



## Columbia County Board of Supervisors

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Tuesday, March 31, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FROM: Chairman Matt Murell

### **EMERGENCY BUSINESS, FAMILY FUNDS ESTABLISHED**

Columbia County Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell said Tuesday that two new emergency funds designed to rapidly deploy resources to community-based organizations and small businesses have been established.

The Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation and the Columbia Economic Development Corporation (CEDC), in partnership with the Columbia County Chamber of Commerce and the Hudson Business Coalition, have established the Columbia County Business Continuity Fund. It will provide cash grants to small businesses in our city and town centers with fewer than 10 full-time employees and less than \$1 million in annual revenue.

These businesses can apply for grant funds ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000 to cover costs related to retaining employees, rent, and other fixed operational costs. Donations to the fund can be made at [www.BerkshireTaconic.org/BusinessContinuity](http://www.BerkshireTaconic.org/BusinessContinuity). The fund will accept applications from April 1<sup>st</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup> at [www.columbiaedc.com](http://www.columbiaedc.com). An independent, volunteer committee of local business leaders will review and award grants based on the availability of funds.

Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation (BTCF) has launched the Columbia County COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund. It will provide flexible resources to nonprofit organizations to help meet the needs of individuals and families who are disproportionately impacted by the coronavirus. The fund will prioritize human services and community-based organizations with experience helping individuals and families stabilize their lives in times of crisis.

Donations to the fund and applications from eligible nonprofits can be made at [www.BerkshireTaconic.org/ColumbiaCOVID19](http://www.BerkshireTaconic.org/ColumbiaCOVID19). BTCF staff and volunteer members of BTCF's Fund for Columbia County committee will review and award grants.

"I want to thank CEDC and its partners for moving so quickly to establish a grant program for small businesses in Columbia County," said Robert Beaury, Germantown Town Supervisor and Chairman of the County Columbia Economic Development Corporation committee. "It is essential that we find ways to provide a lifeline to our business community during this very difficult time so that they can reopen once it is safe to do so."

“The Board of Supervisors is working around the clock to address our public health and preserve our businesses throughout the county. The Columbia County Business Continuity Fund represents our community stepping up and providing additional resources to help our small businesses during this challenging time,” said Murell.

### ***SELF-ISOLATION***

Columbia County Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell continues to urge anyone migrating from outside Columbia County to self-quarantine for 14 days upon their arrival.

“This is a critical component of our fight against the virus. We understand that people are coming here to escape the disease, but everyone should consider they are a carrier of the coronavirus,” said Murell. “We all need to continue the social distancing practices, such as hand washing and keeping six feet between you and others that have been set forth by public health officials.”

Murell added that even though, as of Tuesday morning, there were 39 positive cases of COVID-19 in the county, “we feel there are many more than that. We simply don’t have the test kits that would enable us to get a truer picture regarding the extent of the disease.”

Murell pointed out that as of Monday, New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo had extended the directive that all non-essential workers remain home through April 15. School districts have also been instructed to adhere to that date. In addition, President Donald Trump has extended the directive that social distancing practices throughout the United States remain in effect until April 30.

The state’s coronavirus website, with up-to-the-minute information, can be located at <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>.

### ***DONATIONS***

Those wishing to make donations of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as N95 masks, face shields, and gowns, are advised to contact the Emergency Management Office at 828-1212. If no one answers, leave a message and someone will return the call.

Nitrile gloves are considered suitable for medical use, while other types of gloves must explicitly state they are for medical use. Food donations should be directed to the county Office for the Aging (828-4258) and local pantries.

### ***DISCLAIMER***

It is the county’s intention to issue accurate information regarding the coronavirus situation under conditions that can change by the minute. For the most up-to-date, accurate information, visit the county Department of Health’s website at <https://www.columbiacountynyhealth.com/home/coronavirus-covid-19>.

The county will issue a daily press release on the coronavirus situation every afternoon at 4. The releases can be found on the Columbia County website and the Facebook pages of the Board of Supervisors, Sheriff’s Office, the Department of Health, and the Emergency Management Office.