

# NEWS

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**For Immediate Release**

## **Fueling the COVID-19 Recovery: Board of Supervisors Boosts Local Businesses Relief**

***Small businesses, including food truck and home kitchen operators, can apply for grants under fresh wave of emergency funding***

**Redwood City** – The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors today provided a lifeline to struggling local small businesses as part of a \$2.8 million COVID-19 relief package.

The package includes new emergency relief for small-scale food-service entrepreneurs such as food truck operators and other small business hit hard by the pandemic. The Board also launched a pilot program for home-based chefs to prepare food in their own kitchens for sale directly to consumers.

This is the first time the County has specifically targeted relief to operators of “micro food businesses.”

“What we are doing today provides new economic opportunities for those who need them most including women, immigrants and people of color,” Board President David J. Canepa said. “This modest investment will make a difference for hard-working families who happen to be great cooks and at the same time stimulate the local economy.”

The food service industry was hit hard because shut-downs required most people to stay home and avoid gathering, a death knell for small-scale operators who could not quickly pivot to take-out or set up expensive outdoor, socially distant eating areas.

“Businesses such as food trucks, food carts and incubator kitchens are a means for entrepreneurs to build enduring enterprises,” said Supervisor Dave Pine. “Helping these small businesses will benefit our local economy now and in the future.”

Supervisors today approved three grant programs, one open for any eligible small business and two targeting the food service industry.

### **Food Trucks, Food Carts and More**

First, the Board launched the [Micro Food Business Grant Program](#), which will distribute a total of \$500,000 in grants to eligible [cottage food operators](#), caterers, food truck and food cart operators, commissaries or incubator kitchens.

Applicants must have a current small food-service business lawfully operating in San Mateo County before Jan. 1, 2021, and meet income and other eligibility requirements. Businesses that received relief under certain prior programs are not eligible.

### **Dishing Up Food from Home**

Second, the Board approved establishing the [Microenterprise Home Kitchen Operators Ordinance, Pilot Program and Grant Program](#) with \$238,000 in seed funding.

Under the pilot program, home-based chefs can legally make and sell limited amounts of food directly to consumers. The County is one of only a handful of jurisdictions in California to allow microenterprise home kitchens.

Chefs who receive operating permits from the County's Environmental Health Services division will be able to apply for grants of up to \$2,500 apiece.

"I am excited to see how the community responds to this project," said Supervisor Don Horsley. "The County is making it easy for people to participate, by offering a grant program to help home chefs start up their ovens. I especially want to thank Environmental Health Services Director Heather Forshey for developing a successful pilot plan. I look forward to an incredible array of these microenterprise home kitchens and hope to eventually visit one myself for a delicious meal."

### **SMC Strong: Relief for Small Businesses**

Third, the Board allocated \$2 million for the [2021 SMC Strong Small Business Assistance Program](#). The program provides a fresh round of funding for local, small businesses impacted by the pandemic and did not receive prior County, state or federal relief.

Applicants must meet certain requirements for grants of up to \$10,000 that can be used for past-due rent, operating expenses and other needs.

Since the pandemic began, the County, foundations, charitable organizations and individual donors have all contributed to the [SMC Strong Fund](#), which through two rounds of funding



has already provided grants to almost 1,000 small businesses. The new 2021 SMC Strong Small Business Assistance Program will build upon that success.

Funds for all three programs will come from the federal [American Rescue Plan](#) or through other state or federal relief programs.

**Business Relief Efforts**

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the County along with other funders such as cities, private donors and foundations, have contributed more than \$12 million to local business relief. The following chart outlines the relief efforts and does not include today’s approvals.

Emergency Relief for Small Businesses					
	County Contributions	Non-County Donations	Total	Other Information	Distributed
SMCSTRONG - Small Business Grants - SMCU CF/SVCF* (Rounds 1 and 2)	\$2,000,000	\$2,641,098	\$4,641,098	1,232 Applications received 451 Applicants received grants	\$4,503,335
Restaurant, Winery, Brewery Grants	\$1,080,000	\$2,430,684	\$3,510,684	314 Approved; 313 disbursed	\$3,130,000
Small Business Grants - Renaissance Center	\$3,430,000	\$195,000	\$3,625,000	500+ applicants; 207 grants disbursed	\$3,625,000
Digital Tools and Training - Small Businesses – Renaissance	\$250,000		\$250,000	16 Applicants, 11 grants disbursed	27,500
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$6,760,000</b>	<b>\$5,266,782</b>	<b>\$12,026,782</b>		<b>\$11,285,035</b>

\*San Mateo Credit Union Community Fund/Silicon Valley Community Foundation.

The above chart along with additional context [can be found here](#).

**Additional Information**

Information about Microenterprise Home Kitchen Operations, including instructions on how to apply for a permit, can be found at [smchealth.org/microkitchen](http://smchealth.org/microkitchen).

Application information for the Micro Food Business Grant Program and 2021 SMC Strong Small Business Assistance Program will soon be available at [www.smcstrong.org](http://www.smcstrong.org).

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