

## Office of Governor Abbott – Small Business Assistance Team

Our priority is the health and safety of Texas residents, local businesses and communities throughout the state. Economic Development & Tourism staff and community partners are closely monitoring the situation and following the advice of health officials and government agencies. This is a dynamic situation and we will update this information as we find out about new resources and hear about new policies devised to help businesses cope during the crisis. For additional news and resources regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19), go to [gov.texas.gov/business/coronavirus](http://gov.texas.gov/business/coronavirus).

### FAQs:

#### Employers/self-employed:

1. As an employer, where can I get advice about what I should do in this crisis?  
The [Texas Workforce Commission – Resources for Employers](#) is the best place for employers to get information and advice.
2. I am self-employed and find I can no longer work during this crisis. Can I apply for unemployment assistance?  
Yes. The Texas Workforce Commission has waived the standard 14-day wait period during this crisis. Learn more about [Disaster Unemployment Assistance](#).

#### Funding/Loans:

3. I am a small business and am thinking about applying for the SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL). Do you have any information for me to consider before applying?  
The SBA is not explicit about credit requirements nor qualification criteria. Reviews and approvals will be on a case-by-case basis. Applicants should be sure they have provided everything required to make the application complete or applications will be returned. The SBA is estimating a three-week turnaround time for decisions. Here are some general guidelines regarding applications:
  - Business will need to show they were financially viable before the crisis hit
  - If approved, businesses may defer the first loan payment for up to 12 months
  - Having a guarantor may help
  - Ability to repay will need to be demonstrated
  - A reasonable to good credit score will help
  - Evidence of engagement with your bank will help, although on a recent call the SBA stated a “refusal” is **not** required
  - Considerable information on the business will be required:
    - Tax Returns
    - Schedule of Liabilities
    - Sales figures for beyond three years prior to the disaster (ie. years preceding February 2017)
    - Schedule or overheads/regular costs

There are several forms that will need to be completed, regarding considerable current and historical information about the business. The [SBA disaster loan application](#) is expected to be available for Texas companies by March 22, 2020.

4. If I don't qualify for SBA help, where can I go?  
Talk to the bank in which you have your business account. They may have loans or products that could help you. You can also consider approaching microlenders such as:  
[Peoplefund](#)  
[Liftfund](#)  
[BCL](#)  
Also check with your county or city economic development departments. For example, the City of Austin offers [low interest loans for small/family businesses](#).
5. What was the process by which Texas companies are able to apply for SBA EIDL funds?
  - The SBA requires a state to show it has at least five companies with proven economic injury as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). This information request was handled by the Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM) with the help from regional economic development partners.
  - Governor Greg Abbott formally requested emergency designation for Texas to receive small business disaster loans from the SBA on March 17, 2020.
  - Once the SBA grants a declaration, businesses **statewide** will be able to apply for EIDL assistance.
  - Texas companies can apply online via the [SBA application system once the declaration is granted](#). It is estimated that a designation decision will take place March 22, 2020.
  - Other states Such as New York, California and Washington, had large coronavirus outbreaks weeks before most other states, including Texas. Those states received access to the SBA system earlier.

Other:

6. I have a restaurant and cannot serve people on premises during the crisis. How can I keep my business alive?  
Many restaurants are offering take-out, drive-thru and delivery options for customers. Governor Greg Abbott issued a waiver that now allows restaurants to deliver alcoholic beverages with food purchases to patrons, including beer, wine and mixed drinks
7. I am a rural business involved in horticulture/agriculture, where should I go for help?  
The Texas Department of Agriculture has [an emergency response page](#), which is currently a work-in-progress, as well as [resources for small rural businesses](#).
8. I am struggling to pay my taxes as I normally would. What should I do?  
File any taxes due on time. If you cannot pay at that time, make a detailed and credible case as to why this is the case for you/your business, but be sure to file on time. The IRS has issued this guidance for federal taxes [Coronavirus general information](#) and [IRS Payment Plan information](#).
9. Where else can I find information that could help my business during the crisis?  
For the most up-to-date information, please utilize the following resources:  
The federal government has a "one stop shop" for [Government Response to Coronavirus, COVID-19](#) This page is being updated daily and has the most current federal government agency actions and information. Of particular interest are the actions [the U.S. Small Business Administration](#) is taking to help small business during this uncertain time.

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[Additional SBA Resources & Programs](#)  
[Texas Department of State Health Services](#)  
[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)  
[World Health Organization](#)  
[Texas Department of Licensing & Regulation](#)