



Special COVID-19 Edition

April 6, 2020

[Online Version at FloridaBusiness.org](https://www.floridabusiness.org)

COVID-19 BEST PRACTICES WEBINAR: BLOCKCHAIN, CYBERSECURITY AND MANAGING LIQUIDITY –

FloridaMakes is hosting a [webinar](#) from 10 to 11 a.m., April 6. Learn about managing liquidity in times of uncertainty, how to avoid cybersecurity attacks while your staff is working from home, and using Blockchain to prevent supply chain disruption in the future. Expert presenters include Maria Morales, CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP; Suzanne Chambers, Roebuck Technologies; and Rosa Shores and Chris Tyler with Blockspaces. [Register to attend the webinar](#). A recorded version of the webinar will be made available on FloridaMakes' website for those who are unable to attend.

FBI RELEASES GUIDANCE ON DEFENDING AGAINST VTC HIJACKING – The [U.S. Department of Homeland Security's National Cyber Awareness System](#) has advised that on April 2, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) released an [article](#) on defending against video-conferencing (VTC) hijacking (referred to as "Zoom-bombing" when attacks are to the Zoom VTC platform). Many organizations and individuals are increasingly dependent on VTC platforms, such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams, to stay connected during the COVID-19 pandemic. The FBI has released this guidance in response to an increase in reports of VTC hijacking.

CORONAVIRUS AND YOUR SMALL BUSINESS: LIVE Q&A WEBINAR WITH SCORE – Join SCORE's expert business mentors for this 1.5-hour, live question-and-answer webinar. They will address questions and concerns regarding the current crisis to help you adapt your business and weather the storm. Small businesses have been hurt deeply by the coronavirus, and the impact will be felt for months. SCORE is here with trusted business mentors and resources to assist you. Participants are encouraged to submit their business-related questions during registration and the live webinar. [The webinar will take place at 1 p.m. on April 9.](#)

COVID-19 ASSISTANCE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES: PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM – The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) prioritizes millions of Americans employed by small businesses by authorizing up to \$349 billion toward job retention and certain other expenses. Small businesses and eligible nonprofit organizations, veterans organizations and tribal businesses described in the Small Business Act, as well as individuals who are self-employed or are independent contractors, are eligible if they also meet program size standards. The PPP provides funds to pay up to eight weeks of payroll costs including benefits and can also be used to pay interest on mortgages, rent and utilities. [Read the U.S. Treasury PPP summary fact sheet for borrowers](#); it includes links to the U.S. Small Business Administration's lender lists, business size standards and PPP loan application forms. If you just need a quick link to the SBA's most active lenders, click [here](#).

COVID-19 SBA ECONOMIC INJURY DISASTER LOANS (EIDL) AND EMERGENCY ECONOMIC INJURY GRANTS – EIDLs are lower interest loans of up to \$2 million that are available to pay for expenses, including payroll and other operating expenses that could have been met had the disaster not occurred. Emergency Economic Injury Grants are also available from the SBA. These grants can provide an emergency advance of up to \$10,000 to small businesses and private nonprofits harmed by COVID-19 within three days of applying for an SBA EIDL. To access the advance, [you first apply for an EIDL](#) and then request the advance. The advance does not need to be repaid under any circumstance and may be used to keep employees on payroll; to pay for sick leave; meet increased production costs due to supply chain disruptions; or pay business obligations, including debts, rent and mortgage payments.

STATE OF FLORIDA EMERGENCY BRIDGE LOANS – The [Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program](#) is available to support small businesses impacted by COVID-19. The program can provide short-term, interest-free loans to small businesses that experience COVID-19 related economic injury. Up to \$50,000 per eligible small business can be made available for a one-year term. Loans of up to \$100,000 may be made in special cases as warranted by the need of the eligible small business. All qualified applicants must have been established prior to March 9, 2020, and suffered

pandemic-related economic injury. Loan proceeds can be used only for purposes of maintaining or restarting the business in the designated area. For questions regarding the Emergency Bridge Loan Program, contact the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity toll-free at 833-832-4494 or [send them an email](#).

STATE OF FLORIDA SHORT-TERM COMPENSATION PROGRAM FOR EMPLOYERS – As part of the state’s [Reemployment Assistance](#) programs, [Florida’s Short-Time Compensation \(STC\) program for employers](#) pays partial benefits to groups of employees working reduced hours. Employers may elect to participate in this program to retain valued employees by reducing hours for an entire group of employees instead of resorting to temporary layoffs. Individuals participating in an employer-sponsored training may also be eligible to participate in the program. STC benefits are payable when normal hours of work are reduced from 10% to 40%. To participate, employees must be full-time (at least 32 hours per week prior to Short Time Compensation reduction), permanent employees (not seasonal) who have a set number of hours (excluding overtime) they work each week. Questions from businesses or the public regarding the STC Program should be directed to the Reemployment Assistance Hotline at 800-204-2418 for assistance from the Reemployment Assistance unit.

RESPONDING TO COVID-19 THROUGH FEMA’S INDUSTRY LIAISON PROGRAM – Businesses interested in supporting the response to COVID-19 with goods and/or services can submit an inquiry to the Department of Homeland Security Procurement Action Innovative Response Team at DHSIndustryLiaison@hq.dhs.gov. This will ensure your company capabilities are received and reviewed by the appropriate acquisition office. The [FEMA Industry Liaison Program](#) establishes strategic relationships with suppliers and stakeholders, serves as an information provider for suppliers seeking to do business with FEMA, and connects suppliers with program offices in support of FEMA’s mission.

IRS LAUNCHES EMPLOYEE RETENTION CREDIT – The U.S. Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) have launched the [Employee Retention Credit](#), which is designed to encourage businesses to keep employees on their payroll. The refundable tax credit is 50% of up to \$10,000 in qualifying wages paid by an eligible employer whose business has been financially impacted by COVID-19. The credit is available to all employers, including tax-exempt organizations, regardless of size. There are only two exceptions: State and local governments and their instrumentalities and small businesses that take small business loans. Visit the [IRS webpage](#) for complete details on businesses that qualify, how the credit is calculated, and which wages qualify.

NEWS ITEMS WANTED! – Please send your business news items to [Joanne Magley](#). If you wish to be removed from this weekly broadcast, please let us know.