



Committee: Directly to Council
Committee Review: N/A
Staff: Gene Smith, Legislative Analyst
Purpose: To introduce agenda item – no vote expected
Keywords: EDF, economic development

AGENDA ITEM #2E
April 28, 2020
Introduction

SUBJECT

Special Appropriation to the Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget Montgomery County Government Department of Finance, Economic Development Fund, Support for COVID-19 Response – Telework Assistance Program, \$250,000

EXPECTED ATTENDEES

None

COUNCIL DECISION POINTS & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

- N/A

DESCRIPTION/ISSUE

The Council is introducing the subject resolution to create the Telework Assistance Program. This program will provide grants to businesses and non-profit organizations that implemented a teleworking program and purchased teleworking equipment and software since the beginning of the health crisis in March.

SUMMARY OF KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- The public hearing and action for the subject resolution are tentatively scheduled for Thursday, April 30, 2020 at 1:30 PM.

This report contains:

Proposed resolution

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Resolution No.: _____
Introduced: _____
Adopted: _____

**COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

Lead sponsor: County Council

SUBJECT: Special Appropriation to the Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget
Montgomery County Government
Department of Finance, Economic Development Fund, Support for COVID-19
Response – Telework Assistance Program, \$250,000 (Source of Funds: General
Fund Reserves)

Background

1. Section 308 of the County Charter provides that a special appropriation is an appropriation which states that it is necessary to meet an unforeseen disaster or other emergency, or to act without delay in the public interest. Each special appropriation shall be approved by not less than six Councilmembers. The Council may approve a special appropriation at any time after public notice by news release. Each special appropriation shall specify the source of funds to finance it.
2. A new coronavirus disease, named COVID-19, appeared in China in December 2019 and spread extremely quickly. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the disease a pandemic. The April 11, 2020 situation report from the World Health Organization stated that the number of confirmed cases worldwide has exceeded 1.6 million, (approximately 1.5 million more than 1 month earlier). As of April 24, 2020, there were 3,227 cases and 121 deaths in Montgomery County.
3. To slow the spread of the disease, Governor Hogan declared a State of Emergency and has issued several Executive Orders with actions that include, but are not limited to, closing schools; prohibiting activities by non-essential businesses that restrict traditional on-site operations; closing senior centers and adult medical day care programs; limiting the number of people that can gather; and closing all gyms, movie theaters, and bars and restaurants (excluding carryout and delivery service).
4. The efforts to contain the spread of the disease and the disease itself continues to have a crippling impact on Montgomery County’s local business community and non-profit organizations.

5. Many businesses and non-profit organizations are implementing teleworking policies to comply with the Governor’s stay-at-home order to reduce the spread of COVID-19, some for the first time.
6. The Council through this special appropriation is creating the Telework Assistance Program to reimburse businesses and non-profit organizations for expenses incurred to implement a teleworking policy due to the COVID-19 health crisis.
7. A business or non-profit organization is eligible to receive assistance from the Telework Assistance Program if it: 1) has its physical location(s) only in the County; or its County-based locations account for more than 50% of the business’s total number of employees or 50% of the business’s gross sales; 2) employs 100 or less full-time-equivalent employees; 3) has not received financial assistance from the State or County for teleworking expenses related to the COVID-19 health crisis; and 4) has incurred expenditures after March 1, 2020 specifically to implement a teleworking policy (e.g., computers, cameras, software, etc.).
8. Each eligible business and non-profit may be awarded a grant up to \$2,500 for verified teleworking equipment and software. The actual grant will be based on actual expenditures for each business and non-profit organization.
9. A FY20 Operating Budget special appropriation is requested for the Economic Development Fund:

<u>Personnel Services</u>	<u>Operating Expenses</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>
\$0	\$250,000	\$250,000	General Fund Undesignated Reserve

10. This special appropriation is needed to implement the Telework Assistance Program.
11. Notice of public hearing was given and a public hearing was held.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

A special appropriation to the FY20 Operating Budget for the Economic Development Fund:

<u>Personnel Services</u>	<u>Operating Expenses</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>
\$0	\$250,000	\$250,000	General Fund Undesignated Reserve

This special appropriation must only be used for the Telework Assistance Program under the guidelines described in paragraphs 7 and 8.

This appropriation is needed to act without delay in the public interest.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

Selena Mendy Singleton, Esq.
Clerk of the Council