



Emergency Loans Now Available for R.I. Small Businesses

Yesterday the U.S. Small Business Administration approved Governor Raimondo's application for assistance and will offer low-interest federal disaster loans for working capital up to \$2 million to Rhode Island small businesses suffering substantial economic injury as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Applicants may apply online, receive additional disaster assistance information, and download applications at: <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>.

Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for more information on SBA disaster assistance.

If your business has questions regarding SBA loans and access to capital, please call RI Commerce's Small Business Hotline at (401) 521-HELP or e-mail info@commerceri.com.

Free Digital Tools including Video Conferencing for R.I. Businesses

Microsoft has agreed to provide their Office 365 E1 program for free for six months to all R.I. employers.

That includes web-based Microsoft Office applications, resources to support telecommuting such as meetings and instant messaging, as well as remote file sharing.

This offer extends to businesses of all sizes — whether you have one employee or one thousand employees.



To learn more on how to access these offerings, visit the [dedicated webpage here](#).

Other companies have also made a number of tools available:

- Cisco is offering free [WebEx video conferencing](#) and a remote-work adoption toolkit to help guide businesses in their transition to working at home.
- Google is offering free access to their [Hangouts Meet](#), another video conferencing system, for all of their GSuite and GSuite education customers.
- Schools and school districts can contact [Zoom](#) and the company will lift their 40-minute meeting limit on their free basic accounts.



Upcoming Webinar - Embrace Remote

The Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce is offering a free webinar to showcase successful strategies of remote teams and employees.

This 30 min. webinar will take place on Thursday, March 19 at 9 AM. The webinar will cover nuts and bolts content, share resources, and answer questions.

The webinar will use Zoom Video. If you're new to zoom [sign up for free here](#).

[Click here](#) to learn more.



Restaurants Switch to Takeout

This week [Governor Raimondo announced](#) that all restaurants, bars and coffee shops in Rhode Island will shut down and remain closed until Monday, March 30. Take-out and delivery service can continue.

[Eat Drink RI](#), the [Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau](#), and [Discover Newport](#) have compiled lists of R.I. restaurants offering pick-up and delivery.

Additionally, [Farm Fresh Rhode Island](#) is encouraging the community to use its Market Mobile wholesale service to get fresh food from local farms delivered to your home.

We encourage you to responsibly support our small businesses whenever possible.

Stefan Pryor
Rhode Island Secretary of Commerce
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