

For Immediate Release
November 13, 2020

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**SBAM administering at least $3M in grants from LEO to help small businesses weather the cold**

*New grant program will help businesses expand and winterize outdoor capacity*

**LANSING, MI** – To help small businesses successfully navigate the winter ahead and prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Small Business Association of Michigan is partnering with the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) to administer at least $3 million in weatherization grants to assist qualified small businesses with expanding outdoor capacity during the cold weather months. Eligible businesses may apply to receive between $1,000 – $10,000 in funding for weatherized, temporary outdoor facilities, while eligible municipalities and local organizations may apply to receive up to $15,000.

LEO identified COVID-19 federal funding to assist Michigan businesses in their winterization efforts and the grants are provided through the federal CARES Act.

“There’s no question that these weatherization grants are going to make a real difference for Michigan’s small businesses this winter,” said SBAM president Brian Calley. “Fully utilizing outdoor seating and capacity has been critical to businesses across the state in their efforts to operate safely through this COVID-19 pandemic. And with winter weather diminishing that capacity, providing businesses with the assistance they need to expand and weatherize their outdoor capacity is an important way to help small businesses stay afloat but keep everyone safe this winter.”

“We are proud to continue to partner with SBAM to provide our small businesses with resources to protect their employees, customers and communities from the spread of COVID-19,” said LEO Acting Director Susan Corbin. “Throughout the pandemic, Michigan’s small businesses have done their part to keep our economy open by following proper safety regulations. These federal grants will help them fund temporary outdoor facilities and increase customer capacity while ensuring their workplaces are safe during our cold winter ahead.”

 Commercial firms and nonprofits with 50 or fewer full-time equivalent employees in the following industries are eligible to apply for funding:

* Restaurants and/or bars
* Banquet centers
* Retail stores
* Gyms and fitness centers
* Local governments, including cities, townships, villages and counties that provide common space for businesses
* Commercial property owners who provide common space for tenants

Michigan-based business owners and other eligible applicants can use to the grant funds to construct temporary structures such as canopies and igloos or purchase portable heaters, outdoor furniture and tableware, cooking equipment, and other related safety and security upgrades necessary to increase outdoor capacity for carryout and delivery services. All funds must be used in support of weatherization of outdoor capacity expansions and the construction of permanent structures is not an allowable use. Grant funds are available for purchases made between August 1, 2020 – December 30, 2020.

Interested businesses are invited to submit an application for weatherization grants on [www.MiWinterGrants.org](http://www.MiWinterGrants.org). Applications must be submitted beginning at noon EST on November 18, 2020. Grants will be awarded to eligible businesses on a first-come, first-served basis with special consideration given to awarding at least 10 grants in each of [Michigan’s prosperity regions](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/msp/Posts_450432_7.pdf). For full details and to learn more visit [SBAM.org/weather](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cjosep%5COneDrive%5CDesktop%5CCrap%20to%20Delete%5CSBAM.org%5Cweather).

*The Small Business Association of Michigan focuses solely on serving the needs of Michigan’s small business community through advocacy, collaboration and buying power. Today they serve over 28,000 members in all 83 counties of Michigan. SBAM is located in Lansing, just one block from the Capitol.*

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