriguez at admin@mcleancountyil.gov.

Questions from businesses or potential applicants should be sent to patrick@bnbiz.org