

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION'S



Updated July 17, 2020

If I have a question regarding the application, who should I contact?

TRIDEC is administering the grants. Please email your questions regarding applications to BCCares@tridec.org and they will respond.

What are the eligibility criteria for the grant?

The business must:

- Be physically located in Benton County.
- Be owned by a US citizen or permanent resident alien.
- Have been in operation for one year or longer.
- Use the grant to maintain or create jobs.
- Be for profit or non-profit (501C3, 501C6 and 501C19 only).
- Submit a business license or IRS 501c Determination Letter.
- Have had to close or reduce capacity to operate based on the Governor's orders surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Have lost revenue due to COVID-19.

What expenses are eligible?

These funds are only to be used for the following business operation costs incurred on or after March 27, 2020. In addition, the expense must be necessary; connected to; and would not exist without; the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Rent and Mortgage
- Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) Supplies
- Insurance
- Utility Bills
- Consulting Expenses
- Marketing Expenses
- Training
- Expenses incurred to accommodate business changes due to COVID-19

What are the ineligible expenses?

- Payroll & Benefits, i.e., medical/dental insurance, 401K contributions etc.
- Travel
- Bills for taxes including County property tax and State Excise, B&O or Sales tax
- Federal or State Expenses – including professional licenses and driver's licenses
- Capital Expenses – car/truck/boat - vehicle payments
- Land Acquisition – this pertains to new land acquisition
- Construction Cost
- Office Equipment – desks, chairs

- Purchase/Lease of Equipment-this includes computers, laptops, tablets, monitors, printers, multi-function copier/printers, computer related software (unless they are supplies used as part of your business service (resale items), i.e. selling computers, selling software etc.)
- Software as a Service (SaaS): these are usually cloud based software applications that many medical, dental, chiropractors, and massage therapists use, in addition to beauty salons and tattoo businesses. They often include scheduling applications (online), billing applications, and Customer Service Relationship (CSR) management products as well. They are considered software and are not an eligible expense.
- Alcohol – not eligible for hosted events etc., like a business meeting expense, during travel, at dinners, as gifts, or for a retirement party. It is however eligible for a business that either uses alcohol as part of a manufacturing process or sells it as a retail item the way a winery, brewery, restaurant, bar, or pub would sell to customers.
- Hosting Expenses
- Meals – business meetings.
- Lodging
- Transportation
- Lobbying or political influence
- Possibly other costs not directly related to the operations of business

How many awards will be available?

It is anticipated that 1,500 or more applications will be received for this grant program. There are enough funds for approximately 180 to 200 grant awards.

When did this application open and how did you notify businesses?

The application cycle for this grant program opened on Thursday, July 16, 2020. A press conference was held making the announcement that same day. Businesses who have applied for the Working Washington Small Business Emergency Grant (WWSBEG), and Community Development Block Grants through the City of Kennewick and City of Richland were notified directly. In addition, our partners at the multiple Chambers of Commerce and Visit Tri-Cities included the flyer in their correspondence to their members. Benton County and TRIDEC have also proactively shared this information through their websites and social media channels.

When does the application close?

- To have an application considered for Round 1 funding, it must be submitted by 11:59 PM on Friday, July 31.
- Round 2 application period is open Friday, August 14 – Friday, August 28. Applications must be submitted by 11:59 PM on Friday, August 28 to be considered for Round 2 funding.
- Round 3 application period is open Friday, September 11 – Friday, September 25. Applications must be submitted by 11:59 PM on Friday, September 25 to be considered for Round 3 funding.
- The Benton County CARES Act Community Support Grant closes on Friday, September 25. This is the final deadline to apply for funding. There will be no additional funding rounds.

How will the money be disbursed?

There is \$3.5 million in total funds allocated for this grant program, which will be disbursed over three rounds. Grantees will be selected from a pool of eligible businesses using a random lottery system.

Eligible businesses that were not selected will automatically move to the next round for possible selection. Grantees will receive notification upon selection. Prior to funds being delivered, grantees must sign an agreement with Benton County outlining the terms of funding. Funds will be delivered as quickly as possible to the awarded businesses.

In the event that an awarded business is not able to meet the terms of the signed agreement, is determined to not meet the eligibility criteria, or is not able to provide the required documentation, another company will be selected from the pool of applicants.

If my business is not selected in the lottery in Round 1 or Round 2, do I need to reapply for the grant?

Eligible businesses that did not get selected in the lottery will automatically move forward to the next round for possible selection. There is no need to reapply.

Will there be more funds available later?

If more money becomes available after the \$3.5 million has been granted, the additional dollars will be added to Round 3.