

BUSINESS ADVOCATE

The Business Council of Alabama presented the Alabama Small Business Exchange in an effort to guide small business owners on a range of business issues caused by COVID-19.

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OUR PATH FORWARD IS TOGETHER



THE BCA IS ALABAMA'S STATE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, LEARN MORE AT [BCATODAY.ORG](https://bcatoday.org)

BCA'S SMALL BUSINESS EXCHANGE ANSWERS QUESTIONS FROM HUNDREDS OF SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

Everyone can name a small business that is a staple in the routine of everyday life. Whether it be the go-to restaurant Sunday after church or the clothing boutique that sells the perfect first day of school outfit, small business plays an essential role in the lives and livelihood of citizens throughout Alabama. What most may not realize is just how vital small businesses are to our state. According to the Small Business Administration, a small business is defined as any entity with 500 or fewer employees. By that definition, 99.4% of all businesses throughout the state are small, employing nearly half of the private workforce. To say that small businesses are the backbone of our state is a considerable understatement. Understanding this, the Business Council of Alabama (BCA) began seeking every opportunity to provide clarity and understanding to small businesses in a time that is anything but certain.

On Thursday, April 9, BCA presented the Small Business Exchange in partnership with Alabama Public Television (APT). This event, designed to help small businesses walking



through the process of applying for federal stimulus funding under the CARES Act, allowed small businesses throughout the state the opportunity to speak to experts on a variety of topics, including the CARES Act, small business loans, unemployment, and more. BCA was thrilled to have several special guests be a part of the televised portion of the Small Business Exchange. Governor Kay Ivey, Lieutenant Governor Will Ainsworth, Attorney General Steve Marshall, Carl Jamison of JamisonMoneyFarmer, NFIB Alabama State Director Rosemary Elebash, Jason Isbell of the Alabama Bankers Association, and Secretary of Labor Fitzgerald Washington all provided invaluable advice and resources to listeners throughout the broadcast.

More than 50 subject matter experts from the state's largest law firms, CPA firms, and banks volunteered their time and expertise over the course of two days to consult with small businesses from across the state. The firms represented were JamisonMoneyFarmer PC, the Alabama Bankers Association, the National Federation of Independent Businesses, Maynard Cooper & Gale, Balch & Bingham

LLP, Bradley, Jackson Thornton, Butler Snow, Wilkins Miller, Kassouf & Co., Jones Walker, Adams and Reese LLP, Lightfoot, CK Business Solutions PC, Burr Forman, Carr, Riggs & Ingram, and Alabama Small Business Development Center. These lawyers, bankers, and accountants provided resources and answers to hundreds of questions throughout the two-day event. Through the generous use of their time, BCA was able to reassure businesses that they are not navigating these unprecedented times alone.

"Small business is the lifeblood of this state, and it is imperative we do our part to help," said Katie Boyd Britt, President and CEO of BCA. "The best and brightest from across Alabama volunteered to help answer questions and point businesses in the right direction. We want to continue to help small businesses throughout the state navigate this - and get and stay on their feet. The future of our state depends on it."

BCA aims to continue being a trusted resource for all businesses throughout the state. By working with organizations at the local, state, and national level, BCA



hopes to gain as much clarity as possible on ways to help. Whether that be providing resources, hosting webinars, or simply being a listening ear, BCA wants to be the best advocate for businesses in our state. But, it cannot be done alone. Now, more than ever, the business community must band together as a united front. We must continue

What will that day look like? What changes will need to be implemented in order to keep customers and employees safe moving forward? What innovations can be adopted as we establish a new routine? These are the questions that BCA is striving

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working together to share best practices and supporting one another, keeping our employees and communities safe while looking forward to the day we can resume business-as-usual again.

to answer next. When that day comes, BCA will be standing behind our small businesses, cheering them on as they reopen stronger and more resilient than ever before. [BA](#)

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BCA's President and CEO, Katie Boyd Britt interviews Gov. Kay Ivey during the hour long Small Business Exchange televised on Alabama Public Television (APT) on April 9.

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The Small Business Exchange would not have been possible without our sponsors and the efforts of the volunteer experts they provided.

The Business Advocate is published by the Business Council of Alabama, a non-partisan, statewide business association representing the interests and concerns of over 1 million working Alabamians through its member companies and its partnership with the Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama. For more information on becoming a member of the BCA, contact Helena Duncan, 334-240-8749, or hduncan@bcatoday.org.



ALABAMA
MANUFACTURER
OF THE YEAR



THE 2020 MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

**POSTPONED
UNTIL FALL
2020**

(DETAILS TO FOLLOW)

**IN THE INTEREST OF EVERYONE'S SAFETY
AND WELLBEING.**

WE'VE POSTPONED THE 2020 MANUFACTURER OF YEAR AWARDS TO DATE TBD.

Hosted by the Business Council of Alabama
and the Alabama Technology Network.

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