

## **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. A third round of applications will open November 5, 2020 and remain open until the program is fully subscribed based on application numbers. Eligible businesses or nonprofits will be approved based on how complete their application is and how quickly they submit their application. If organizations do not submit a complete application, there may not be enough time for grant reviewers to coordinate and gather the correct information to verify their eligibility.

The 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 with all local city ordinances.
- Applicant must be current on property taxes if they own the building. This does not apply to organizations that lease their space.
- Applicant must employ 50 or less full-time equivalent (FTE) employees as of January 1, 2020.

- Applicant must have been in operation 6 months prior to March 1, 2020 (must have been open for service/business and collecting revenue by September 1, 2019).
  - Anoka County will not disqualify an applicant if there was an ownership change and the business remained in operation after September 1, 2019.
- 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.
- 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.**