



NEWS from the Shelby County Mayor's Office

Lee Harris, Mayor

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11th Floor, 160 North Main, Memphis, Tennessee 38103

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SHELBY COUNTY GOVERNMENT OPENS APPLICATIONS FOR
MICROGRANTS TO SUPPORT SAFE PRACTICES AT CLOSE
CONTACT/PERSONAL SERVICE BUSINESSES**

Memphis, TN – Shelby County Government has opened applications for stipends of up to \$2,000 to support safe practices at close contact/personal service businesses in Shelby County. Close contact/personal services business, such as barbershops, beauty shops, nail salons, and similar businesses pose a higher public health concern because of the sustained contact with customers. The various health mandates in place require these businesses to take heightened and extraordinary precautions. Starting today, these businesses may apply for support to help cover costs related to the mandates for increased sanitization, heightened precaution, and personal protective equipment requirements. Applicants need to apply at covid19.shelbycountyttn.gov while funds are available.

Commissioner Mickell Lowery has been the leading advocate for supporting the safe operation of close contact businesses and announced the opening of grant applications on Tuesday, August 11, during a Joint Task Force press conference. Several quotes follow.

Shelby County Commissioner Mickell Lowery: “The closure of beauty shops and barbershops due to COVID-19 resulted in countless calls from constituents all over Shelby County. Thousands of residents are employed in the beauty services industry, and over half of adults rely on them for regular services throughout the year. We have been calling this specific road to recovery in this industry, ‘Our Beautiful Comeback.’ The grant fund announced today will

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enable these businesses to continue to provide the services that residents want without compromising public safety.”

Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris: “Barbershops and salons have been under significant strain after several weeks of closure. This grant acknowledges the reality of permanently lost revenue amid high overhead and provides some financial support as we move towards a safe and careful operation. We know we have to do more and this is just the start. We will continue to identify ways to support safe operation and long-term stability of business, particularly small business, in light of these extraordinary times.”

Dr. Alisa Haushalter, Director of the Shelby County Health Department: “Because of how COVID-19 is spread, the long periods of face-to-face contact that are typical of a salon appointment made keeping these businesses open a public health concern. Today’s new industry-specific mandates require face masks for everyone, staggered schedules, and frequent sanitization between appointments. We’ve seen most beauty shops, barbershops, and nail salons invest in these new requirements to help slow community transmission.”

(end of release)