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Lee Commissioners approve next round of LeeCARES assistance programs

Fort Myers, FL, Aug. 4, 2020 – The Lee Board of County Commissioners today authorized the next round of LeeCARES programs to assist individuals, families, and businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Board approved plans to:

- Launch Round 2 of LeeCares Assistance for individuals and families providing for broader eligibility and increased award amounts up to \$3,000 per household. Grant recipients from earlier rounds of assistance are also eligible for Round 2 funding. Round 1 closes to applications on Aug. 7 and Round 2 opens Aug. 17.
- Enhance the Business Rehire program by increasing grant sizes by up to \$8,000 awarded to each full-time equivalent rehire according to wages paid.
- Double the maximum scholarship amount allowed for each child that qualifies for childcare expenses to \$2,500 to extend the program through the remainder of the calendar year 2020.
- Distribute Personal Protective Equipment to county residents in partnership with the municipalities.
- Enhance CARES Act funding by \$1.8 million for the existing Rapid Re-housing Program currently administered by Lee County's Department of Human & Veteran Services; this includes adding additional partnering agencies to increase program capacity.

The LeeCARES programs are funded through the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES). The funding includes:

- \$45 million to Human Services programs including the Individual Assistance
- \$25 million to Business Relaunch and Rehire programs and PPE.
- \$23,950,000 for Public Safety and Medial expenses, including contact tracing, EMS transport, quarantine housing, etc.
- \$20 million for Governmental COVID-19 direct expenses for Lee County and Constitutional Offices, including PPE, facility safety, public education and messaging, data collection, elections, telework, etc.
- \$20.5 million for general reserves for COVID-19 costs.

A dashboard that shows assistance statistics is available at www.LeeFLcares.com/transparency.

Visit www.LeeFLcares.com for additional information about all available programs.

Application instructions also are available in Spanish by calling 239-533-2273 (or 239-LEE-CARES); applicants without internet access can also call the number. Hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. Please note, county offices are closed Friday, July 3, for Independence Day weekend.

Updates about the county's response to coronavirus can be found at www.leegov.com/COVID-19.