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SANTA FE—Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham's Economic Recovery Council is urging small businesses that have been hard hit by the COVID-19 public health emergency to apply for an emergency loan program now available through the New Mexico Finance Authority.

The Small Business Recovery Act of 2020 set aside $400 million from New Mexico's Severance Tax Permanent Fund to provide loans to New Mexico businesses and nonprofits that have experienced financial hardship during the pandemic.

"This is a great opportunity for businesses to get some critical help that could make the difference in being able to navigate through this very difficult period," Economic Recovery Council Chairwoman Christina Campos said "It's so important for our recovery that our state's small businesses get through this."

"This is a program that is especially beneficial for small businesses that may not have been able to access federal relief or who need more flexibility," added Councilmember Jason Sandel. "We'd love to see more businesses take advantage of what is available."

Businesses may be eligible for loans of up to $75,000. The loans do not require a personal guarantee or collateral and carry an interest rate currently set at 1.625 percent, fixed for the life of the loan. The loans can be used to cover rent, payroll, and other expenses.

Among other criteria, to be eligible, applicants:

• Must be a New Mexico business or a nonprofit corporation organized under Section 501(c)3 or 501(c)6 that has closed or reduced operations due to the public health order,

• Had annual gross revenue of less than $5 million as determined by its 2019 federal income tax return or Form 990,

• Experienced a 30 percent decline in monthly gross receipts or monthly revenue in April and May of 2020, as compared to the same months in 2019.

Applications are being processed on a first-come, first-served basis. ***To learn more and to apply, go to the New Mexico Finance Authority website at nmfinance.com.***

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