



44 BUSINESS CAPITAL

The Bill passed. Now What?

The CARES Act was passed and included the Paycheck Protection Plan (PPP). The PPP will be administered by the US Small Business Administration and its SBA lending partners. As Berkshire Bank's SBA lending operation, 44 Business Capital is diligently looking through the PPP and working with our trade association (NAGGL) to understand the framework of the plan while also aligning internal resources to handle the extraordinary amount of applications we will undoubtedly receive.

As soon as we have application documents from the SBA along with what information is required, we will immediately get that information out to our stakeholders.

What advice do we have for small businesses?

Consistent with prior messaging, we continue to suggest the following:

- Gather the following information. While this is just an “educated guess” on what might be required, it makes sense to gather this given the content of the Bill:
 - Your 941 payroll information as far back as 1/1/2019
 - Proof of your rent payments (3 months) “pre-pandemic”
 - Copies of your utility bills (3 months) “pre-pandemic”
- Check with your utility company to see what kind of relief programs they are offering
- Check with your vendors and suppliers and work with them to ease cash flow. This situation is tough for us all, but small businesses are being impacted particularly so during this time.



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- If you have an existing SBA loan, ***ask for a deferment! Most lenders should be able to provide a 3-month deferment to help ease cash flow requirements during this crisis.***
- If you have conventional/non-SBA debt, approach your bank about relief in the form of Interest Only payments or payment moratoriums based on your specific situation.
- Speak with your landlord and review your lease with counsel for clauses such as **Force Majeure** that may give you rent abatement if you are closed for actions beyond your control.
- Review your insurance policy for business interruption insurance and see if you have benefits to which you are entitled.

A small business can continue to apply for assistance through the SBA Disaster Relief program: <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/>.

This is Direct Assistance from the SBA; the banks are not involved but here to provide guidance, point you in the right direction and/or help you gather the necessary information (financials, etc.).