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## SchoCo Promise: Safety 1st

### SEEC, partners launch help with New York Forward plan, promo

By Patsy Nicosia

SEEC and its partners, including the Economic Alliance & Reopening Task Force, want to make sure Schoharie County stays open—safely—as New York State reopens.

To do that, today they're launching the SchoCo Promise, an effort with two pieces linked through Survey Monkey.

The first will help walk businesses through filing their required New York Forward safety plan and "affirming" that they've done it—a bewildering and confusing step most don't realize is critical to keeping the Mohawk Valley Region—that's us—open.

Then, the second piece of the Survey Monkey tool will take businesses through the steps to become a part of

SchoCo Promise, a designation that recognizes safe COVID-19 practices modeled after other Promises in New York City, the Poconos, Niagara Falls, and Lake George.

"We're very fortunate that we're now in Phase 4, but we're a little worried that not all businesses realize they have to have a safety plan and have it affirmed," said SEEC Executive Director Julie Pacatte.

That missing step is something that's critical to keeping businesses open, she said, especially if COVID numbers begin to climb.

SchoCo Promise is intended as a way to let visitors know businesses take COVID safety seriously, something everyone involved hopes will keep them coming.

"Every indication is that folks want to shop at places that take

it seriously," Ms. Pacatte said.

"We also realize it's important to keep the people who own and run our businesses healthy and safe. Stay healthy, stay open. That's the message we're going with."

Businesses that receive the SchoCo Promise designation will receive a certificate and window clings they can use to promote it.

They'll also be able to access resources like shared business safety plans and signs and be included in marketing opportunities like social media posts and newspaper advertising campaigns.

SEEC and the Economic Alliance & Reopening Task Force can also help essential businesses that have remained open through all of the New York on Pause phases affirm their safety plan—again, many don't know

it's required or where in New York Forward they even fit, Ms. Pacatte said—and sign them up for SchoCo Promise too.

For more information and the Survey Monkey link, go to [seecny-19.org](http://seecny-19.org).

Members of the Economic Alliance & Reopening Task Force include: Bill Felter, Serious Brewing; Kimberly Witkowski, Schoharie County Council of Senior Citizens; Robin Stine, Henry Hill Farm; and Theresa Olsen, GTO Woodturning.

Also: John McKeeby, Schoharie River Center; Lindsey Giagni, State Farm Insurance; Bob Smith, Cobleskill Golf & Country Club; Bryan Ludwig, Progressive Chiropractic; Ryan McGiver, Scrumpy Ewe Cider; and Jerrine Corallo, Country Classroom.



**SEEC and its partners are launching the SchoCo Promise today, a way to help keep businesses safe in COVID-19.**