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St. Louis Regional Businesses List Cleaning Supplies, Cash Among Top Needs During Pandemic; Regional Chamber Asking All Businesses to Fill Out Survey

ST. LOUIS (Mar. 31, 2020) – The St. Louis Regional Chamber is asking businesses across the region to share their experiences, concerns, needs and suggestions for helping companies during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Regional Chamber has launched an anonymous survey for regional businesses to help inform support organizations and better coordinate and deliver specific and targeted resources for companies affected by COVID-19.

Based on initial results from almost 200 businesses, the availability of cleaning supplies, impacts to business and cash flow, business grants and the need for marketing and communications top the list for immediate and long-term needs.

“What we are hearing is that many business owners are uncertain of the future, but they’re also open to adapting and innovating to continue operations and protecting employees,” said Tom Chulick, President & CEO of the St. Louis Regional Chamber. “Companies need help now to keep business going, but they also want to look ahead. I see a lot of resilience and innovation coming from St. Louis businesses.”

All businesses in Illinois and Missouri are encouraged to fill out the survey and share their experiences and concerns now through May 1, 2020.

Top-ranked concerns:

1. Availability of cleaning supplies and necessities for place of employment
2. Impact to supply and/or demand of industry
3. Financial liquidity / access to credit – tied
4. Concern about having to lay off staff – tied

Key findings to date from business survey responses:

- The ‘stay at home’ order in St. Louis County and the City of St. Louis is the governmental regulation most impactful to respondents – many of whom are restaurants, retail shops, or exercise gyms.
- 36% of respondents do not or cannot allow for employees to work from home.



- The #1 non- 'other' tool most critical to business post-pandemic is 'marketing and communications assistance,' followed closely by 'supply chain assistance' and 'access to workforce.'
- Many respondents recognize the difference between grants and loans and are seeking grants.
- Non-English-speaking business owners are seeking multilingual communication of directives and available resources.
- Financial assistance and access to capital are key demands, with multiple requests for rent/mortgage and/or utility forgiveness.

In addition to the survey, the Regional Chamber has created a COVID-19 business resource center on its website, which includes up-to-date information on local, state and federal loan and grant programs, financial assistance, tax information, employee safety recommendations and other resources. The Regional Chamber team is reaching out to members via phone and email to find out directly what they are doing to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic and coordinating with local and state organizations and economic development agencies like Missouri Department of Economic Development, SLDC, STL Partnership, Civic Progress, Regional Business Council and AllianceSTL to streamline support.

This past week, the Regional Chamber also launched the Business Resilience Webinar Series, a twice-weekly video briefing and resource series providing up-to-date news, support and best practices for major industries impacted by the pandemic.

Every Tuesday through May 5 at 10:00 a.m., the Regional Chamber will present briefing videos from local government officials and industry leaders on the pandemic response and available resources:

- 3/31: Local elected officials from Missouri and Illinois
- 4/7: Leaders from BJC Health Care, SSM Health, and Mercy
- 4/14: Restaurants
- 4/21: Financial Services
- 4/28: Hospitality
- 5/5: Tourism

Every Thursday at 10:00 a.m., the Regional Chamber will host one-hour webinars with best practices and resources on specific operational topics:

- 3/26: Small Business Series
- 4/2: Transitioning to Remote Work
- 4/9: Healthcare Infrastructure
- 4/16: Entrepreneurship and Innovation



All webinars and briefings are presented at no charge, but registration is required. Visit www.stlregionalchamber.com/webinar to register.

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About the St. Louis Regional Chamber

The St. Louis Regional Chamber is the region's largest business organization, representing the St. Louis business community across 15 counties in both Missouri and Illinois. We champion a greater St. Louis region by serving as a catalyst for regional economic opportunity and forward-thinking public policy. For more information, visit www.stlregionalchamber.com.