



State of Illinois
JB Pritzker, Governor



Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
Sylvia Garcia, Acting Director

FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY:

August 18, 2021

Lauren Huffman, DCEO

Lauren.Huffman@Illinois.gov

Agnes Masnik, DCEO

Agnes.Masnik@Illinois.gov

****Media Advisory****

**STATE OF ILLINOIS OPENS APPLICATION FOR THE BACK TO BUSINESS (B2B)
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

\$250 Million available in B2B grants for COVID-19 relief for Illinois businesses

Matteson - On August 18, 2021, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) will join Community Navigator, Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation (GAGDC) and Village of Matteson officials to announce the official opening of the \$250 Million Back to Business Grant Program portal administered by Allies for Community Business (A4CB) with applications being accepted to support the continued recovery of small businesses across Illinois, followed by a program overview and application drive.

The [Back to Business \(B2B\) grant program](#) offers small businesses access to funds that can help offset losses due to COVID-19, bring back workers, and take continued steps to rebuild amid the fallout from the pandemic. While many business types and industries may apply, businesses in the following industries will be given priority status for grants: restaurants and taverns; hotels; arts businesses and organizations; and more. Additionally, businesses located within Disproportionately Impacted Areas (DIAs), as defined in statute, will be prioritized to claim ARPA funds.

To reach the businesses most in need with these funds, DCEO will work alongside over 100 community navigators, 42 Small Business Development Center (SBDCs) and other outreach partners, like GAGDC who have relationships with their local business community.

Immediately after the press conference, a program overview will be provided to area businesses, as well as an application drive, including no-cost technical assistance for businesses that are ready to apply.

For businesses unavailable to participate in this event, other area events will be hosted across the state in the next few weeks to ensure businesses get the help they need. For more information on

B2B, how to apply, and where to access small business assistance, please visit dceo.illinois.gov.
To find a community navigator near you, visit
<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/AboutDCEO/GrantOpportunities/Pages/CommunityNavigator.aspx>

Who:

- Sylvia Garcia -Director of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)
- GAGDC Representative TBD
- Legislators TBD
- Donna Miller - Cook County Commissioner
- Sheila Y. Chalmers-Currin, Village President of Matteson
- Community Navigators (Cook County, Southland Development Authority, South Holland Business Association, Chamber 57, Southland Juvenile Justice Council, In His Hands Resource Center)

When: Wednesday, August 18, at 11:30 a.m. (Media arrive at 11:00 a.m.)

11:30 a.m. Press Conference

12:00 p.m. B2B Presentation, Application Opening & Technical Assistance

Where: Village of Matteson Community Center, 20642 Matteson Ave. Matteson, IL 60443

Parking and special instructions: Onsite parking

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