

Anoka County Business Relief Grant Program

Anoka County will offer a business relief grant program to support local businesses impacted by COVID-19. Grants will be awarded in an amount not to exceed \$10,000. Applications will be accepted electronically during a 10 day time frame beginning August 24, 2020 and ending September 3, 2020 at which time the County's administrator will evaluate the applications. Application will be made available in Spanish, Hmong, Somali, Arabic and Russian on a request basis. In addition, application technical assistance will be available through Anoka County Regional Economic Development Department and additional technical assistance providers. Grants will be awarded based upon the extent of hardship and need.

Grant Amount:

Grants will not exceed \$10,000 to cover eligible expenses incurred as a result of the COVID pandemic after March 1, 2020 (see examples of eligible use of grant funds below). Recipient must submit a list of COVID related expenditures during the application review process.

The total amount of CAREs Act funds allocated towards the Anoka County business relief grant program will be equitably distributed among each of the seven county districts based upon economic hardship and need.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Applicant must be locally owned, operated and domiciled in the State of Minnesota with a physical establishment in Anoka County. If there is a parent company or a second location outside of Anoka County, only the entity located in Anoka County will be eligible.
- Applicant must be able to demonstrate financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Applicant must be in good standing with the Minnesota Secretary of State and the Minnesota Department of Revenue as of January 1, 2020. If there is an issue pending with the Minnesota Secretary of State, Applicant may still apply for the grant, but will need to demonstrate the issue has been satisfactorily resolved in order to be eligible and receive grant funds.
- Applicant must certify that it is not prohibited from doing business with either the federal government or the state of Minnesota as a result of debarment or suspension proceedings.
- If required, Applicant must be licensed, in good standing.
- Applicant must be current on property taxes.
- Applicant must employ 50 or less employees as of January 1, 2020.
- Applicant must have been in operation 12 months prior to application.
 - Anoka County will not disqualify an applicant if there was an ownership change and the business remained in operation within 12 months prior to application.

- Applicant must disclose all federal, state or local grant or loan applications for which applicant has applied which has been received or remains pending at the time of application.
- Applicant must Certify in good faith that the “uncertainty of current conditions makes the grant request necessary to support ongoing operations.”

Ineligible Businesses/Restrictions

- Applicants who have previously received federal, state or local grants for the same expenses.
- If an applicant receives any funding from a local city and the County, Applicant may only accept one of the grants.
- Multi-state chains are generally ineligible except for locally owned franchisees.
- Nonprofit organizations.
- Businesses that primarily derive income from gambling or adult entertainment.
- Home-based businesses are generally ineligible except for in-home licensed childcare providers.
- Businesses that derive income from passive investments; property rentals or property management; billboards; or lobbying.
- Payment of taxes or government utilities or fees are ineligible.

Examples of Eligible Usage of Grant Funds

1. Commercial lease or mortgage payments.
2. Accounts payable (AP) if the AP is a COVID-19 related expense incurred since March 1, 2020.
3. Payroll, unless the business received Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) funds or pandemic unemployment insurance (UI) to assist with payroll expenses incurred after March 1, 2020.
4. Reopening costs or safety improvement costs expended since March 1, 2020 (i.e. outdoor seating, plexiglass, cleaning products, re-staffing costs, etc.)
5. Operating utilities or fees for those facilities interrupted or forced to shut down incurred after March 1, 2020.

The categories outlined above are intended to be general guidance. Final grant decisions will be made in consultation with the County’s Administrator after a thorough review of all application factors. After the initial funding round, County reserves the right to amend any criteria for eligibility as needed to best address the impact of the current pandemic.