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Media Contacts (for reporters' use only):

Robyn Harris, LiftFund
robyn@gilbcomm.com, 281-649-9595

Martha Zurita, LiftFund
mzurita@liffund.com, 210-531-5518

Press Office, Harris County Judge
press@cjo.hctx.net, 713-274-7050

Apply starting Sept. 20 for \$30 million Harris County small business relief program, managed by LiftFund

**Eligible small and micro businesses may receive grants
between \$5,000 and \$25,000**

HOUSTON – Starting Sept. 20, small and micro businesses in Harris County contending with the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic can apply for grants tailored to help these businesses bounce back.

The Small Business Relief Fund will begin accepting applications **Monday, Sept. 20 at 9:30 a.m. through Monday, Oct. 4, at 5:30 p.m.** via the program's website, www.harriscountybusinessrelief.org. Eligible small business owners may apply for financial support in the form of grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000. The grants do not have to be repaid.

On Aug. 10, Harris County approved the \$30 million relief fund to support small and micro businesses recovering from the effects of the pandemic. The Small Business Relief Fund was created with funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and is being administered by LiftFund, a nonprofit organization that supports small business owners with funding and business education.

Harris County urges business owners who plan on applying to visit the website at www.harriscountybusinessrelief.org to review the applicant checklist to verify eligibility for this program and also to be prepared with the proper documentation needed to apply before the application portal opens.

"Small businesses keep money in our local economy and create a sense of community through networking and neighborhood involvement. They are meeting places, incubators of innovation, and pathways to success for first-generation entrepreneurs," said Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo. "Small businesses and the families they employ can't sustain a crisis of this duration and magnitude. Along with my colleagues on Commissioners Court, I'm proud to support small

and micro businesses' continued recovery with a \$30 million relief program managed by LiftFund.”

Support with the application process will be provided by LiftFund and other community organizations collaborating as partners (navigators). These local agencies will help applicants navigate the application process and overcome technological or language barriers. The list of agencies includes [Cámara de Empresarios Latinos de Houston](#), [East Harris County Empowerment Council](#), [Impact Hub Houston](#), [OCA-Greater Houston](#), [Spring Klein Chamber of Commerce](#) and the [Urban League](#). The partner organizations' locations and contact information is listed at [HarrisCountyBusinessRelief.org](#).

In an effort to help business owners prepare, LiftFund has hosted some info session webinars to provide an overview of the program. The last session is scheduled for Thursday, September 23 at 12 p.m. and will be simultaneously translated to Spanish and Vietnamese. Visit [HarrisCountyBusinessRelief.org](#) to register for the upcoming event and access the recording from previous sessions.

Eligibility Criteria

- Located within Harris County
- Registered as a business operating in Harris County
- Must have 30 or fewer employees (including part-time, contractors and full-time employees and owners)
- In operation before April 2020
- Experienced negative impact on operations due to the pandemic
- Annual revenue of less than \$500,000 dollars in 2019 and 2020
- Be in good standing with the Texas Comptroller's office with no outstanding tax obligations or liabilities

Funds will not be awarded based on a first-come, first serve basis, but will be assessed using a scoring methodology. All grants will be awarded by January 2022.

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About Harris County, Texas

Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo is the head of Harris County's governing body and director of the Harris County's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Judge Hidalgo, alongside four County Precinct Commissioners, oversees a budget of approximately \$5 billion that funds services and institutions for the third-largest county in the nation, home to nearly 5 million people. For more information about Harris County and the Office of the County Judge, please visit: cjo.harriscountytexas.gov.

About LiftFund

LiftFund transforms lives by opening doors, leveling the financial playing field and building a community of shared success through entrepreneurship. Founded in 1994, LiftFund provides capital, financial coaching, tools and resources to entrepreneurs who do not have access to loans from commercial sources. In Houston, LiftFund has provided more than \$67.9 million in capital and more than 4,200 loans; 81% to minority clients. In 2020, LiftFund provided \$98 million in relief funding, including relief loans, small business grants and PPP loans, to small business owners across its 15-state footprint. For more information, visit www.LiftFund.com.