

More Relief in Sight for Business Owners

If you own a business that's been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, you may have received some type of aid from the government – or maybe not. But in either case, some new opportunities for assistance may interest you.

President Biden signed legislation extending the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) application deadline from March 31 to May 31, 2021. So, if you haven't received a PPP loan yet – or even if you have, and you're eligible for a "second draw" loan – you've got another chance.

As you may know, a PPP loan may be fully forgiven, including interest, if the loan proceeds are used for eligible expenses such as payroll costs (including benefits), mortgage interest, rent, utilities, operations expenditures, property damage costs, supplier costs and work protection expenditures.

The recently enacted American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) also strengthens the PPP, providing \$7.25 billion more in aid and expanding eligibility to some nonprofit organizations and local digital news services. And other recent changes to the PPP program were designed specifically to help smaller businesses.

Apart from these PPP benefits, the ARP includes other components that can help business owners, including the following:

- **Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL)** – The ARP allocated \$15 billion to the Small Business Administration (SBA) to offer additional \$10,000 EIDL advances for qualifying businesses.

- **Sick & Family Leave Tax Credit** – The ARP extends the Sick & Family Leave Tax Credit through Sept. 30, 2021, increases the wages covered by the credit to \$12,000 per worker (from \$10,000) and expands the number of days covered for self-employed individuals to 60 (from 50).

- **Shuttered Venue Operators Grant Program** – The ARP adds \$1.25 billion to this program, which covers live venue

operators or promoters, theatrical producers, live performing arts organization operators, motion picture theater operators and qualified museums, zoos and aquariums. Businesses can now apply for a PPP loan and a Shuttered Venue grant.

- **Restaurant Revitalization Fund** – Dining establishments have been particularly hard hit by the pandemic. To aid in the industry's recovery, the ARP established the \$28.6 billion Restaurant Revitalization Fund, which offers direct grants to restaurants and other qualifying food operations.

To learn more about PPP loans, as well as the other programs mentioned above, visit the Small Business Administrations' coronavirus relief website at www.sba.gov/coronavirusrelief.

You also may want to contact your tax advisor to discuss other aspects of the ARP that might affect you, such as the Employee Retention Credit. The ARP has extended this tax credit through the end of 2021 and expanded it to include "recovery start-up businesses" that began operations after Feb. 15, 2020, and have annual gross receipts of \$1 million or less.

Running a business is never easy – and for many business owners, this past year has truly presented an existential threat. Hopefully, though, as widespread vaccinations help bring the pandemic under control, we will soon see a return to more normal times. Until that day arrives, you may find that the newest relief measures can help you keep pushing forward.

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