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| Development COVID-19 Update |
| **Lt. Governor Husted Announces TechCred Awards, Program Changes to Support COVID-19 Economic Recovery**  Lt. Governor Jon Husted, who serves as Director of the Governor’s Office of Workforce Transformation, announced this week that 150 Ohio companies have been approved for TechCred funding from the latest round of applications and that applications will be accepted beginning Monday, June 1, for the next round.  TechCred helps employers upskill their current and incoming workforce to meet the needs of the increasingly tech-focused economy, particularly amid the COVID-19 health crisis.  Ohio TechCred logoThe TechCred program was launched in September of last year with the goal of expanding tech talent and helping businesses upskill their current employees in areas such as software development, robotics, and cybersecurity. As companies work to adapt to new technological demands during the global coronavirus pandemic, the potential positive impact of the initiative has an even greater reach. The Governor’s Office of Workforce Transformation has implemented a series of updates to support changing business needs as Ohio’s economy reopens.  “As businesses restart operations and people go back to work, the need for a tech-savvy workforce is growing,” Lt. Governor Husted said. “From tele-health, to distance work and learning, the need for tech skills increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, and we must aggressively prepare Ohioans to compete.”  The last round of TechCred applications closed at the end of March 2020, and 150 Ohio employers were approved, which will result in up to 1,045 credentials to upskill Ohio workers. Since the beginning of the program, 500 Ohio employers have been approved for reimbursement, which will result in the earning of up to 4,232 technology-focused credentials by Ohio employees.  High tech worker in computer server room“Now, more than ever, a workforce with advanced skills is critical to the success of Ohio businesses and the Ohio economy,” said Lydia Mihalik, Director of the Ohio Development Services Agency. “Credentials earned through TechCred will help both employees and businesses prepare for a brighter future.”  Many of the TechCred pre-approved credentials can be completed 100 percent virtually. Examples of these credentials and training providers can be found at [TechCred.Ohio.Gov](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5931/3/).  “One thing that has not changed during this pandemic is Ohio’s focus on providing skilled workers for in-demand jobs,” Ohio Department of Higher Education Chancellor Randy Gardner said. “Having a TechCred program that responds to the needs of employees and employers during this time will help Ohio and its technology workforce get through the COVID-19 crisis and emerge stronger than ever.”  To support the changing needs of Ohio businesses and workers during the economic recovery, the following changes have been made to the TechCred program:   * To make TechCred more flexible for upskilling new hires, employers are no longer required to list employee names when applying for TechCred. Instead, they will identify the number of current or prospective employees they will upskill. * To account for possible staffing changes, employers who were awarded in the October 2019, January 2020, and March 2020 rounds of TechCred may now substitute employees listed in their original application. * Employees can now earn multiple credentials during each application period.   The next application period of the TechCred program opens June 1 and runs through June 30, allowing for another opportunity for companies to train current and/or incoming employees.  More information on TechCred can be found at [TechCred.Ohio.Gov](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5931/5/). |
| Responsible Restart Ohio |
| **Governor DeWine’s Responsible RestartOhio Continues to Roll Out**  As businesses and organizations across Ohio continue to reopen under Governor Mike DeWine's Responsible RestartOhio plan, the Governor’s Fair Advisory Group has released guidelines for how county fair boards and agricultural societies can work with county health departments to safely operate junior fairs for kids.  [The guidelines focus on maintaining social distancing, limiting crowds, ensuring the health of everyone involved in the junior fair activities, and animal care and welfare.](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5962/6/)  "The decisions about county and independent fairs need to be made locally because each county and independent fair is unique and has different challenges," Governor DeWine said. "Conditions may change over the course of the summer, however, we are asking all fair boards to comply with all of the orders of the Ohio Department of Health and the guidelines for other sectors that would also apply to fairs, such as for food service and rides."  The Ohio Department of Agriculture is in the process of distributing all state funding available for Ohio's 94 county and independent fairs.  Full guidelines to ensure that Ohio’s industry sectors operate in the safest manner possible are available at [Coronavirus.Ohio.Gov](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5761/7/).  For more information about Responsible RestartOhio, visit [Coronavirus.Ohio.Gov](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5761/10/). |
| Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation |
| **Ohio BWC Defers Premium Installments for Employers**  The Ohio Bureau of Workers’ Compensation (BWC) is deferring Ohio employers' premium installments for the months of June, July, and August. Businesses will have the option to defer the monthly premium payments with no financial penalties.  “By extending the premium due date, businesses can continue to focus on the safety and well-being of their employees and customers during this health pandemic,” Governor DeWine said.  This is the second payment deferral BWC has given to employers amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.  The deferral is designed to help employers focus financial resources on reopening their businesses under the Responsible RestartOhio Plan. |
| Personal protective equipment gloves and mask |
| **Reminder: Ohio Manufacturing Alliance Helps Businesses Find PPE**  The Ohio Manufacturing Alliance to Fight COVID-19 created the Ohio Emergency PPE Makers’ Exchange as an online marketplace where organizations that need personal protective equipment (PPE) and related equipment can find a wide selection offered by Ohio manufacturers. This online service is especially well-suited for organizations that may have lower-volume needs.  For more information and to participate in the Exchange, [click here](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5862/11/).  The Alliance is a public-private partnership led by The Ohio Manufacturers’ Association, the Ohio Manufacturing Extension Partnership and its partner organization MAGNET, the Ohio Hospital Association, and JobsOhio, in partnership with the Ohio Development Services Agency, the Ohio Department of Administrative Services, and the Ohio Department of Health.  The Alliance also has created [this list of practical things](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5863/12/) manufacturers need to be thinking about and do to prepare for COVID-19.  In addition to the resources available via the Ohio Manufacturing Alliance Makers’ Exchange, another [list of vendors providing various PPE is available here (PDF](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5971/13/)).  *DISCLAIMER: Third-party websites not controlled or monitored by Ohio Development Services Agency. Development is not responsible for any materials, information, or content posted on any linked third-party website. The inclusion of any links or contact information in this communication does not imply any relationship or association between Ohio Development Services Agency, the State of Ohio, and the listed business, nor is it an advertisement or endorsement. Information is provided for user convenience and information purposes only. You are responsible for your access to linked websites or contact of any individual or business.* |
| Business woman working at desk |
| **We’re Here to Help Businesses Get Assistance**  The Ohio Development Services Agency has many resources to help business owners make it through the current crisis and prepare for a strong future. For instance, Ohio Small Business Development Center network partners have participated in more than 5,800 in-depth small business advising sessions between March 1 and May 15.  Here are some of the resources, and most of them are offered at no cost to businesses.   * Small Business Development Centers: [SBDC.Development.Ohio.Gov](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5891/14/). * Minority Business Assistance Centers: [Minority.Ohio.Gov](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5892/15/). * Procurement Technical Assistance Centers: [Find.GovContracts.Ohio.Gov](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5893/18/). * Manufacturing Extension Partnership: [MEP.Development.Ohio.Gov](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5894/19/). * Export Assistance Network: [ExportAssistance.Development.Ohio.Gov](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5895/20/). * Entrepreneurial Services Provider Program: [ESP.Development.Ohio.Gov](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/4967/21/). |
| Student holds graduation cap while operating a computer |
| **Success Story**  **Akron Companies Team Up to Create an Augmented Reality Experience for 2020 Grads**  Graduates of the class of 2020 are having a unique final year of school. Not only are they finishing the school year outside of the classroom, but the expected traditions that mark the end of the year seem less and less possible. And while no company can return these seniors’ years to normalcy, a pair of Akron-based partners have created a way to give students a virtual celebration fitting in this time of social distancing.  S3 Technologies logoNortheast Ohio’s S3 Technologies and New Territory have partnered to create an augmented reality Snapchat filter that gives the user a graduation cap and tassel, along with their school’s logo. The idea is to make lasting graduation day memories from afar. Now that the experience has launched, any school can get in touch with the companies and have a custom version built in just a few days.  “We thought there would be no better way to do that than by using an application that was on students’ smart devices already,” New Territory founder and CEO Bill Myers said. “It’s really fun to use. The hat connects perfectly to the top of your head, the tassel moves along with you and you can move it from one side to the other to indicate you’ve graduated. We created an experience that captures this monumental moment for the graduating class of 2020. I think this filter is something young people will reference for years to come. It may only last a few months, but the photos and videos will be stored for years to come and really be a keepsake from these strange times.”  The partnership between the two organizations showcases the power of northeast Ohio’s entrepreneurial scene. New Territory is a relatively new startup with a focus on cutting-edge tech, while S3 has been around for a decade, working with existing technologies in the security, audio-visual, and network arenas. But by combining their expertise, the two companies are able to push Akron toward the future of job creation and technology while maintaining firm footing in today’s industries.  That drive to create has powered Ohio throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, as organizations all across the state are creating solutions to problems, new experiences and game-changing innovations. For Myers, that’s no surprise. He said organizations like Bounce Innovation Hub, which houses New Territory, are providing Ohio companies with the resources to thrive, even during the pandemic.  [For more on this story, including a video, click here.](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5963/22/) |
| Woman reading social media on phone while drinking coffee |
| **We’re Pushing News and Information on Social Media**  Development also is using its social media channels to raise awareness of programs and assistance available through the state and federal governments. We also are urging small businesses to reach out to Ohio Small Business Development Centers and Minority Business Assistance Centers around the state for help in applying for federal assistance and to plan for the future.  Follow us on [Facebook](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5870/23/), [Twitter](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5871/24/), [Instagram](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5872/25/), and [LinkedIn](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5873/26/).  [hashtag InThisTogetherOhio](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5875/27/) |
| **For more information**  Visit [Coronavirus.Ohio.Gov/BusinessHelp](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5890/28/) or email [BusinessHelp@Development.Ohio.Gov](mailto:BusinessHelp@Development.Ohio.Gov). |
| [Ohio Development Services Agency](http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/891622/43139582/5876/29/) |



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