

Small Business Relief Fund **Guidelines**

May 27, 2020

To provide emergency assistance to small local businesses in Ramsey County adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ramsey County Small Business Relief Fund will provide grants of up to \$7500 to small businesses most in need of support.

Funds will help businesses pay for critical expenses such as rent payments, mortgage payments, utilities, payments to suppliers, and costs associated with reopening. Providing this support will increase the capacity of small businesses with a physical location in Ramsey County to survive the current crisis and will help prevent potential future blight scenarios.

We understand there is a cost to reopening your business safely. These grant funds can be used to ensure your business can afford to operate while maintaining the social distancing guidelines for the safety of your employees and customers.

The Relief Fund will be administered by the Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers' (MCCD), Open to Business program, which currently provides technical assistance and access to capital for businesses throughout Ramsey County. Priority outreach will be conducted in partnership with community-based organizations working in low-wealth communities, communities of color, and areas with barriers to access other small business resources.

Terms

- Up to \$7500 grant based on economic injury from COVID-19 and eligible expenses
- Funds can be used for operating expenses, including rent payments, mortgage payments, utilities, payments to suppliers, or other critical non-payroll business expenses (including expenses related to reopening) as approved by the fund administrator.

Eligible Businesses

Businesses must meet all of the following criteria as of March 1, 2020 to be eligible. A business owner's immigration status does not impact eligibility.

- Must be a locally owned and operated for-profit business with a physical establishment in Ramsey County
- Must have at least one employee in addition to the owner as of March 1, 2020 and not more than 20 employees, and under \$1 million in annual revenue
- Must have been operating for at least 12 months prior to March 1, 2020
- Must be licensed, in good standing, current on property taxes prior to May 15, 2020, if applicable

- Must demonstrate a significant loss in revenue since March 15 (no credit score or collateral requirements apply)

Certain businesses are ineligible, including:

- Home-based businesses; those without a physical establishment, (except in-home childcare providers will be eligible)
- Non-profit organizations
- Corporate chains, multi-state chains
- Individuals who have or are currently receiving assistance through the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program or assistance from their municipality (i.e. Saint Paul Bridge Fund, Shoreview's Small Business Emergency Assistance Program)
- Businesses in default conditions prior to February 29, 2020
- Businesses that primarily derive income from gambling
- Businesses that derive any income from adult entertainment
- Businesses that primarily sell pawned merchandise, guns, tobacco or vaping products
- Businesses that derive income from passive investments; business-to-business transactions; real estate transactions; property rentals or property management; billboards; or lobbying

In addition to the Ramsey County Small Business Relief Fund, businesses are strongly encouraged to apply for all available COVID-related funding, such as the [Small Business Administration](#) (SBA) Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) and Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), State of Minnesota Small Business Emergency Loan (SBEL), and other local programs. However, due to the limited amount of funding and in order to serve as many businesses as possible, businesses will be ineligible to receive duplicative funds from the Ramsey County Small Business Relief Fund AND city or state SBEL funds. Businesses receiving federal relief funds are still eligible for the Ramsey County Small Business Relief fund, but must use County funds for other eligible expenses than those covered by federal funds.

Application Process

- Application Forms will be accepted beginning May 27 through June 12, 2020 at noon
- Completed Application Forms can be emailed to RCCOVIDRelief@mccdmn.org.
- If applications exceed the funding available, the fund administrator Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers (MCCD) will select grant recipients using a random selection process. The fund administrator, MCCD, will notify approved applicants by email on or before June 19, 2020.
- Upon notice of an approved application, applicants will be required to submit the following within 10 business days:
 - 2019 Federal Business Tax Return or appropriate Business Tax Schedule- based on entity type. Businesses that have not yet completed a 2019 Federal Return are eligible to apply and substitute other documentation of revenue.

- o Evidence of revenue loss related to the COVID 19 emergency. Applicants should submit documentation that best demonstrates the impact and is deemed acceptable to Program Administrator. Some examples of acceptable documentation include Sales Tax Reporting, Period Statements from 3rd-party Sales Platforms, Merchant Services Statements, and Point of Sale or Register reports.
- o Evidence of employment prior to March 1st, 2020. Acceptable documentation may include period reporting from a 3rd-party payroll processor, applicant's Federal Form 941/Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return, or other State or Federal payroll-related filing.
- o Any additional documentation or information deemed necessary by the fund administrator to determine eligibility, generate loan documents, disburse loan proceeds, or meet program reporting requirements.
- o Failure to submit required documentation will result in forfeiture of loan award.

Note: The Ramsey County Board reserves the right to revise these guidelines as needed to best address the impact of the current pandemic.