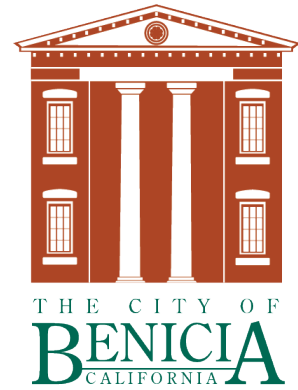


PRESS RELEASE

CITY OF BENICIA
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CITY OF BENICIA UPDATE ON COVID-19 FOR MARCH 22, 2020 Business Resources and Support

Benicia, CA (March 22, 2020) — During the unprecedented and unexpected business closures and shelter-at-home orders, many Benicia business owners find themselves in dire need of help to weather the COVID-19 emergency. The City of Benicia's Economic Development division is sharing business support information and resources.

“In the past week, our business community and their employees have grappled with changing guidelines and ever more stringent restrictions. We know that this has caused great uncertainty and anxiety,” said Economic Development Manager Mario Giuliani. “The City’s Economic Development staff are focused to assist our businesses to learn about and apply for the programs developed by our State and Federal partners to support employers and employees during this emergency.”

Rapid Response Services for Businesses

[Solano Small Business Development Center](#) is standing by to help businesses facing potential layoffs or business closures. Start by filling out the client intake form at <https://www.jotform.com/build/200757157479162> or reach out to Pamela Clemmons at 707.307.3986.

Aid with Loan Applications

The Northern CA Small Business Development Center (SBDC) network produced multiple webinars last week to help small businesses weather the current storm and to specifically provide help with completing the Small Business Administration (SBA) Disaster Loan application. The webinars are available at <https://www.norcalsbdc.org/coping-covid-19-webinars-northern-california-sbdc-network>. There is a place for businesses to enter their contact information so that they will be sent invitations and links to all upcoming webinars that will occur over the next few weeks.

SBDC and SBA Assistance Links

The SBDC and the SBA are there to help businesses with no-cost advising and assist with apply for SBA Economic Injury loans:

- One-on-One (no-cost) SBDC Advising at <https://www.solanosbdc.org>
- Download the COVID-19 Small Business Survival Guide at https://www.norcalsbdc.org/sites/default/files/Covid-19-survival-guide_sbdc_updated32020.pdf
- SBA Disaster Loans at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>

Additional Links

- Information on State and Federal support, financing and FAQs at <https://www.norcalsbdc.org/covid-19>
- Small Business Resource List attached
- State Go-Biz resources and assistance at <https://business.ca.gov/coronavirus-2019/>

Essential Business Definition

A key question many have been asking is about the Governor's stay-at-home order and what is an essential business. This link provides helpful information to determine what is deemed an essential business: <https://covid19.ca.gov/stay-home-except-for-essential-needs/>

Moratorium on Disconnections/Deferral of Fees/Extended Deadlines

The City has implemented a moratorium on utility service disconnections and late fees for non-payment for water and sewer service due to the COVID-19 emergency and the current closure of City Hall offices. Details are available at www.ci.benicia.ca.us/utilitybilling. The deadlines for business license tax renewals and transient occupancy tax payments have also been extended to June 15, 2020. The City is developing an emergency ordinance to prevent commercial and residential evictions.

For business questions or assistance, contact Economic Development Manager Mario Giuliani at mgiuliani@ci.benicia.ca.us or call 707.746.4289.

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Attachments:

- Solano SBDC Rapid Response
- Solano SBDC Help and Resources
- Small Business Resources – State Treasurer's Office