2020

BUSINESS RELIEF GRANT PROGRAM

Eligible businesses can begin applying on 9/22/2020 for a chance to receive up to $20,000 in grant relief for losses or expenditures related to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Columbia Heights Business Relief Grant Program seeks to assist businesses with 50 or less employees that have been negatively impacted by the pandemic. Applications will be accepted until 10/9/2020. Further criteria and eligibility requirements can be found in the grant application located online at www.columbiaheightsmn.gov or in person in the City of Columbia Heights Community Development Department.

Return applications and required materials to Mitchell Forney in the Community Development Department:

Attn: Mitchell Forney
Community Development
590 40th Ave NE
Columbia Heights, MN 55421

THE CITY OF COLUMBIA HEIGHTS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

BUSINESS RELIEF GRANT PROGRAM

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

DATE RECEIVED:	AMOUNT REQUESTED:
DATE REVIEWED:	TAX ID NUMBER:

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The City of Columbia Heights will offer a business relief grant program to support local businesses impacted by COVID-19. Grants will not exceed $20,000, and will be used to cover eligible expenses and business losses 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. In addition, application technical assistance will be available through the Columbia Heights Community Development Department. Grants will be awarded on the extent of hardship and need.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Applicant must be locally owned, operated and domiciled in the State of Minnesota with a physical establishment in Columbia Heights. If there is a parent company or a second location outside of Columbia Heights, only the entity located in Columbia Heights 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. 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.
- If required, Applicant must be licensed, in good standing.
- Applicant must be current on property taxes and assessments.
- Applicant must not have any outstanding property maintenance or City licensing violations.
- Applicant must employ 50 or less employees as of Q4 2019.
- Applicant must have been in operation 12 months prior to application.
    - Columbia Heights will not disqualify an applicant if there was an ownership change and the business remained in operation within 12 months prior to 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; for example, property rentals or property management; billboards; or lobbying.
- Payment of taxes or government utilities or fees is 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 City Manager after a thorough review of all application factors. After the initial funding round, City reserves the right to amend any criteria for eligibility as needed to best address the impact of the current pandemic.

BUSINESS INFORMATION

Legal Business Name: _____

Business Operating Name (if different)_____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email Address: _____

Type of Business: _____

Mailing Address (if different): _____

Primary Contact Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email Address: _____

Title/Role: _____

Grant amount requested _____

☐ The business owns the property ☐The business leases the property

	Yes	No
Did your business employ 50 full-time (or equivalent) employees or fewer in Q4, 2019?	☐	☐
Does the business operate (have physical presence) in another city?	☐	☐
Has the business been in operation longer than 12 months prior to the application?	☐	☐
Is the business registered with the Minnesota secretary of state?	☐	☐
Is the Business current on all property taxes, assessments and licensing requirements?	☐	☐
Has the business applied for or received any federal, state, or local grants in 2020, other than this? (If yes explain below)	☐	☐

_____

_____

_____

	Yes	No
Is this a home business or non-profit organization?	☐	☐
Was your business ordered to close or had to significantly reduce its operations by a State of Minnesota Emergency Executive Order in 2020?	☐	☐

Current operating status of business:

- ☐ Open for business and/or operating online
- ☐ Open for business but for reduced hours
- ☐ Reduced operations and/or operating online
- ☐ Closed but still operating onsite, online, or remotely
- ☐ Completely closed
- ☐ Other (please explain)

USE OF GRANT FUNDS

Briefly explain how the business has been impacted by the COVID-19 health pandemic and/or related Executive Orders and what challenges it is facing.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Describe how you intend to use awarded grant funds to support your business during the COVID-19 crisis. Eligible expenses include current payroll obligations, lease or mortgage payments, utilities, accounts payable, and other critical business expenses. Please specify eligible expenses expected to be paid as a direct result of the current health emergency. For example: Payroll - 2 employees, 2 weeks: $3,000, May Rent - $2,000.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Is there anything else that we should be aware of in relation to your application or business?

_____

_____

_____

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. **The following documents must accompany a completed application**

   a) Evidence that you own or lease the space your business is located in. Example documentation includes: copy or statement of lease including terms, mortgage statement, property tax statement or other document to show proof of occupancy within City of Columbia Heights. This could also include photograph or web map street image of the business location with evidence of business signage, if applicable..

   b) Proof of employment (941 statement)

   c) Proof of loss in revenue (income statements 1/2019-7/2019 compared to 1/2020-7/2020)

   d) If applicable list of COVID-19 related expenses

   e) Itemized List of expenditures on how grant will be used

   f) Other supporting documentation deemed necessary by the City of Columbia Heights, CMDC, or the Applicant.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Once the application has been received Community development staff will review all applications and ensure all proper documentation has been submitted.
2. Community development staff and CMDC will review all grant applications and rate them with respect to amount needed and demonstrated need for grant funding.
3. Once grant applicants have been chosen Community development staff and CMDC will contact applicants regarding the awarding of funds.
4. Applicants will then enter into a grant funding agreement with the city, then submit a signed w-9 and letter requesting funding.
5. Once the applicant has been distributed the funds, the applicant will fill out the follow up survey and return it to the Community Development Department.

APPLICANT ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1. The Applicant shall hold the City of Columbia Heights ("City") and , its officers, consultants, attorneys, and agents harmless from any and all claims arising from or in connection with the Grant Program or its Application, including but not limited to, any legal or actual violations of any State or Federal laws.

2. The Applicant recognizes and agrees that the City retains absolute authority and discretion to decide whether or not to accept or deny any particular Grant Application, and that all expenditures, obligations, costs, fees, or liabilities incurred by the Applicant in connection with the Grant Application are incurred by the Applicant at its sole risk and expense.

3. The Applicant acknowledges that it has read the COVID-19 Emergency Grant Program guidelines and understands that if the application is approved for funding, grant funds awarded must only be used to pay eligible expenses.

4. Financial Assistance Certification: I hereby certify that the Small Business Emergency Assistance is necessary due to direct and adverse effects related to Executive Orders 20-04 and 20-08.

The undersigned, a duly authorized representative of the Applicant, hereby certifies that the foregoing information is true, correct, and complete as of the date hereof and agrees that the Applicant shall be bound by the terms and provisions herein.

- All proceeds from the grant will be used for eligible business expenses under the COVID-19 Emergency Grant Program;
- Applicant will file a report with the Columbia Heights within 60-days after the date of the executed grant agreement stating how awarded funds were spent;
- Applicant shall be bound by all terms and provisions of the COVID-19 Emergency Grant Program.

APPLICANT' S SIGNATURE	DATE
PROPERTY OWNER' S SIGNATURE	DATE