

State govt urged to simplify application for one-off financial aid for SMEs

SIBU (Oct 8): Pelawan assemblyman David Wong urges the state government to simplify the application for one-off financial assistance of RM10,000 for small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

In a statement yesterday, he said the sudden change in the application for the assistance would create confusion and make it difficult for the businesses to get the assistance they needed.

According to him, the state government announced on Aug 4 that the payment of the financial assistance for SMEs would be made directly to eligible companies in two tranches – first in September and second in December and no application is required.

However, recently it was announced that eligible business owners are now required to apply for the cash aid, in which many additional documents and eligibility criteria were added as requirements.

“Why is the state government only changing the eligibility criteria and requiring business owners to apply for the aid now?”

“Businesses were supposed to receive their first cash aid payment by now, but instead they are only given two weeks to submit their application or miss out the cash aid,” he said.

According to him, now business owners need to obtain a Sarawak ID and to upload required documents through Sarawak government portal www.sarawak.gov.my.

The application started yesterday and will end on Oct 22.

He also requested the government to explain the sudden change in the application.

“First, it was announced that active SMEs registered with Socso as of 2020 are eligible and no application is required. Then, it was announced that applications are now required and business owners are required to upload the required documents in two weeks’ time.

“But today, when people are applying for the said aid, more additional documents such as Form 78 are suddenly added, and they have been told that their businesses must be registered and actively operating for at least three years to be eligible. We are not even sure if further changes will be made after this,” he said.

Thus, he said the state government should automate and simplify the application for the financial assistance if the government is sincere in providing aid to the businesses.

Wong also said that Sarawak government should include micro-enterprises in the state to be eligible for the financial assistance.

He said majority of the business entities in the nation are categorised as micro-enterprises.

“According to SME Corp and Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM), 78.4 per cent of the total business entities in the nation are categorised as micro-enterprises, where they have less than five employees and an annual turnover of not more than RM300,000,” he said.

He pointed out that as the Covid-19 pandemic has devastated the nation’s economy, many businesses have been forced to retrench their employees to survive, with their income also heavily affected.

<https://www.theborneopost.com/2021/10/08/state-govt-urged-to-simplify-application-for-one-off-financial-aid-for-smes/>