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**SMALL BUSINESSES IN CHARLEVOIX COUNTY
CAN APPLY FOR COVID RELIEF GRANTS BEGINNING JUNE 1**
Regional Resiliency Program Grants Administered by Venture North

CHARLEVOIX COUNTY, MICHIGAN – Charlevoix County businesses with nine or fewer employees may apply for COVID-19 relief grants starting June 1, 2021 at 8 a.m. through June 11, 2021 at 5 p.m. through the Regional Resiliency Program (RRP), administered by Venture North Funding and Development.

A grant application must be completed online at www.venturenorthfunding.org. The RRP provides grants of up to \$5,000 to businesses with urgent needs or needs involving adapting their operations to meet COVID-19 challenges. Grants can be used to meet payroll, cover rent, support employee retention, purchase inventory, begin new online sales systems and many others.

“If a business has questions or needs help completing the grant application, contact us,” said Galbraith. “We will work with you to ensure the application is submitted on time.” Those needing help should contact Venture North at 231- 995-7115 or info@venturenorthfunding.org.

The total amount available for eligible businesses in Charlevoix County is \$20,000 provided by Venture North from contributions received for the RRP, including an initial grant of \$200,000 from the Consumers Energy Foundation to help support the program in Venture North’s 10-county region.

In 2020, a total of nearly 200 grants were awarded to small businesses in Venture North’s 10-county region totaling over \$500,000. The goal for 2021 is to match or surpass the 2020 results.

“While positive signs of recovery are clear, many small businesses continue to be challenged and, particularly for them, recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic is far from over,” said Galbraith. “Many were severely impacted by a loss of cash flow, customers and employees. The supply of products remains slow or even nonexistent in many cases, threatening businesses that count on them for sales.”

Venture North, a tax-exempt nonprofit, continues to seek donations to the RRP to meet the demand. “Any entity or person can donate to the RRP program and know that 100 percent of their contribution will be used for grants to eligible small businesses that apply for funding,” Galbraith said. Funds may be donated online at “Donate to the RRP” at www.venturenorthfunding.org or by calling 231-995-7115.

Venture North Funding and Development provides commercial financing and technical assistance to support business growth and job creation in their ten-county region, often in partnership with other financial institutions. As a certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), Venture North also focuses on providing support for underserved populations such as minority, women, and veteran-owned businesses in low-income communities.

