

Anoka County Business and Non-Profit Relief Grant Program
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS)

When and how do organizations apply?

Applications will be accepted between August 24 and September 3, 2020.

My business is a home-based business that is a licensed child care provider. Am I eligible for this program?

Yes. Licensed childcare businesses are exempted from the home-based business exclusion.

Do sole-proprietors or self-employed qualify for this program?

Yes, as long as they have a physical establishment outside their home and have eligible expenses.

Can churches apply for the non-profit program?

As long as they are a 501(3)(c) non-profit organization

Which non-profits are eligible to apply?

Applicant must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or 501(c)(19) veteran's organization

I received a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan or an Economic Injury Disaster Loan (or any other federal SBA loan or grant, including an EIDL Advance). Am I still eligible for a grant from this program?

Yes – however they cannot use this grant to cover the same expense they may have utilized either the PPP or EDIL

If I receive a grant from this program, how does that affect my Paycheck Protection Program loan?

Please refer this question to your PPP loan servicer or financial advisor.

If a business received a COVID relief grant from the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) or their local municipality, can they apply for this program?

If an organization has already received a grant from their local municipality or the state, they cannot accept the county's grant.

What if a business applied for a COVID relief grant from their local municipality or DEED, but is not sure if they were awarded funds yet, can they apply for this program?

Yes – businesses should apply to all applicable grant options available to them, but ensure they disclose which programs they have applied for. Businesses cannot receive a grant from their municipality and county or the county and the state.

Can organizations send in a paper or email application?

No. Due to the large volume of applications, we can only accept applications submitted through the online form. Our grant administrators and the county's economic development department will be offering technical assistance with the online applications.

What happens after organizations submit their application?

The county is working with two outside grant administrators that will be reviewing applications for eligibility. If the program is oversubscribed, the county will notify any organization that were selected to not move forward with the grant administration review. Those organizations will be placed on a waitlist if any of the selected applicants cannot pass the eligibility review. Once the grant administrators have exhausted all funds in the relief grant funds, any waitlisted organizations will be notified they did not receive a grant.

Does it matter when organizations submit their application?

No, as long as you submit it before the application deadline your application will be treated the same whether it was received on day one of the application period or day ten. However, it is advisable not to wait until the last minute incase there are any questions while filling out the application.

I need help filling out my application. Where can I get help?

Anoka County has a list of community development partners that serve woman, minority and woman owned organizations.

You may use any other assistance provider you wish, but no assistance provider, whether free or fee-based, can guarantee you will receive a grant or that your chances of receiving a grant through the random selection process will be improved.

I need the application translated into another language. Where can I get help?

Contact MCCD or a community partner listed below for assistance in translating the application and filling out a complete application.

Who is selecting the winners? How will selections be made?

If the business and non-profit relief grant programs receive more applications than available, we will be prioritizing businesses and non-profits with the highest COVID impact or need.

I own or I am part-owner of multiple businesses or non-profits that could be eligible for an award. Can each of those business apply to receive a grant?

Yes, if each business or non-profit operates as its own separate legal entity.

Are cooperatives eligible for this program?

If cooperatives are structured to generate and distribute profits for the benefit of members or owners, they are eligible for this program.

My business leases space within the permanent physical location of another business (for example, a chair in a barbershop or a store within a mall, etc.). Is this considered a permanent physical location?

Yes.

I am a permanent resident of Minnesota and I own more than one business or non-profit and at least one is located in Anoka County. Can I submit separate applications for each business or non-profit, and can my business or non-profit be eligible for separate awards?

You can submit separate applications for each business or non-profit and would be eligible for two awards, but you must be a Minnesota resident. If you are not a Minnesota resident, but own less than 50% of a business or non-profit with a Minnesota resident(s) owning more than 50%, the organization will still qualify.

What is the definition of "permanent resident of Minnesota"?

For the purposes of this program, "permanent resident of Minnesota" means "resident" as defined by Minnesota Statutes (Minn. Stat. 290.01). The term "resident" means any individual who is domiciled in Minnesota or is domiciled outside the state who maintains a place of abode in the state and spends, in the aggregate, more than one-half of the tax year in Minnesota, unless the individual or the spouse of the individual is in the armed forces of the United States.

The term "abode" means a dwelling maintained by an individual, whether or not owned by the individual and whether or not occupied by the individual, and includes a dwelling place owned or leased by the individual's spouse.

If I am selected to receive a grant, what information will I be asked to show to verify I am a permanent resident of Minnesota?

You may be asked by your grant administrator to show proof of residency in the form of a utility bill, tax form, driver's license or some other acceptable form of information as determined by the grant administrator. You do not need to provide these documents with your application.

I am a permanent resident of Anoka County, but my business or non-profit has a permanent physical location outside of the county. Is my business or non-profit eligible for this program?

No. Organizations are required to have permanent physical location in Anoka County.

How do I know if I am in good standing? What does "in good standing" mean?

"In good standing" means that your business or non-profit is current and active with any required business or non-profit registrations with the Office of the Secretary of State as of March 1, 2020 and that no Minnesota tax liens have been filed against your business or non-profit with the Minnesota Secretary of State.

You can look up your registration. Please have your file number available when filling out the grant application.

Note that, depending on your business structure, you may not be required to be registered with the Secretary of State. In that case, you will be deemed “in good standing” with the Minnesota Secretary of State. For example, if you are a sole proprietorship operating under your own name, you do not have to be registered with the state.

<https://mbportal.sos.state.mn.us/Business/Search>

What if my business or non-profit was not in good standing on March 1, but since then, my business or non-profit no longer has any Minnesota tax liens and/or I renewed my required business registration with Secretary of State? Is my business eligible for this program?

If your business or non-profit can provide documentation that the issue has since been resolved, then yes. If the issue is not resolved, no.

<https://mbportal.sos.state.mn.us/Secured/SearchUCC>

Do I need to show that my business or non-profit is “in good standing” when I apply for a grant?

Visit the secretary of state website and print off or save verification that your businesses is in good standing.

<https://mbportal.sos.state.mn.us/Business/Search>

I don't know if I have a tax lien against my business or non-profit. How do I find out?

You can visit the Office of the Secretary of State website to look for tax lien filings.

<https://mbportal.sos.state.mn.us/Secured/SearchUCC>

My business is a home-based child care provider. Do I need to be registered with the Secretary of State to be eligible for this program?

Not necessarily. If your business operates under your own name and not an assumed name or an LLC, S corporation or other business formation, you do not need to be registered with the Secretary.

How is financial hardship defined? What level of financial hardship must my business or non-profit demonstrate to qualify for this program?

Your organization should show a loss in revenue year-over-year between January 1 and July 30, 2019 vs. 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.. Your business or non-profit may also show hardship if forced to close or operate at less than 50% of normal capacity from an executive order after March 1, 2020.

I started my business or non-profit after July 1, 2019. I am unable to compare revenues between January 1 and July 30 of last year and this year. Am I eligible for this program?

If your business or non-profit was started after January 1, 2019 but was in operation on before March 1, 2019, compare March 1, 2019 to July 30, 2019 vs 2020.

How is revenue defined? My business or non-profit often doesn't get paid for work until 2-3 months after we complete it.

For the purposes of this program, we can accept either accrual or cash basis accounting when calculating revenues over the relevant time period. Whatever method is used, it should be consistent between the two years being compared.

I received forgivable loans, grants, and/or Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) between March 1 and May 31, 2020. Do I count these as revenue for this program? What if these funds were sufficient to make up for any revenue losses I experienced during this time period?

Generally, yes, you should count the proceeds of forgivable loans, PUA benefits, or grants as revenue. If this revenue was sufficient that your business or non-profit did not experience at least a 10% revenue loss year-over-year between March 1 and May 31, 2019 vs. 2020, then your business or non-profit should not apply to this program.

I am self-employed. I received – or am receiving – unemployment benefits through the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program. Am I ineligible for this program?

Not necessarily. However, your business or non-profit must meet all other eligibility requirements, including demonstrating financial hardship after factoring PUA benefits into your self-employment revenue.

Can my business or non-profit receive more than one grant?

No. You can only receive one grant per business or non-profit .

I own a business or non-profit with multiple locations. Can each of the locations be eligible to apply and receive a grant?

If each location is physically located in Anoka County and operates as its own entity, then yes. If the business or non-profit is one entity with multiple offices or locations, only one grant can be awarded.

Does my home-based business qualify as "permanent physical location?"

No. Home-based businesses are not considered eligible for the Small Business Relief Grants Program – with the exception of home-based licensed childcare providers, which are eligible.

What is the definition of a home-based business?

According to IRS Publication 587 a home-based business is one that uses the owner's home (or space within the home) as its principal place of business. That is:

It is used regularly and exclusively for administration or management of a trade or business, and

The owner has no other fixed location where the business carries on a substantial amount of administration or management.

I am self-employed and/or an independent contractor. Am I eligible for this program?

Yes, as long as your business or non-profit has a permanent physical location and your business is not considered a home-based business (unless it is licensed family child care facility). Otherwise you are not eligible.

Besides myself, my business or non-profit does not have any employees. Am I eligible for this program?

Yes – as long as you are not a home-based business or non-profit

My business or non-profit has zero employees and/or hires independent contractors for some of its functions. Am I eligible for this program?

Yes – as long as you are not a home-based business or non-profit

My business or non-profit employs more than 50 employees but they all are employed part-time. Am I disqualified from this program?

Yes – businesses or non-profits must have 50 or less total employees as of January 1, 2020 to be considered eligible - not 50 or less full-time equivalent employees (FTE).

My business only employs part-time employees. Am I disqualified from this program?

No.

I am self-employed or an independent contractor, but my work is performed at the permanent physical location of another business or non-profit . Am I eligible for this program?

No. For the purposes of this program, businesses or non-profits that do not have a permanent physical location and is not eligible for this program.

What is the definition of "permanent physical location"?

For the purposes of this program, permanent physical location means a non-mobile permanent facility such as an office, warehouse, storefront or other facility where the business carries on a substantial amount of administration or management of their business.

Businesses or non-profits that operate exclusively through a mobile operation, such as a mobile food stand, food truck, etc., are not considered as having a permanent physical location.

Facilities that are in the home, in a space within the home, or in a structure on the same property as the home of the business or non-profit owner are considered a home-based business. Home-based businesses are ineligible for a grant from this program, except licensed child care providers.

For the purposes of this program, for-profit farming operations as defined by Internal Revenue Code 183 are not consider home-based businesses.

Are for-profit farming operations considered home-based businesses?

No.

My business is a for-profit farming operation. Am I eligible for this program?

Yes. If you are selected to receive an award, you may be asked for information that verifies your farm is operated for profit and is not a so-called “hobby farm.”

My business or non-profit was restricted from operating at full capacity by executive order. How does this impact my chance of getting a grant?

If your business was restricted by executive orders to operating at 50% or less of normal capacity after March 1, you will qualify for a priority designation for an award. Business that qualify for that designation will be drawn for first through the randomized selection process - assuming they meet all the other eligibility requirements.

This includes the following categories of businesses:

- Retail
- Restaurants and bars
- Personal services (salons, tattoos, barbershops)
- Gyms, personal fitness and yoga studios, martial arts
- Indoor events and entertainment
- Outdoor events and entertainment (not including drive-in facilities)
- Organized sports (adult and youth)
- Places of worship, religious services, weddings, and funerals
- Campgrounds and charter boats
- Pools

**Please refer to staysafe.mn.gov for a helpful guide to businesses impacted by Executive Orders on May 18 (see Stay Safe Grid).

If I win a grant, how will I get grant funds?

Once you have been selected and your application has been reviewed for all eligibility by one of our grant administrators, you will be notified, and a check will be issued within a week from Anoka County directly.

What documentation will I be asked to provide?

At the time of grant application, you will be asked for documentation that verifies you are eligible to receive a grant. Some examples of documentation you may be asked to provide include – but are not limited to – the following: sales tax reporting, period statements from third-party sales platforms, merchant services statements, point of sale or register reports, third-party payroll processor reports, federal form 941/employer's quarterly federal tax return, or other state or federal payroll-related filings.

Who can I receive assistance from in filling out my application?

Applicants can receive assistance filling out the application with any of the following organizations:

- African Development Center
- African Economic Development Solutions
- Central Minnesota Development Company

- First Children's Finance
- Hmong American Partnership
- Latino Economic Development Center
- Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers
- Metropolitan Economic Development Association
- Neighborhood Development Center
- Northside Economic Opportunity Network
- WomenVenture Network

If I am selected, what kind of documents will I have to sign to get this grant money?

You will have to sign a document certifying you are eligible to receive this grant and that the grant will be used for eligible uses only. This document will be titled "Subrecipient Agreement."

What can the funds be used for?

Grant funds shall be used for working capital to support payroll expenses, rent, mortgage payments, utility bills, and other similar expenses that occur or have occurred since March 1, 2020, in the regular course of business. All uses must be exclusively for operations in Anoka County.

Can the funds be used to pay business-related insurance deductibles?

Yes.

Can the funds be used to repair my facility or equipment?

Yes.

Can the funds be used to purchase equipment?

No. Grant funds shall be used for working capital expenses that occur in the regular course of business. The purchase of equipment is not regarded as a working capital expense.

Can the funds be used to pay back taxes including property taxes?

No.

Under any circumstances will I have to pay the grant back?

This is a grant - not a loan - and you will not be required to pay it back. However, the county reserves the right to audit the use of funds and may conduct an audit check on a random selection of grant recipients. Grant recipients who are found to have violated the terms of the application process or grant agreement may be required to refund Anoka County.

Is the amount of the grant taxable to the recipient business or non-profit?

Please consult your accountant, lawyer, or other tax advisor. DEED is unable to provide tax advice.

I am self-employed, and I'm receiving unemployment benefits through the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program. If I receive a grant from this program, how will that affect my unemployment benefits?

Please refer to Unemployment Insurance rules and procedures for how to report a grant as income when you request your weekly benefit.

What kind of businesses or non-profits cannot apply for a grant through this program?

Please refer to the business and non-profit relief grant guidelines

Do I have to create or retain jobs for a grant?

No, there are no job creation requirements for the Small Business Relief Grants.

Can the funds be used for business or non-profit acquisition and/or the purchase of land or building?

No.

How long will this program last?

Until all funds are administered to eligible businesses and non-profits.

I received a Small Business Emergency Loan Program (SBEL) loan. Can I still receive a grant through this program?

No. Under the legislation, businesses that received SBEL loans are not eligible.

I still have questions and I am not finding answers in this FAQ. Where do I send my questions?

You can send your questions to jacquel.hajder@co.anoka.mn.us or accovidrelief@mccd.org We will be reading all questions that come in, responding as quickly as possible and updating the FAQ sheet regularly. Due to the large volume of questions, we ask that you only email your questions verses calling. Please provide a return email and phone number with the question so we can follow up on your questions.