

Publications

Ohio Economic Development Agencies Engaged in COVID-19 Relief Efforts

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The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted both our health and our economy, and JobsOhio (JO) and the Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) are helping businesses cope. JO has taken a leadership role in the crisis by partnering with the State, the Ohio Manufacturers' Association and the JO Regional Network to increase the supply of personal protective equipment in Ohio.

JO has adjusted some of its existing programs and created new programs to support Ohio businesses. JO's initiatives include:

- JobsOhio Innovation Fund, a new program with up to \$50,000,000 allocated to partner with JO's current network of venture investors to provide loans to high priority investor-backed companies, particularly those whose financing has been delayed by COVID-19. The fund will provide convertible loans of \$250,000 to \$2,500,000, co-funded at least 1:1 with existing investors, to help Ohio based, venture backed private businesses at the Series 'A+' stage bridge until their next independent funding event, sustain their in-demand employees, and continue to be in a position to grow and create jobs when the COVID-19 crisis abates. More information is available at <https://www.jobsohio.com/ohios-innovation-economy/>.
- For existing JO clients, JO has instituted its JobsOhio Rapid Development Initiative and Workforce Retention Loan Program. The Rapid Development Initiative is an effort to enhance flexibility for JO's existing clients to broaden reimbursable costs, improve access to funds, and provide limited compliance waivers. Similarly, JO has implemented a six-month deferral of principal and interest on its loans. The Workforce Retention Loan Program quickly provided companies with forgivable payroll loans (program by invitation only).
- JO has made a \$2,000,000 investment in the Appalachian Growth Capital fund to support businesses in Southeastern Ohio.
- Outside of the pure economic development area, JO committed 7,000 pairs of Crocs for Ohio health care workers. JO also supported

bars and restaurants through the liquor buy-back initiative.

On April 7th, the Lt. Governor Husted announced the creation of the Office of Small Business Relief (OSBR) (<https://businesshelp.ohio.gov/>) within ODSA to identify ways to support Ohio's 950,000 small businesses. The OSBR's initial roles will primarily be providing information about federal programs and providing coordinated resources through the existing Small Business Development Center, Minority Business Development Center, Procurement Technical Assistance Centers and Manufacturing Extension Partnership programs. We also anticipate that ODSA will continue to support existing programs (and potentially develop new programs) supporting small businesses, such as the existing Ohio Capital Access Program and the Ohio Collateral Enhancement Program.

For existing ODSA borrowers, the agency is providing six month deferrals of principal and interest (except bond borrowers). For tax credit recipients who may need amendments, most tax credits are administered through the Ohio Tax Credit Authority (TCA), so please keep in mind that ODSA will want to be proactive and will need TCA approval later this calendar year for most changes.

If you need assistance with your existing JO or ODSA incentive, or have questions about new incentives, please contact: Scott J. Ziance, 614.464.8287, sjziance@vorys.com; Sean Byrne, 614.464.8247, spbyrne@vorys.com; Aaron S. Berke, 330.208.1017, asberke@vorys.com; Christopher J. Knezevic, 614.464.5627, cjknezevic@vorys.com; Jonathan K. Stock, 614.464.5647, jkstock@vorys.com; or your regular Vorys attorney.

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Vorys COVID-19 Task Force

Vorys attorneys and professionals are counseling our clients in the myriad issues related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. We have also established a comprehensive Coronavirus Task Force, which includes attorneys with deep experience in the niche disciplines that we have been and expect to continue receiving questions regarding coronavirus. Learn more and see the latest updates from the task force at vorys.com/coronavirus.