



U.S. Chamber of Commerce Releases Guide to Help Tens of Millions of Independent Contractors Secure CARES Act Funding

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Chamber of Commerce today released a new guide to help independent contractors and self-employed individuals secure funding under the CARES Act. The guide, which was prepared after the Small Business Administration provided new guidance on Tuesday, is intended to assist millions of independent contractors including accountants, construction workers, musicians, real-estate agents, freelance writers, and gig workers. The guide provides step-by-step assistance to help individuals understand eligibility requirements, borrowing limits, and appropriate use of funds under the Paycheck Protection Program and Economic Injury Disaster Loans. It also outlines the steps required to apply for Unemployment Compensation under a special program created by the CARES Act.

The guide for independent contractors and self-employed individuals is available at uschamber.com/ICguide. The Spanish version of the guide can be found at uschamber.com/ICGuideESP

“No self-employed individual, independent contractor or their families should go bankrupt because of the economic fallout from the coronavirus,” said Neil Bradley, executive vice president and chief policy officer, U.S. Chamber of Commerce. “This guide will help our nation’s independent contractors across a wide spectrum of industries secure the funding they need to support themselves and their families during this difficult time.”

23 Million Independent Contractors

According to IRS data from 2016, nearly 23 million Americans earn wages as independent contractors working either part or full-time. Of those 23 million independent contractors, less than 2 million (8.6%) earn wages as part of the on-demand economy.

To help illustrate the depth and breadth of the nation’s independent workforce, the Chamber has posted [data visualizations on a state-by-state and industry basis](#). The interactive map shows both the number of independent contractors in each state and the number of independent contractors in each state that work through online or app-enabled platforms in addition to the top 20 industries for independent contractors.

Not surprisingly, the most populous states of California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Illinois topped the list in terms of the most independent contractors per state, but it also showed that 13 states have more than 500,000 people working as independent contractors and 38 states have at least 100,000 independent workers.

Further, the dataset shows the top five independent contractor industries:

1. Professional, scientific, and technical services
2. Other services
3. Real estate, rental, and leasing
4. Health care and social assistance
5. Construction

“Twenty-three million American support themselves and their families through work as an independent contractor. Whether it is in construction or real-estate, delivery services or entertainment, or the hundreds of other independent contractor occupations, these individuals are a critical element of our economy. We are pleased that Congress included support for them in the CARES Act,” Bradley said.

Paycheck Protection Act Funding

Beginning on April 7, independent contractors receiving 1099-MISC forms and self-employed individuals were eligible to apply for the Paycheck Protection Program loan as part of the \$2 trillion CARES Act. While these loans are potentially 100% forgivable, loan commitments have reportedly reached the maximum total of \$349 billion available in the Paycheck Protection Program. Earlier today, the Chamber [urged](#) congressional leaders to restore this needed CARES Act funding.

“Today’s tragic and staggering unemployment figures underscore the dire need for bridge funding to keep more Americans on the job and more businesses afloat during the coronavirus economic crisis,” Bradley said. “There is absolutely no excuse for failing to get these funds approved immediately. American small businesses, self-employed workers, and independent contractors need and expect the type of bipartisan cooperation that led to the CARES Act to solve this immediate crisis.”

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is committed to helping American businesses respond to the coronavirus so they can support their employees, customers, and communities. Our members and the state and local chambers, who are on the front lines of this pandemic, need us now more than ever to help them through this significant disruption. We will continue working every day to help our country’s people, businesses, and economy weather this storm and emerge stronger—just as we have at other challenging times in our nation’s history.

Visit uschamber.com/Coronavirus for more information.

About the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world’s largest business federation representing the interests of more than 3 million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations.

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