Kildare open for business

14th September 2020

Tánaiste announces additional funding for small businesses

Up to 2,000 businesses nationwide eligible

The Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment Leo Varadkar TD today (Monday the 14th of September) visited Kildare and announced a Scheme aimed at helping small businesses most acutely impacted by Covid-19 Restrictions.

The Micro-Enterprise Assistance Fund will help businesses with fewer than 10 employees, which are ineligible for existing grants, with a grant of up to €1,000 to help them adapt and invest to rebuild their business. About 2,000 businesses nationwide will benefit.

Speaking from K Leisure in Naas, Kildare, the Tánaiste said:

“The past few months have been extremely difficult for businesses across the country and especially for the people of Kildare who have had to endure further restrictions. Those actions were necessary at the time. They helped turn the tide against the spread of the virus. I know they also came with an economic impact and that businesses have been under serious pressure over the past few weeks.

“Kildare is fully open for business, in line with public health guidelines. Today we’re announcing a Fund which will help businesses, not eligible under our other schemes with the costs of re-opening. While many businesses have benefitted from the Restart Grant Plus and other government schemes, this is for small businesses with up to 10 staff that have not been eligible to any scheme to date. It is recognition of the difficulties in adapting to Covid-19 that they have had. Now is the time to shop local and I encourage everyone to think of their local business owner when doing their weekly shop or looking to buy something.”

As part of the July Stimulus, funding is also being increased to local enterprise offices to extend existing programmes, such as the ‘Lean for Micro’ programme to all businesses employing less than 10. This scheme is designed to encourage Local Enterprise Office clients to adopt Lean business principles in their businesses to increase performance and competitiveness.

Interested businesses can apply directly to their Local Enterprise Office.

Applications from Kildare, Laois and Offaly are already prioritised for funding under all existing Schemes.

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NOTES TO EDITOR
Eligibility criteria

The initial €2m for the Micro-Enterprise Assistance Fund is being provided under the July Stimulus for LEO clients that meet the following criteria:

- Businesses impacted by a 30% reduction in turnover due to COVID-19 restrictions or downturn in trade will be eligible provided they commit to reopening and to hiring and sustaining employment;
- The grant will be based on the amount of vouched additional expenditure from 14 September, from date of launch of the Scheme;
- Employers with between at least one and up to 10 full-time employees;
- Businesses that have a commercial focus, have an up to date tax compliance certificate and within eligible sectors (excluding gambling, coal and steel etc.);
- Businesses that are ineligible for other state sectoral funding schemes; and,
- Businesses already in receipt of the Government’s Restart/Restart Plus Grant, Fáilte Ireland Restart Plus scheme or the DEASP Enterprise Support Grant for Small Business are excluded.