

COVID-19 Community Relief Grant Program

Overview

This COVID-19 Community Relief Grant Program from the City of Brooklyn Park is available to provide support to households, businesses, schools and nonprofit organizations for COVID-related expenses and loss of income. Eligible expenses under this program include increased costs for public health and sanitation such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and safety products, setting up remote work or distance learning, or increased COVID-related costs such as childcare, food costs or medical expenses. Households who have experienced income loss are also eligible for rent or mortgage assistance. Applicants are encouraged to apply if they can clearly demonstrate financial impacts due to COVID-19 between March 1 and November 1, 2020. **All funds must be expended by November 1, 2020.**

Background

Since March of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to school and business closures, record increases in unemployment and significant disruption to everyday life. Data demonstrates the severe public health and economic impacts of the pandemic in Brooklyn Park. For example, zip code level data from the Minnesota Department of Health shows that zip code 55428, which extends into the southwest area of the city, is one of the two zip codes in the state with the highest number of COVID-19 cases per 10,000 residents.

Local, state and federal governments have allocated trillions of dollars of support for COVID-related expenses to blunt these impacts. This City of Brooklyn Park COVID-19 Community Relief Grant Program is a disbursement of federal government CARES Act funding that acknowledges the impacts that COVID-19 has had on our community and provides grants to households, businesses, schools and nonprofit organizations for COVID-related expenses and loss of income/revenue.

The total pool of funding available is approximately \$2.5 million. Funding allocations will be decided based on need presented in the applications received. Funding for this program is provided by the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. This program will be administered in compliance with State and Federal requirements and funds distributed by this grant program must be used for CARES eligible expenses as defined by State and Federal guidance and outlined in this RFP. Federal guidance on CARES eligible expenses can be found [here](#) and an FAQ document can be found [here](#).

Eligible applicants

Eligible applicants must be located in the City of Brooklyn Park. Nonprofit organizations serving Brooklyn Park residents are also eligible. Applicants can include households, businesses, nonprofit organizations and schools.

Households

Brooklyn Park households are eligible to receive up to \$1,500 in COVID relief dollars if applicants can provide the information below. A household is eligible if its income is below the following limits:

- \$75,000 for single person households
- \$125,000 for heads of household
- \$150,000 for married couples filing taxes jointly

To receive \$1,500 in COVID relief dollars, households can either:

1. Demonstrate income loss AND COVID-eligible expenses such as rent, mortgage, or COVID-related expenses as described below. This is a good option for households who can show that they have lost income because of the pandemic. Documents that can demonstrate loss of income include ONE of the following:
 - a. Evidence of unemployment
 - b. Paystubs
 - c. Bank statements
 - d. Other evidence available
2. If it is difficult for your household to show income loss, you can provide documentation of increased COVID-related expenses for things like childcare, food, health, childcare, teleworking, distance learning, or unforeseen financial costs for COVID funerals. The full list of eligible expenses is below.

Eligible expenses are any additional costs due to COVID-19, including but not limited to:

1. Increased childcare, including a distance tutor and/or out-of-school time
2. COVID-related medical expenses
3. Increased housing costs (water/sewer bills, electrical bills, heating/cooling)
4. Caring for people who have COVID
5. Increased food costs (from loss of food from other sources)
6. Funerals for COVID deaths
7. Public health and sanitation (safety products, setting up COVID safe spaces)
8. Setting up remote work and adult education (additional technology, internet, workspaces)
9. Distance learning (additional technology, internet or workspaces)
10. Rent and mortgage payments are eligible ONLY IF the household can prove with documentation that it has experienced loss of income.

All applications will need to include a statement of why the funds are needed and several certifications (listed below). Staff will contact each applicant to follow up and collect the necessary documentation.

In your application, you will be asked to make these certifications:

1. I certify that I am not receiving other CARES funding for the same expenses.
2. I approve you to contact my landlord, utility company or employer, or others needed to verify my application.
3. I attest that the information I provided on this form is true and accurate. I understand that misuse of funds will require repayment and may result in legal action. I understand that I may be asked to provide further verification at a later point.
4. I approve the City of Brooklyn Park to share this information with community agencies and/or agencies funded from state, federal, and local resources.

Businesses

Businesses must show in their application a loss of revenue due to COVID-19. They must also show how they will spend any granted funds on eligible expenses. The expense can be any standard operating expense or additional COVID-related cost such as:

- Current payroll obligations (may not include employees who have been laid off)
- Lease or mortgage payments
- Accounts payable
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as masks for employees and customers
- Facility improvements meant to provide protection to customers and employees (ex. plexiglass at register, hand sanitizer dispensers, etc.)
- Other critical business needs and expenses that can't be paid as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic

Awarded funds may not be used for business owner's/manager's personal use or expenses. A business owner cannot also seek funds for household reimbursement.

Businesses must meet the following criteria to be eligible:

1. Be a "for-profit" business or a nonprofit that does not obtain revenue solely from donations
2. Employ 50 or fewer full-time equivalent employees (FTEs).
3. Located in Brooklyn Park and in operation since March 1, 2020.
4. Be registered and in good standing with the Minnesota Secretary of State

Individual contractors, sole proprietors, businesses without employees, home-based businesses and microbusinesses are eligible to apply. Preference will go to applications that show expenses already incurred and documented by the business.

Businesses will be granted up to \$15,000 based on the information and documentation provided in their application. Any business may request up to \$15,000 but it is not guaranteed that all applications can be fully funded. Priority will be given to businesses that have received \$5,000 or less in COVID-19 related emergency relief funding from other local, county, and state sources and businesses that can demonstrate need for the funds and the impact funds will have on a business. Eligible businesses that have received a prior City, Brooklyn Park Development Corporation (BPDC), State of Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Small Business Relief grant or Hennepin County Small Business Relief grant can apply for additional funds up to a combined total of \$15,000 for eligible expenses as described below.

Businesses who applied for and did not receive a Hennepin County Small Business Relief grant do not need to reapply to this Brooklyn Park program. It is possible you may get selected to receive County funds after further review of applications. In that case, the City and County will work together to determine which source of funds is most appropriate.

Businesses should be aware that grants from this program will likely be considered taxable revenue in 2020.

Ineligible businesses include corporate chains, multi-state chains, nonprofit organizations who obtain revenue solely from donations, businesses in default conditions prior to March 1, 2020,

and businesses that primarily derive income from passive investments only, gambling, or any income from adult entertainment.

City staff may need to ask applicants to provide additional information if the information provided does not adequately describe an applicant's needs. Please be as thorough as possible to best meet program and Federal government guidelines. Federal guidance on CARES eligible expenses can be found [here](#) and an FAQ document can be found [here](#).

Nonprofit organizations & schools

Both nonprofit organizations and schools are eligible for this program. The Federal requirements for CARES Act funding state that nonprofit organizations must regrant funds to individuals or provide services based on the eligible expenses below. However, nonprofit organizations are also eligible to apply as a business and can include in their applications administrative fees that are reasonably necessary to administer the grants or services. Nonprofits that wish to apply to provide services and as a business should complete the online nonprofit and business applications separately.

Applicants must be a registered nonprofit in good standing with the Secretary of State and provide existing services in Brooklyn Park. Applications will be ranked on the proposed use of funds to fill a critical life or safety need in the community, reputation and experience in providing services in Brooklyn Park, and the ability to expend funding by the deadline as demonstrated by existing organizational and programmatic infrastructure. Reimbursements for COVID related expenditures since March 1, 2020 are eligible uses under this program.

Funding to schools will be based on the need, amount of funds available, and documentation presented in the application. Because schools have received other CARES Act allocations and may be eligible for future funds, preference will be given to nonprofit organizations disbursing funding or services to community members and to applications for expenses already incurred.

Nonprofit organizations and schools can use the funds for costs associated with COVID as described below as well as services to respond to the public health emergency. Examples of eligible costs include:

- Increased childcare, including a distance tutor and out-of-school time
- COVID related medical expenses
- Increased housing costs (water/sewer bills, electrical bills, heating/cooling)
- Caring for people who have COVID
- Increased food costs (from loss of food from other sources) or the provision of food services
- Funerals for COVID deaths
- Public health and sanitation (safety products, setting up COVID safe spaces)
- Setting up remote work and adult education (additional technology, internet, workspaces)
- Distance learning (additional technology, internet or workspaces)
- Services to prevent eviction or foreclosure

Examples of services to respond to the public health emergency include the acquisition and distribution of medical, protective, or sanitizing supplies for public health or safety workers, expenses for disinfecting public areas, or other actions taken to mitigate COVID-19 threats to health and safety.

Federal guidance on CARES eligible expenses can be found [here](#) and an FAQ document can be found [here](#). The City will also host a Zoom Q&A session for nonprofits on Thursday, September 3, from 1 to 2 p.m. The link to join is <https://zoom.us/j/98718323684>.

Nonprofit and school reporting requirements

This program utilizes funding from the federal CARES Act and requires reporting to satisfy federal requirements demonstrating CARES Act eligible expenses. Grantees will be required to submit a report by November 3 that includes:

- A brief narrative description of the uses of funds
- Number of Brooklyn Park residents served
- Documentation such as receipts, invoices or bank statements that demonstrate funds spent on CARES eligible expenses

Additional Eligibility Criteria for All Applicants

Households, businesses, nonprofit organizations and schools are eligible to apply for the expenses as described. Eligible expenses must be incurred from March 1, 2020 to November 1, 2020. Because of the timeline established by Federal and State reporting requirements to expend the funds by November, preference will be given to applications that can clearly demonstrate proof of past expenses for reimbursement. **All funds must be expended by November 1, 2020.**

Applicants cannot seek reimbursement from multiple sources of funds for the same expenses. For example, an applicant cannot receive funds to have rent reimbursed for the month of March if they have already received funds from another CARES source to pay that expense.

Timeline

1. Applications open: Tuesday September 1, 2020
2. Zoom Q&A session for nonprofit organizations: Thursday September 3, 1-2pm. The link to join is <https://zoom.us/j/98718323684>.
3. First round applications due: Midnight on Tuesday, September 15
4. Funding notifications will be made the week of September 28
5. Applicants who advance: Recipients will be required to enter into Grant Agreements with the City. Applicants who advance will also be asked to fill out a City-provided W-9 form.
6. Funds from this round will be dispersed in October, typically within a week of entering into a fully executed grant agreement.
7. Funds must be expended by November 1, 2020.

If there are remaining funds, applications will be reopened on a rolling basis. Grants will be distributed to applicants based on their applications and distributed by mail or wire transfer with an award letter.

Questions

City staff are happy to help you with your application!

If you are a household, non-profit or school, please contact Sarah Abe at sarah.abe@brooklynpark.org or 763-493-8089 with any questions.

If you are a business, please contact Daniela Lorenz at Daniela.lorenz@brooklynpark.org or 612-280-9491.

Thank you for being a valuable part of our community!