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Howard County Business Grants
Applications will OPEN 7:00 a.m. on July 15, 2020 and will CLOSE 11:59 p.m. on July 18, 2020

PURPOSE: The purpose of this grant is to provide financial assistance to Howard County businesses in targeted sectors that have been most impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency and plan to re-open. Because of the limited funding available, eligible sectors have been identified and the grant formula is intended to distribute funds to all qualified businesses in that cohort. These grants are for locally-owned storefront retail, restaurants, and farmers that have experienced significant financial loss caused directly or indirectly by the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Eligible uses include expenditures related to reimburse for the costs of business interruption caused by the required business closures due to COVID-19, or for costs required to re-open safely.

Three (3) grant opportunities:
1. Farm Grants – Qualifying full or part-time time farmers.

2. Storefront Retail Business Grants – Locally-owned, small retail, and certain service merchants in commercial space that were forced to close in accordance with Governor Hogan’s Executive Orders closing non-essential businesses in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

3. Restaurant Re-Opening Grants – Locally-owned restaurants in commercial space to assist with required PPE and other accommodations needed to begin outdoor or indoor service or accommodate more robust take-out and/or delivery services.

The deadline to submit an application and required documentation is 11:59 p.m. on July 18, 2020.

Please note that while financial information will be kept confidential, the names of businesses receiving grants, and the amount they receive, are public information.
HOW TO PREPARE TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION

Please read ALL instructions before beginning application.

1. **Review eligibility requirements**
   
   For **ALL** grant categories, businesses must:
   
   1. Occupy commercial space in Howard County; or be an operational farm (3 acres or more) located in Howard County;
   
   2. Have incurred financial losses caused directly or indirectly by the COVID-19 public health emergency;
   
   3. Be in “Good Standing” with the State of Maryland and Howard County (See section 2);
   
   4. Have been in business for at least one year, (i.e. since June 1, 2019) according to the Date of Formation/Registration on the businesses Certificate of Status;
   
   5. Not be in bankruptcy or litigation that would restrict the receipt of grant funds;
   
   6. Have a copy of a federal tax return for the business from 2018 or 2019;
   
   7. Be categorized under an eligible Business Activity Code/NAICS Code (To verify, click [here](#).)
   
   8. Pledge to re-open.

**Grant Specific Requirements** - If your answer to ALL eligibility requirements above is **YES**, you will need to meet the additional criteria for the grant category for which you qualify:

- **Farmer Support Grants**  – Farm must be a minimum of 3 (three) acres **and** have earned income from farming over the past 2 years to qualify. Grant amount: Up to $2,500

- **Storefront Retail Business Reopening Grants**  – Retail business must be locally-owned, non-chain, small retail merchants, including sole proprietors and must occupy commercial space **and** have fewer than 20 employees as of March 1, 2020. Grants for expenses related to losses caused by COVID-19 or costs associated with reopening. Grant amount: Up to $2,500

- **Restaurant Reopening Grants**  – For locally-owned, non-chain, restaurants with commercial space to assist with losses caused by COVID-19 or required PPE and other accommodations needed to begin outdoor or indoor service. Must have been forced to close or restrict indoor dining due to COVID-19. Grant amount: Up to $2,500

   *All grant values are estimated and subject to availability.*

**Ineligible Businesses:**

1. National retail chains and restaurants are not eligible for this grant program.

2. Home-based businesses are not eligible for the grants.

3. Businesses who are **not** in “Good Standing” with the County and State of Maryland are not eligible for the grant.

For resources and programs to assist your business, contact your financial advisor or review the Howard County Business Portal at [www.hceda/coronavirus](http://www.hceda/coronavirus).
2. Prepare required information
Grant recipients must be in “Good Standing” with applicable County and State taxes. This information will be verified prior to grants being awarded.

*(SOLE PROPRIETORS: This is not required for sole proprietors or other types of businesses that are not required to register with the State of Maryland.)*

To verify that your company is in “Good Standing”, look up your business on [SDAT’s free online search](https://www.sdat.net):  
- Enter your business name and select "Search".
- Your business will be listed if you are registered.
- Select your business and check under the General Information tab to verify that your business is in GoodStanding. It is not necessary to order a copy of your Certificate of Status.
- If your business is not in Good Standing follow instructions in the [Good Standing Checklist](https://www.sdat.net).
- Any deficiencies MUST be corrected before applying for this grant program.

**Documentation Needed:**
Based upon your business entity type, you will need to submit your 2018 or 2019 Federal Tax Return:  
If Sole Proprietor:  
- Form 1040 or 1040-SR Schedule C, Profit or Loss From Business  
  - PAGE 1 ONLY
If Sole Proprietor- Farm:  
- Form 1040 or 1040-SR Schedule C OR Schedule F, Profit or Loss From Farming  
  - PAGE 1 ONLY
If Partnership:  
- Form 1065, U.S. Return of Partnership Income  
  - PAGE 1 ONLY
If Corporation:  
- Form 1120, U.S. Corporation Income Tax Return  
  - PAGE 1 and;  
  - PAGE 4 Schedule K
If S-Corporation:  
- Form 1120-S, U.S. Income Tax Return for an S Corporation  
  - PAGE 1 ONLY

You will need to upload the following documentation with your application:  
- Signed Form W-9 (Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification)
- Employee Roster as of March 1, 2020 (STOREFRONT/RETAIL ONLY)  
  - (Format: Last Name, First Initial)
  - Please do not include any personal identifiers in employee listing (Ie. social security numbers, date of birth, pay rate, etc.)
HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

3. Apply
When applications open, you will need to:

- Have **ALL** of the required information and documentation when you begin to fill out the application.
- Complete **ALL** required fields. Review **ALL** responses for accuracy before submitting application. **INCOMPLETE OR INACCURATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE PROCESSED.**
- Submit your application online before the published deadline. Applications are only accepted online and will be processed as quickly as possible.

**Applications will close on July 18, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.**

To apply, go to [http://www.hceda.org/c19grants](http://www.hceda.org/c19grants)

4. Notification
Recipients of a grant will be notified by email provided on the application. Applicants will certify at the end of the application that all information provided is accurate and true and electronically accept all terms and conditions of the grant. All financial information is kept confidential. Grant recipients, and the dollar amount of the grant received, are public information.

Howard County Government cannot provide tax advice and recommends that you consult with a tax professional. It is possible that relief grant funds may be reported as taxable income to the businesses. If awarded, grant recipients will receive a form 1099-G from Howard County Government.

5. Acceptance of Grant Terms
Once an entity has been approved for a grant, the applicant will need to accept the Grant Terms with Howard County Government adhering to the following:

- All of the information set forth in the Application is true and correct.
- The Grantee is, and will remain, in compliance with the laws of the Federal Government, the State of Maryland and its political subdivisions, including all laws prohibiting discrimination.
- The Grantee acknowledges the grant may not be used for purposes that are prohibited by federal, state, or local laws or regulations or for expenses reimbursed or expected to be reimbursed by federal grants. The Grantee certifies that it and its principals are eligible to participate in this Grant Agreement and have not been subjected to suspension, debarment, or similar ineligibility determined by any federal, state or local governmental entity and the Grantee is in compliance with the State of Maryland statutes and rules relating to procurement and that the Grantee is not listed in the federal government’s terrorism watch list as described in Federal Executive Order 13224 dated September 23, 2001.
• In connection with the Grant and the Application, Howard County Government (HCG) has the right to audit the books and records of the Grantee and the Grantee shall give HCG access to the Grantee’s books, records, and other requested documents.

• If any information in the Application is false or materially misleading, the Grantee agrees to repay the amount of the Grant to HCG and the Grantee may be prosecuted for any false statements made as part of the Application.

• The Grantee acknowledges the grant may be used for eligible uses. Eligible uses include expenditures related to reimburse for the costs of business interruption caused by the required business closures due to COVID-19.

• Grantee agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Howard County Economic Development Authority, the County, their directors, officers and employees, for any grant it receives that the federal government, the State, HCG, or the Howard County Economic Development Authority determines was not used for eligible expenditures and, therefore, must be repaid. Within 60 days of receipt of written notice and demand from the County for any such funds, Grantee shall repay provide such funds to the County.

• Grantee agrees that if it fails to provide the County with any funds as required under this grant, such funds shall constitute a delinquent debt owed to the County by Grantee, and that the County may seek to collect on that debt by any means allowed for under Maryland law.

• The Grantee agrees that the answer to the question: Please indicate how this grant will assist your business or farm during this COVID-19 emergency: may be used by HCG as testimonial to the positive impact of this grant program and may be used in press releases either in print or other media.

The Grantee will be required to accept the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement. The Grantee acknowledges that if any information in the application, grant funds may be delayed or rescinded.

If you have any questions regarding this grant opportunity, please contact Howard County Economic Development Authority here.