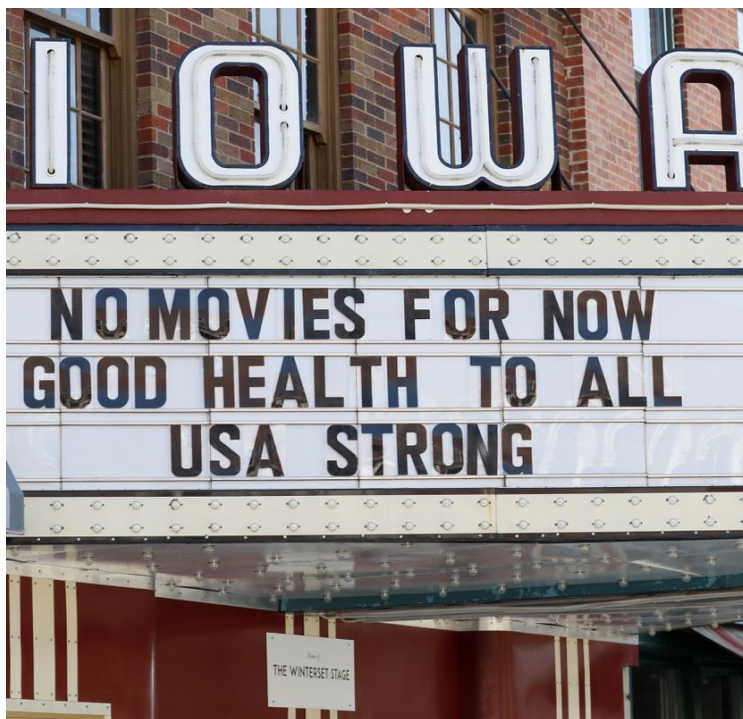


# LOCAL & STATE ECONOMIC RECOVERY & EQUITY TOOLKIT

FALL 2020



Picture Credit: Top Left Associated Press, Top Right Nhat V. Meyer/Bay Area News Group

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

State and local governments are facing unprecedented requests for assistance as individuals, families, service providers and businesses struggle with the continued impact of COVID-19. As we enter fall 2020 with the reality of ongoing coronavirus impact, local governments are leveraging a variety of tools to support families, businesses and nonprofits.

In August of 2020, the Washington Post reported that 29 million adults reported not having enough to eat in the preceding week, and 15 million renters reported being behind on rent. The data is more stark for communities of color, according to the report: "Black and Latino renters are the most at risk: In July, 44 percent and 41 percent, respectively, said they had no or slight confidence they could make the next month's payment or were likely to defer it, according to a U.S. Census Bureau survey. About 21 percent of White renters felt the same, according to an Urban Institute analysis of the data collected between May 28 and June 9."

The landscape for small businesses is also dire. Minority-owned businesses employ 8.7 million Americans and generate more than \$1 trillion in economic output, according to a report by McKinsey & Company Report. The report found that "58 percent of minority-owned small businesses are "extremely" or "very concerned" about the financial viability of their business," and that 55 percent of minority-owned businesses have conducted layoffs or furloughs. These astounding figures for families and businesses will continue to grow without immediate intervention.

As pressure on the federal government mounts to provide additional relief, state and local governments have a variety of options to limit the pain and damage. This toolkit provides a central space for effective strategies, practices and resources that cities, counties and states are taking around economic recovery, supporting immigrant small businesses and workforce development.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This toolkit was created by the National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA), a national coalition of 41 immigrant rights organizations across 37 states that lead policy and programmatic campaigns to further immigrant inclusion and equity at the federal, state and local levels. The strategies and resources shared in this toolkit were curated together with NPNA membership; along with the municipal leadership of Cities for Citizenship (C4C), a network of 93 cities and counties promoting and advancing citizenship initiatives. Special thanks to support from Citi and World Education Services (WES) for their support and contribution to COVID-19 response efforts. For questions regarding the report, please contact NPNA at [info@partnershipfornewamericans.org](mailto:info@partnershipfornewamericans.org).



# TOOLKIT OVERVIEW

## Economic Relief & Recovery Strategies

- ✓ Create Emergency Relief Funds for Hardest Hit Communities
- ✓ Ensure Equitable Access to Relief Funds and Programs
- ✓ Execute Rental Assistance and Eviction Moratoriums
- ✓ Support Universal Basic Income (UBI) Programs
- ✓ Close the Digital Divide

## Strategies to Revitalize Immigrant Small Businesses & Nonprofits

- ✓ Distribute Grants, Provide Zero-Interest Loans & Create Technical Assistance Initiatives
- ✓ Centralize COVID-19 Resources
- ✓ Expand Government Procurement to Include Minority and Immigrant-Owned Businesses

## Workforce Development Strategies

- ✓ Expand Partnerships with Local Colleges and Universities
- ✓ Develop Contact Tracing Programs in Partnership with Community Based Organizations, Local Hospitals & Health Departments
- ✓ Hire & Train ‘Community Navigators’ in Partnership with Community-Based Organizations
- ✓ Pass Legislation or Executive Orders to Remove Occupational Licensing Barriers for Foreign-Trained Healthcare Professionals

# ECONOMIC RELIEF & RECOVERY

## Strategy 1

### Create Emergency Relief Funds for Hardest Hit Communities

Municipalities can establish emergency relief funds to support individuals and families who were excluded from the CARES Act, often immigrants who are undocumented and/or in mixed-status families. Several municipal examples include:

- **Chicago Resiliency Fund**: The City of Chicago partnered with nonprofits to create a fund to provide \$1,000 to households that were excluded from receiving the federal stimulus checks. Chicago-based nonprofits including The Resurrection Project and two dozen other community organizations distributed funds to families that qualified.
- **DC Cares Program**: The District of Columbia has partnered with the Greater Washington Community Foundation to distribute funds and resources through partner nonprofits including the following. \$5 million in funds were distributed to undocumented families. Prepaid cards with \$1,000 each were given to families.
- **City of Austin's Relief in a State of Emergency (RISE)**: The City of Austin partnered with local nonprofit, El Buen Samaritano, to distribute \$500,000 to families that were left out of federal stimulus and CARES relief programs.

## Strategy 2

### Ensure Equitable Access to Relief Funds and Programs

Municipalities can create capital consortiums or business service portals that act as a single entry point for loan applications, grant information, and technical assistance. Partnerships with nonprofits and community development institutions ensure resources are accessible to small businesses. A couple municipal examples include:

- **Philadelphia Capital Consortium**: Nonprofit lenders, for-profit lenders, and other funders work with Philadelphia's Department of Commerce to improve access to capital for small businesses.
- **RISE Miami-Dade**: Miami-Dade County created the RISE small business loan program. Eligible businesses must have yearly revenue below \$2 million and less than 25 employees to qualify.

# ECONOMIC RELIEF & RECOVERY

## Strategy 3

### Execute Rental Assistance and Eviction Moratoriums

Pre-pandemic housing instability has been dramatically exacerbated due to COVID-19. Cities and municipalities have implemented rental assistance programs and eviction moratoriums on both residential and commercial tenants. Several municipal examples include:

- **Cook County, Illinois:** Cook County's Rental Assistance program helps suburban Cook County residents having difficulty paying their rent. It pays up to three months of overdue or future rent. Recipients must prove they are below the 80th percentile of the median income in their area.
- **Richmond, Virginia:** The city of Richmond created a fund for rent and mortgage assistance for noncitizen and mixed immigration status households. The city's Office of Multicultural Affairs will work with applicants to determine their eligibility.
- **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:** The City of Philadelphia's Eviction Diversion Program is modeled after the Philadelphia court's mortgage foreclosure diversion program. The program requires renters and landlords to conciliate any claims and ensure tenants are aware of their rights before eviction proceedings can take place.
- **San Francisco, California:** The city of San Francisco announced a moratorium on commercial evictions for small and medium-sized businesses related to financial impacts caused by COVID-19. The moratorium will prevent any small to medium-sized business from being evicted due to a loss of income related to lost revenue or other economic impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Gov. Pritzker (IL) announces rental relief program; pic credited to Justin L. Fowler/The State Journal-Register via AP, Poo



San Francisco Mayor London Breed announces the city's first confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus at a City Hall news conference on March 5. (Kevin N. Hume / San Francisco Examiner )

# ECONOMIC RELIEF & RECOVERY

## Strategy 4

### Support Universal Basic Income (UBI) Programs

The disparity in economic impact by COVID-19 has fast-tracked pilot programs and task forces for UBI in major cities. Recently, 11 mayors wrote a letter expressing their support for guaranteed income programs. A couple initiatives include:

- **Stockton, California:** In 2019, the city of Stockton California implemented the first pilot UBI program in the country. The program is giving 130 residents \$500 a month. The results have been promising and the program has been extended through 2021 to support participants through the pandemic.
- **Chicago Taskforce on UBI:** Chicago created the Resiliency Family Task Force to further study potential ways to address poverty and economic opportunity. Legislators and advocates have since pushed the city to adopt pilot programs for UBI and expanded direct cash assistance programs.

## Strategy 5

### Close the Digital Divide

Local governments are taking measures to reduce the digital divide. COVID-19 has forced families, businesses and nonprofits to rely on technology and the internet more than ever before, yet low-income families and small businesses face the reality of inequitable access to digital technology. Initiatives include:

- **San Diego, CA:** The City of San Diego is moving forward with a partnership to donate end-of-life City computers to the San Diego Futures Foundation to help bridge the digital divide for thousands of residents. The city is seeking to provide computers to over 30,000 households.
- **State of Illinois:** The state of Illinois announced its first round of grants totaling \$50 million to projects expanding broadband access across the state. This is part of the Illinois \$420 million plan to expand broadband access to every resident in the state by 2024.
- **Boulder, Colorado:** The city of Boulder, Colorado created a \$1.5 million fund to support residents and small businesses. \$100,000 in funds were dedicated to bridge the digital divide.

# REVITALIZE IMMIGRANT SMALL BUSINESS & NONPROFITS

## Strategy 1

### Distribute Grants, Provide Zero-Interest Loans & Create Technical Assistance Initiatives

Local economies have been severely impacted by business closures and layoffs, putting significant strain on government budgets. Assisting small businesses is critical to preserving both short- and long-term economic health. The following grant and loan programs have been implemented by local governments to supplement the federal Paycheck Protection Program:

- **Cook County Recovery Initiative**: Cook County created the Community Recovery Initiative to assist small businesses and nonprofits through the Cook County Recovery Fund, a targeted loan program for small businesses and independent contractors which provides up to \$20,000 in zero-interest loans; and the Cook County Technical Assistance Network, a partnership with nonprofits to provide technical assistance for financial assistance, grant, and loan programs.
- **Washington DC Small Business Recovery Microgrants**: A microgrant program to support small businesses and nonprofits. The amounts vary based on business type and size.
- Grant programs to support safe reopening by funding PPE and other safety protocols include **Columbus, OH** grants to childcare providers, **Chandler, AZ** PPE grants, and **Indianapolis** PPE grants.
- **Detroit/Wayne County Small Business COVID-19 Relief Grant**: \$15.5 million in grants were distributed to nonprofits and small businesses with less than 50 employees. Grants distributed up to \$20,000. A minimum of 30% of grants distributed will be distributed to minority, women owned, and veteran owned businesses.
- **Miami-Dade County Rockefeller Foundation Opportunity Collective**: Miami-Dade County received funding from the Rockefeller Foundation Opportunity Collective. The initiative aims to connect minority business owners with capital. The foundation pledged \$10 million to be allocated to local governments, faith-based organizations and nonprofit partners to distribute to minority owned businesses.
- **Norfolk Small Business Grant Program**: The city of Norfolk created a fund for small business grants using \$2 million in CARES Act funding. Priority for the grants were given to minority and women owned business.

# REVITALIZE IMMIGRANT SMALL BUSINESS & NONPROFITS

## Strategy 2

### Centralize COVID-19 Resources

Portals and guides are an important piece to economic recovery. In times of crisis it is difficult to navigate relief programs across government agencies. Language barriers in particular negatively impact immigrant-owned businesses, who may have access to information or technical support. Below are examples of centralized resource portals and pages which promote equitable access to relief programs.

- [Boston City Portal for COVID-19 Related Resources](#)
- [Birmingham Resource Directory for COVID-19](#)
- [Washington DC Small Business Hub](#)

## Strategy 3

### Expand Government Procurement to Include Minority and Immigrant-Owned Businesses

Municipalities have the ability to set aside a certain percentage of their contracts to minority and women-owned businesses. Local government spending could offset part of the loss in consumer spending by committing to expand procurement quotas to minority firms.

- **Louisville, Kentucky:** The City of Louisville, Kentucky established an Equity in Contracting and Procurement Task Force which will be charged with working to close the wealth gap by supporting Black-owned and Minority-, Female- and Disabled-owned Business Enterprises (MFDDBE) through supplier diversity initiatives, particularly related to capital projects.
- **State of Illinois:** Illinois invested \$2 million in state and federal funds to create two new Procurement Technical Assistance Centers in Chicago's under-resourced communities. The centers provide classes and seminars, individual counseling and easy access to bid opportunities, contract specifications, procurement histories, and other information necessary to successfully compete for government contracts.



# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## Strategy 1

### Expand Partnerships with Local Colleges and Universities

Innovative partnerships with local colleges and universities ensure that students can complete job training programs in high-demand fields.

- **Tallahassee Community College:** Instituted a campus wide program that connects those who lost their jobs during the pandemic with employment opportunities, workforce development training and other services, including childcare, healthcare, abuse and housing support.
- **Coastal Alabama Community College:** Providing workforce development training in an area considered to be the seventh most vulnerable place in the U.S. to sustain job losses as a result of COVID-19.
- **Laramie County Community College:** This Wyoming campus worked with local officials to receive special dispensation from the state of Wyoming to allow students to finish their workforce development training and courses in healthcare industries during COVID..

## Strategy 2

### Develop Contact Tracing & Outreach Programs in Partnership with Community Based Organizations, Local Hospitals & Health Departments

Contact tracing programs are essential to containing the spread of COVID-19. This work is integral to public health and there is major shortage of these frontline workers across the country, creating a space for workforce development for the un-and-under-employed.

- **The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership:** Combines public and philanthropic resources to broaden the reach of workforce development resources. The Chicago Department of Public Health announced a \$56 million grant award to the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership to create 600 contact tracing jobs to combat the spread of COVID-19.
- **State of Utah:** Community Health Workers & Mobile Testing Site (Utah) - Comunidades Unidas, an immigrant rights organization, has received funding through the Utah Department of Health (UTDH), to hire “Promotoras” or Community Health Workers for contact tracing and hosting a mobile COVID-19 testing unit. Comunidades Unidas partners with UTDH to train the Promotoras on contact tracing and community outreach, along with partnering with the Wellness Bus to host a mobile testing site in their organization’s parking lot.

# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## Strategy 3

### Hire & Train "Community Navigators" in Partnership with Community-Based Organizations

In addition to contact tracing programs, states and localities are working to build culturally and linguistically competent Community Navigator programs to conduct community outreach and provide translation for public health services and other programs.

- **Flint, Michigan:** Partnered with Michigan United to create a Community Health Navigator Program that identifies minority leaders with deep ties to their communities. Community Navigators perform public education presentations for their communities in a culturally competent manner. Michigan United provides training and learning stipends to compensate these leaders for their time.

## Strategy 4

### Pass Legislation or Executive Orders to Remove Occupational Licensing Barriers for Foreign-Trained Healthcare Professionals

There are approximately 263,000 refugees and immigrants with health-related degrees in the United States who are underemployed, unemployed, or out of the workforce. Almost two-thirds (or 165,000) of all underutilized health-care immigrant workers likely obtained their health-related education outside the United States. Removing unnecessary occupational barriers benefits local economies while providing employment opportunities.

- **New Jersey:** Make the Road New Jersey and other advocates successfully passed a bill to remove occupational licensing barriers to undocumented residents in fields such as nursing. It was signed by Governor Murphy on September 1, 2020. In April of 2020, Gov. Murphy of New Jersey signed an Executive Order that allows that physicians who are licensed in another country but living in the United States to apply for a temporary emergency license to practice medicine in New Jersey—the first program of its kind in the country.
- **Arkansas:** In 2019, the state of Arkansas passed legislation that extended nursing licenses to DACA recipients.
- States that have passed legislation to address disparities in access to licensure for internationally-trained healthcare professionals include **Minnesota**, **Washington**, **California**, **Missouri** and **Massachusetts**.

# CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The absence of a serious federal response to contain COVID-19 has forced state and local governments to the frontlines of response and recovery initiatives. For their own short- and long-term stability, local governments have an opportunity to create programs and policies that address the immediate needs of families, small businesses and a workforce seeking stability.

The strategies named in this toolkit provide an initial glance at response and relief efforts that cities, counties and states are taking to revitalize local economies, support immigrant small businesses and strengthen workforce development. The path to full economic recovery will be long, especially for communities of color, and will require continued investments in the aforementioned initiatives, and innovative strategies that are being developed.

NPNA, together with partners across the country, call on the federal government to pass necessary relief legislation such as the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act (HEROES) that was passed by the House of Representatives in May of 2020.

We recommend that cities, counties and state officials share this toolkit with executive office as well as agency leaders, identify gaps and opportunities in their current COVID-19 response, and begin implementing new strategies to support local communities. This must happen in tandem with lobbying federal officials to pass meaningful economic recovery legislation.

The National Partnership for New Americans, as well as members, Cities for Citizenship (C4C), stand ready to support local governments in these critical efforts. Please contact NPNA at [info@partnershipfornewamericans.org](mailto:info@partnershipfornewamericans.org) for assistance and collaboration.

We hope this serves as a valuable reference and guide to encourage local governments to adopt meaningful economic recovery programs during this unprecedented time.

