



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 16, 2020

City of Wheeling Supporting Small Businesses with Applying for West Virginia CARES Act Small Business Grants

WHEELING, W.VA. – City of Wheeling officials are available to support the efforts of small businesses when applying for West Virginia CARES Act Small Business Grants. The grants can provide small businesses with up to \$5,000 to cover the costs of business interruption, lost sales and other expenses resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Applications for the grants are available online by visiting <https://grants.wv.gov/en>. Those interested in assistance or additional information should contact Nancy Prager, director of the City’s Economic and Community Development department at 304-234-3701 or via email at nprager@wheelingwv.gov.

On March 27, 2020, the CARES Act federal legislation was signed into law, which included an allocation of \$1.25 billion to the State of West Virginia to cover costs to localities resulting from the virus, including the potential for grants to cover costs to small businesses. On July 13, Governor Jim Justice and the State of West Virginia opened the “WV CARES Act Small Business Grant Program” for applications from for-profit small businesses who have been and are being impacted economically by the COVID-19 virus. The program will provide small businesses grants of up to \$5,000.

Small businesses are eligible if they:

- Have between 1 and 35 full time employees (at least 1 of which is not also an owner / member / shareholder of the business)
- Have their principle place of business in West Virginia
- Were qualified to do business in West Virginia and in operation as of February 29, 2020
- Are currently and intend to remain qualified to do business in West Virginia and in operation for at least the next twelve months
- Are in good standing with the State Tax Department and WorkForce West Virginia

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- Are a for-profit business
- Are not in violation of any state order or decree (e.g., mine safety, DEP citations, etc.)
- Are not presently suspended, debarred, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or otherwise excluded from participation in any federal grant program, and are not presently a debtor in any pending bankruptcy (including any owners of the business)
- Have suffered eligible expenses and/or losses because of the COVID-19 pandemic

Eligible Expenses & Losses because of the COVID-19 pandemic include direct out-of-pocket expenses including:

- Costs of business interruption due to COVID-19 required closures may include but are not limited to:
 - Reduced sales or suspended operations
 - Rent or mortgage payments (unless otherwise waived by lessor/lender)
 - Utilities payments
 - Costs and Expenses for Payroll
 - Increased costs related to COVID-19 prevention measures
 - Disrupted supply network leading to shortage of critical inventory or materials
 - Costs of personal protective equipment required by the business
 - Payment of any short term (less than 24 months) or credit card debt incurred by the applicant to pay eligible expenses
 - Expenses incurred to replenish inventory or other necessary re-opening expenses.
 - Costs of physical modifications or supplies for business to enable compliance with public health measures, requirements, or guidelines, including but not limited to:
 - Installation of drive-thru windows and items necessary to get a drive-thru operational, such as headsets, additional registers, etc.
 - Vinyl/smooth surface furniture

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- Vinyl/hard surface flooring
- Telework equipment and subscription service
- Takeout/to-go merchandise
- Website design/reconfiguration
- Construction or installation of outdoor seating
- Contactless equipment: doors, locks, gates, point-of-sale systems, and other equipment
- Cleaning and sanitization supplies
- Ozone generators, ozone meters, and dehumidifiers: only if documentation from CDC, WHO, EPA, or ADH can be provided stating it is effective in fighting COVID-19
- Tablets and other easily sanitized computer equipment
- Signage pertaining to reopening or restructuring the business to facilitate COVID-19 precautions
- Bleachable towels and/or bedding
- Supplies and furniture necessary to allow for spacing out employees and customers
- Plexiglass and/or plastic barriers to separate employees and customers
- Payment for third party licensed medical staff to perform COVID-19 screenings of employees

Conditions on Grants:

- May not include costs which have already been recovered through other federal programs such as the Paycheck Protection Program or the SBA Emergency Injury Disaster Loan program, through private insurance, or otherwise.
- Funds must be expended in compliance with state and federal law.
- Applicant must maintain supporting documentation for any expense or loss for which these WV CARES Act Small Business Grant funds are being sought for a period of 5 years.

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- The State of West Virginia has the right to audit the applicant based on their submitted expenses and/or losses.

Process for Applying for Small Business Grant:

- 1.) The process for applying for WV CARES Act Small Business Grant funds begins by the small business becoming a registered Vendor in the wvOASIS system. You must be a registered Vendor to receive WV CARES Act Small Business Grant funds. An eligible business can apply to be a registered Vendor—*without needing to pay the typical \$125 fee for registration as a Vendor*—in wvOASIS at <https://www.wvoasis.gov/>, and clicking “VSS.” We ask that any current vendors or those vendors who plan to continue to do business with the State in the future, to please sign up for electronic funds transfer (EFT), at <https://www.wvsao.gov/ElectronicPayments/Default> Other vendors who choose to not sign up for EFT, will receive a paper check which will be mailed to a physical address in West Virginia.
- 2.) Monday, July 13, 2020, applications opened for registered vendors. You will need your Vendor number to begin the application process. Applications will be accepted through September 30, 2020.