



STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND
INCORPORATED 1786

TOWN OF ELLINGTON

55 MAIN STREET – PO BOX 187
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187
www.ellington-ct.gov

TEL. (860) 870-3120 **TOWN PLANNER'S OFFICE** FAX (860) 870-3122

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING AGENDA WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2020, 7:00 PM

ZOOM MEETING

**(IN-PERSON PUBLIC ATTENDANCE NOT PERMITTED DUE TO COVID19)
(INSTRUCTIONS TO JOIN VIRTUAL MEETING PROVIDED BELOW)**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS (on non-agenda items):

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Report: Tolland County Chamber of Commerce
2. Report: Agricultural Initiatives
 - a. Draft Zoning Regulations – Farm Brewery, Cidery, Distillery and Winery
 - b. Discuss: CGS 12-81(m) Municipal option to abate up to 50% of property taxes for certain farms & Mansfield Ordinance Regarding Farm Tax Abatement
3. Report: Connecticut Economic Development Association Best Practices
4. Report: Tax Incentive/Abatement Programs
5. Report: Current Economic Activity
 - a. Discuss: Draft First Annual Small Business Shop Local Campaign

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Approval of the August 12, 2020 regular meeting minutes.
2. Correspondence:
 - a. DECD Small Business Survey – Post COVID-19 Needs to sustain and grow.
 - b. Governor Lamont announces expansion of Shared Work Program.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

Note: Next regular meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2020.

In order to comply with COVID-19 limited in-person meetings and social distancing requirements, this meeting will be conducted using the online video conferencing service provider Zoom. Meeting details will be provided on the Agenda and posted on the Ellington webpage (www.ellington-ct.gov), Agenda & Minutes, Economic Development Commission.

Join Zoom Meeting:
<https://zoom.us/j/94280610728>
Meeting ID: 942 8061 0728
Password: 735202

Dial by your location:
+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)
Meeting ID: 942 8061 0728
Password: 735202



Town of Ellington

Planning Department

55 Main ST., PO Box 187, Ellington, CT, 06029/Phone: 860-870-3120/Fax: 860-870-3122/lhoulihan@ellington-ct.gov

DATE: September 2 2020
TO: Economic Development Commission
FROM: Lisa M. Houlihan, AICP, Town Planner
SUBJECT: Draft Zoning Regulation - Farm Brewery, Cidery, Distillery and Winery

Farm Brewery, Cidery, Distillery and Winery

1. **Permitted uses** include tastings, tours, retail and wholesale sales of products grown or manufactured on the premises, sale of merchandise related to the products grown or manufactured on the premises or sale of merchandise unrelated to the products grown or manufactured on the premises when unrelated merchandise is no more than 25% of all merchandise displayed for sale.
2. **Minimum Lot Size:** 10 contiguous acres under single ownership and/or leasehold in any zone.
3. **Setbacks Requirements:** Buildings and structures shall be located a minimum of 100 feet from all property lines. Areas used for outdoor activities like outdoor seating and tastings shall be located a minimum of 200 feet from all property lines. However, buildings, structures and outdoor activities may be located 10' to a rear yard or a side yard when adjacent to permanently protected farmland, open space, or state forest.
4. **Parking and Access Requirements:** Adequate off-street parking and safe ingress and egress shall be provided. A reasonable parking area not to exceed three square feet for every one square foot of store or tasting area (whether inside or outside of a structure) is required. Permeable parking surfaces are recommended.
5. **Refuse** areas shall be properly screened from public view.
6. **Additional standards:** a vegetated buffer, fencing or combination thereof may be required to reduce disturbance to adjacent residential zones or residences.
7. **Hours of Operation:** Sunday, noon to 6pm; Monday-Wednesday noon to 8pm; Thursday-Saturday noon to 9pm.
8. **Food trucks** may be permitted, but shall be subordinate to the farm brewery, cidery, distillery or winery. Establishments may allow visitors to bring prepared food.
9. **Outdoor entertainment** shall not be amplified.
10. **Deliveries and pick-up** shall not occur between 10pm and 6am, when adjacent to a residence or residential zone unless the farm is located adjacent to a permanently protected farm, open space, or state forest.

Examples of Farm Wineries

Brignole Vineyards
 103 Hartford Ave
 E. Granby

Commercial Zone
 15 acres
 Established 2016

Mon - Fri 1:00 - 7:00
 Sat 12-7
 Sun 12-6

Private event space (up to 100 attendees)
 Food trucks



Crystal Ridge Winery
 257 Belltown Rd
 So. Glastonbury

Rural Residence Zone
 250 acres
 Established 2004

Mon -- Fri 3-8
 Sat 12-8
 Sun 12 -6

Food trucks
 Outdoor Entertainment



Lost Acres Vineyard
 80 Lost Acres Rd
 No. Granby

R2A Zone
 28 acres
 Established 2010

April - Dec. 31
 Fri & Sat 12-6
 Sun 12-5



Live acoustic music, 50% grown onsite,
Date Night Special picnic area or take
home (specialty pizza & wine),
membership events (3 times per year)



Cassidy Hill Vineyard
454 Cassidy Hill Rd
Coventry

GR-80 Zone
96 acres
Established --

Fri 11-8
Sat & Sun 11-5

Private event rental space (up to 60
attendees) Mon-Thur, Sat & Sun
evenings, and Fri from Labor Day
through Dec.
Closed Jan - March & holidays

Live acoustic music Fridays 6-8



Heartstone Farm & Winery
468 Route 87, Columbia

RA Zone
56 acres
Established 2017

Thur 12-7
Fri 12-8
Sat & Sun 12-7

Patio
Curbside pickup
Home delivery (5 bottle min)



CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTE

Sec. 12-81m. Municipal option to abate up to fifty per cent of property taxes of dairy farm, fruit orchard, vegetable, nursery, nontraditional or tobacco farm or commercial lobstering business operated on maritime heritage land.

A municipality may, by vote of its legislative body or, in a municipality where the legislative body is a town meeting, by vote of the board of selectmen, and by vote of its board of finance, abate up to fifty per cent of the property taxes of any of the following properties provided such property is maintained as a business: (1) Dairy farm, (2) fruit orchard, including a vineyard for the growing of grapes for wine, (3) vegetable farm, (4) nursery farm, (5) any farm which employs nontraditional farming methods, including, but not limited to, hydroponic farming, (6) tobacco farms, or (7) commercial lobstering businesses operated on maritime heritage land, as defined in section 12-107b. Such a municipality may also establish a recapture in the event of sale provided such recapture shall not exceed the original amount of taxes abated and may not go back further than ten years. For purposes of this section, the municipality may include in the abatement for such fruit orchard any building for seasonal residential use by workers in such orchard which is adjacent to the fruit orchard itself, but shall not include any residence of the person receiving such abatement.



**Town of Mansfield
Code of Ordinances**

“An Ordinance Regarding Farm Tax Abatements”

Adopted July 23, 2012

Effective

Section 1. Title.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the “Farm Tax Abatements Ordinance.”

Section 2. Legislative Authority.

This chapter is enacted pursuant to sections 7-148 and 12-81m of the Connecticut general Statutes.

Section 3. Findings and Purpose.

The Town Council of the Town of Mansfield believes that agriculture and farming are vitally important to the quality of life, environment, and economy of the Town of Mansfield, and wishes to encourage farming in the Town.

Connecticut General Statutes §12-81m allows towns to abate up to fifty percent of the property taxes on any dairy farm, fruit orchard, vegetable farm, nursery, or nontraditional farm, including a vineyard for growing of grapes for wine, and to recapture abated taxes in certain circumstances in the event of a sale of the property.

The Town Council wishes to establish a mechanism whereby such tax relief may be granted to dairy farms, fruit orchards, vegetable farms, nurseries, or vineyards for growing of grapes for wine, as provided by law

Section 4. Property Tax Abatement.

Upon approval by the Tax Assessor and affirmative vote by the Town Council, the Town may abate up to fifty percent (50%) of the property taxes for any such dairy farm, fruit orchard, vegetable farm, nursery or vineyard.

- a.** Any abatement shall continue in force for five years, or until such time as the dairy farm, fruit orchard, vegetable farm, nursery, or vineyard for growing of grapes for wine is sold, or until such time as the property ceases to be a dairy farm, fruit orchard, vegetable farm, nursery, or vineyard for growing of grapes for wine, or if any such business is deemed ineligible for an abatement based on a determination by the Tax Assessor that the beneficiary of the abatement has failed to show that they have derived at least fifteen thousand dollars in gross sales from such business or incurred at least fifteen thousand dollars in expenses related to such operation, with respect to the most recently completed taxable year of such business. Otherwise, any such abatement may be renewed for an additional five years by vote of the Town Council based on a proper reapplication made to the Office of the Tax Assessor at or near the end of the preceding five year term pursuant to the requirements for any initial application as set forth in this chapter.

b. The property owner receiving the abatement must notify the Tax Assessor and Town Council in writing within thirty (30) days of the sale of the property or the cessation of operations as a dairy farm, fruit orchard, vegetable farm, nursery, or vineyard for growing of grapes for wine.

Section 5. Application for Property Tax Abatement.

The Town of Mansfield may abate property taxes on dairy farms, fruit orchards, vegetable farms, nurseries, or vineyard for growing of grapes for wine, and recapture taxes so abated in the event of sale, in accordance with the following procedures and requirements:

a. Any action by the Town concerning the abatement of property taxes for dairy farms, fruit orchards, vegetable farms, nurseries, or vineyard for growing of grapes for wine, or the recapture of any taxes so abated, shall be done pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §12-81m, as such statute may be amended from time to time.

b. Any request for an abatement must be made by application to the Office of the Tax Assessor of the Town of Mansfield by the record owner of the property, or a tenant with a signed, recorded lease of at least three years, which lease requires the tenant to pay all taxes on any dairy farm, fruit orchard, vegetable farm, nursery, or vineyard for growing of grapes for wine, as part of the lease.

c. In order for an abatement to apply for the tax year beginning July 1, 2013, the application must be submitted no later than October 1, 2012. For any tax year thereafter, the application must be submitted by October 1 of the preceding year.

d. An abatement is only available for dairy farms, fruit orchards, vegetable farms, nurseries, or a vineyard for growing of grapes for wine. The applicant must provide the Assessor with evidence to support the status of the property as a dairy farm, fruit orchard, vegetable farm, nursery, or a vineyard for growing of grapes for wine. In determining whether a property is a dairy farm, fruit orchard, vegetable farm, nursery, or a vineyard for growing of grapes for wine, the Assessor shall take into account, among other factors: the acreage of the property; the number and types of livestock, vegetable production, fruit trees or bushes on the farm; the quantities of milk or fruit sold by the facility; the gross income of the farm derived from dairy, nursery, vegetable, or orchard related activities; the gross income derived from other types of activities; and, in the case of a dairy farm, evidence of Dairy Farm or Milk Producing Permit or Dairy Plant or Milk Dealer Permit, as provided by Connecticut General Statutes § 22-173. All residences and building lots are excluded, but any building for seasonal residential use by workers in an orchard which is adjacent to the fruit orchard itself shall be included.

e. In addition to the aforementioned evidence that must be submitted to the Assessor, the applicant must also provide a notarized affidavit certifying that the applicant derived at least fifteen thousand dollars in gross sales from such eligible business or incurred at least fifteen thousand dollars in expenses related to such operation, with respect to the most recently completed taxable year of such business. For purposes of this Chapter, such eligible business” shall cumulatively include all properties upon which an individual entity is doing

business as a dairy farm, fruit orchard, vegetable farm, nursery, or a vineyard for growing grapes for wine, otherwise, any such abatement shall be denied.

Subsequently, in order to retain any such abatement, within thirty days of each annual assessment date in the Town of Mansfield, the applicant must provide such notarized affidavit certifying that the applicant derived at least fifteen thousand dollars in gross sales from such business or incurred at least fifteen thousand dollars in expenses related to such operation, with respect to the most recently completed taxable year of such business. Otherwise, any such abatement shall be terminated by the Assessor with notice to the Town Council.

Section 6. Recapture.

Upon sale of the property, and subject to the authority of the Town Council per this chapter to waive any such payment, the property owner must pay to the Town a percentage of the original amount of the taxes abated, pursuant to the following schedule:

Number of Years Sale Follows Abatement Percentage of Original Amount of Taxes Abated for Given Tax Year Which Must be Paid

- More than 10 years, 0%
- Between 9 and 10 10%
- Between 8 and 9 20%
- Between 7 and 8 30%
- Between 6 and 7 40%
- Between 5 and 6 50%
- Between 4 and 5 60%
- Between 3 and 4 70%
- Between 2 and 3 80%
- Between 1 and 2 90%
- Between 0 and 1 100%

a. Upon affirmative vote by the Town Council, the Town may waive any of the amounts which would otherwise be owed pursuant to the foregoing recapture provision if the property continues to be used as “farm land,” “forest land,” or “open space,” as those terms are defined in Section 12-107b of the Connecticut General Statutes, after the sale of the property.

b. The taxes owed to the Town pursuant to the recapture provisions of this chapter shall be due and payable by the record property owner/grantor to the Town Clerk of Mansfield at the time of recording of her/his deed or other instrument of conveyance. Such revenue received by the Town Clerk shall become part of the general revenue of the Town. No deed or other instrument or conveyance which is subject to the recapture of tax, as set forth herein, shall be recorded by the Town Clerk unless the funds due under the recapture provisions herein have been paid, or the obligation has been waived pursuant to the immediately preceding subsection herein.

c. The Tax Assessor shall file, not later than 30 days after abatement is approved by the Town Council, with the Town Clerk, a certificate for any such dairy farm, fruit orchard,

vegetable farm, nursery, or vineyard land that has been approved for a tax abatement, which certificate shall set forth the date of initial abatement and the obligation to pay the recapture funds as set forth herein. Said certificate shall be recorded in the land records of the Town of Mansfield.

Section 7. Right of Appeal.

Any person claiming to be aggrieved by any action or inaction of the Tax Assessor of the Town of Mansfield regarding this chapter may appeal to the Board of Assessment Appeals of the Town of Mansfield in the manner set forth in Connecticut General Statutes section 12-111, as amended. Appeals from any decision of the Board of Tax Review may be taken to the Superior Court for the Judicial District of Tolland pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes section 12-117a, as amended.

Section 8. Effective Date.

Following its adoption by the Town Council, this Ordinance shall become effective on the twenty-first day after publication in a newspaper having circulation in the Town.

Dear ELLINGTON BUSINESS OWNER,

The Economic Development Commission would like to invite you to participate in the
1st Annual – Community Focused – SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

In hopes to bring more of the community out to shop and find gifts and experiences they may not have noticed without a town-wide campaign.

Due to the quick decision to try to make this event happen The EDC and a local business owner has gone ahead and created a plan for this year but will look forward to participation from more business owners next year to maybe “tweak” this year’s campaign.

WHO MAY PARTICIPATE?

If you are a business that has retail shopping or you’d like the community to see your operation or studio space -You’re a perfect fit!

HOW TO PARTICIPATE?

PLEASE R.S.V.P. to this invitation by October xx, 2020

PREPARE A GIFT GIVEAWAY*

PLAN TO HAVE CUSTOMERS AND DO THE GREAT THINGS YOU DO FOR CUSTOMERS ON SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY. i.e. special deals and sales, complimentary gift wrap, Samples (individually wrapped for them to take home – COVID friendly), maybe your own Drawing.

Let us know HOW MANY CUSTOMERS YOU WOULD EXPECT normally for Friday and Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend (this will help us order Shop Small Bags and marketing materials.)

If interested in donating a % of Friday/Saturday sales, we will put it all together and donate To local charity. This years charity will go to _____?
(Again, each year we can change the charity)

WHEN:

To allow customers to get around to as many businesses as possible, we will extend the 2020 Experience to 2 days – Friday, November xx and Saturday, November xx

WHAT WE WILL GET TO YOU:

A punch card with all the participating businesses. Customers must get at least 8 “punches” on their card in order to go into PRIZE DRAWINGS.

WHO WILL COORDINATE:

An Ellington EDC member will be by your business on Monday, November xx to pick up Any punch cards you have. (For example, if you the last business a customer has visited at 5pm Saturday, you will collect their punch card to give to EDC member on Monday)
Cards with at least 8 visits – will be entered to win a prize.

Prizes will be drawn during the week after SBS and EDC will call the winners.

EDC will also pick up any prize gifts you will donate for GRAND PRIZE giveaway.

ADVERTISING

EDC will place ad in the November NCN and on the TOWN WEBSITE, Facebook and Instagram to encourage Community participation. It will be up to each business to update their website and promote on their social media pages what you plan to offer – COVID compliant. Have fun and be Creative with your ideas. Weather permitting, start with tables and information outside, and Bring customers in – according to protocols – to see or experience your business.

SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY – MARKETING MATERIALS

Will be ordered and distributed the Monday before Thanksgiving, November xx.
Along with EDC punch cards.

PUNCH CARDS

EDC will pay for 5x7 Card with all participating businesses.
As well as a THANK YOU sign that you may display at your register or reception area.

DONATION FOR CHARITY – if you would like.

If you like to take 5-10% of sales for Friday xx and Saturday xx - we will pool the money and give it to a charity in Ellington.

DONATION FOR PRIZE WINNERS

DONATION for customers who got 8 or more “punches” on their Shop Small Ellington card.
This can be whatever you decide, Gift Card or Gift Basket and any amount you would like.



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINTUES
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2020, 7:00 PM
ZOOM MEETING**

**(IN-PERSON PUBLIC ATTENDANCE NOT PERMITTED DUE TO COVID19)
(PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROVIDED VIA ZOOM)**

PRESENT: Chairman Sean Kelly, Vice Chairman Chris Todd, Regular Member Donna Resutek and Alternate Bryan Platt. Regular Member David Hurley joined the meeting at 7:34 PM.

ABSENT: Alternate Stefanie Cunningham

STAFF

PRESENT: Lisa M. Houlihan, Town Planner and Christine Post, Recording Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Sean Kelly called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS (on non-agenda items): **NONE**

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Report: Tolland County Chamber of Commerce – Nothing new to report
2. Report: Agricultural Initiatives - Nothing new to report
3. Report: Connecticut Economic Development Association Best Practices
 - a. 2019 Plan of Conservation and Development Chapter Six - Economic Development and Appendix A: Summary of Considerations/Strategies;
 - b. Ellington Zoning Regulation Section 7-14, Agricultural Uses;
 - c. Public Act 17-160 An Act Establishing a Manufacturer Permit for Farm Breweries;
 - d. Agricultural regulations from Tolland, Stafford, South Windsor and East Windsor, and draft regulations from the Town of Somers.

Chairman Kelly opened discussion regarding the referenced materials provided by staff.

Vice Chairman Todd asked if the Commission has flexibility to vary from the lot size requirement listed in Zoning Regulation Section 7-14 and Ms.

Houlihan explained less intense activities could be on smaller lots and referred to a recent amendment approved for backyard poultry.

Commissioner Platt liked Tolland's regulations regarding farm breweries and Vice Chairman Todd stated that Stafford's regulations do a good job of setting standards for different size of events. Ms. Houlihan offered to perform research regarding lot sizes for some of the existing Connecticut wineries.

Vice Chairman Todd referred to past discussions with Cold Creek and suggested if the town is going to allow food trucks for farm wineries regulations should be amended to allow breweries to have food trucks.

Vice Chairman Todd talked about amending Zoning Regulation Section 7-14 in a way that encourages people to participate and should mirror relevant language in the Plan of Conservation and Development.

Chairman Kelly said that Somer's regulations has an excellent format for breweries and wineries, Ms. Houlihan explained the language from Somer's is proposed at this time and not yet approved.

Vice Chairman Todd said Tolland's regulations talk about licensed medical marijuana dispensaries and wondered if that should be addressed at this time. Ms. Houlihan reported medical marijuana dispensary is already addressed in the zoning regulations in a separate section.

Commissioner Platt likes both Tolland's and Somer's regulations because they propose a minimum of 3 acres, but he would like to see the results from the research Ms. Houlihan will do for existing farm wineries. Commissioner Resutek suggested 3 acres might not be enough acreage for full-blown venues.

The opening for South Windsor's regulations has a very clear vision for agrotourism, per Vice Chairman Todd.

Ms. Houlihan reviewed several parcels within Town regarding access and agreed regulations should consider remote locations and easily accessible locations. Commissioner Resutek stated that East Windsor's regulations address this particular issue and suggested provisions exclude amplified music and lot size be commensurate with the size of the event. Ms. Houlihan will research Granby's regulations as they correspond to Brignole Vineyards.

Ms. Houlihan will putting together these suggestions and research topics to create a rough draft for the Commission to review at next month's meeting.

4. Report: Tax Incentive/Abatement Programs

Ms. Houlihan received an inquiry from Earthlight reporting they are interested in applying for tax abatement for their new development at 128 West Road. Ms. Houlihan gave them the necessary information.

5. Report: Current Economic Activity

Ms. Houlihan reported that Accu-time Systems, Inc., on Somers Road has moved from Ellington to Windsor. Ms. Houlihan called Phil Sis, VP Engineering and Operations, to discuss the move and see if there was anything Ellington could do to prevent the move. Mr. Sis indicated the town had cooperated in every way. He explained the company outgrew the facility in Ellington and the size of the parcel and its configuration was not conducive for current and future needs.

There is no update on when DiFiore's will open.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Approval of the July 8, 2020 regular meeting minutes

MOVED (PLATT) SECONDED (HURLEY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE JULY 8, 2020 MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

2. Correspondence:

- a. Pullman & Comley correspondence dated August 5, 2020

Ms. Houlihan received formal notice from Attorney Lee Hoffman at Pullman & Comley via correspondence dated August 5, 2020, regarding a utility-scale solar farm off Middle Road in East Windsor and the public comment deadline in September. This project does not propose development in Ellington at this time.

The Commission agreed that next month's meeting will be a Zoom meeting in keeping with social distancing practices.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (PLATT) SECONDED (RESUTEK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING AT 7:54 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Post, Recording Clerk

Barbra Galovich

Subject: FW: DECD Small Business Survey

From: Barbra Galovich

Sent: Thursday, October 01, 2020 3:00 PM

Cc: Lisa Houlihan <LHoulihan@ELLINGTON-CT.GOV>

Subject: DECD Small Business Survey

Please see the below email from AdvanceCT and the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD)

Dear CT Business Owner,

We are fully aware that the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted our lives and changed the way business is conducted everywhere. Connecticut's small businesses especially have had to quickly adapt to new protocols and guidelines that protect their employees and their customers. Although Connecticut is seeing some of the lowest transmission numbers in the country, the long-term economic impact of the pandemic is not yet known.

In order to drive effective decisions and policies to help our small businesses across the state, we need information. Below is the first of several surveys intended to gather feedback from our small businesses on the front lines. The survey is completely voluntary but we encourage filling it out as best you can and/or sharing it with any relevant businesses.

<https://www.research.net/r/DECDbizsurveycomm>

We need to hear directly from you, the business owner, about how your business has adjusted and what key services are necessary to sustain and grow in this new post-COVID environment.

We thank you in advance for all that you have done and continue to do to keep our state healthy, safe, and moving forward.

As always if you have questions or concerns, call (860) 500-2333 or email decd.covid19@ct.gov.

- The CT DECD TEAM



Governor Lamont recently announced the expansion of the state's [Shared Work program](#) to help companies navigate the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Shared Work program, managed by the Connecticut Department of Labor, helps employers reduce operating costs and avoid layoffs by temporarily reducing employees' hours by 10-60%. Those workers receive a significant portion of those lost wages by receiving partial unemployment benefits.

In addition to reducing short-term costs, businesses benefit by avoiding the expense associated with recruiting, hiring, and training new employees when the economy recovers. Impacted employees benefit by retaining a connection to their employer (rather than being laid off), maintaining their health insurance and other benefits, and protecting the majority of their income.

Connecticut's Shared Work program, which began in 1992, helps companies manage temporary downturns or lulls that can occur between contracts. It can also be used to help manage the impact of COVID-19.

Before the pandemic, Connecticut had approximately 290 companies enrolled in the program, protecting about 2,900 workers from layoffs. Since March, the program has benefited 1,340 companies and more than 24,300 workers.

Key elements of the program include:

- Companies with two or more workers can qualify
- Employees' hours can be reduced up to 60%
- Shared work is available up to six months for each employee
- Companies can file for an extension at the completion of the six-month period
- The federal government will cover the unemployment costs traditionally covered by businesses until December 31, 2020.

Companies interested in participating in the Shared Work program may now apply with the Connecticut Department of Labor. For more information and to begin the application process, [click here](#).

Sincerely,

David Lehman, Commissioner

david.lehman@ct.gov, (860) 500-2310