

BELMONT COUNTY

SMALL BUSINESS RELIEF PROGRAM

The Small Business Relief Program will provide Belmont County small businesses with some monetary relief from business interruption costs caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligible small businesses can apply for Grant Funds to be used for the reimbursement of certain Eligible Expenses, as defined below.

For questions regarding the program, please email arocchio@belmontcountyohio.org

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

In order to be eligible to apply for Grant Funds under the Belmont County Small Business Relief Program, a business must meet the following criteria

1. Must be a for-profit entity with a location in Belmont County.
2. Have been operational since January of 2019. This can be evidenced, at a minimum, by: a) filing(s) with the Ohio Secretary of State, such as articles of incorporation or other registration documents along with an Ohio Secretary of State Certificate of Good Standing; b) an Ohio vendor's license; c) Federal Schedule C – Profit or Loss from Business (Sole Proprietorship); or any other documents that demonstrate that the business has been in operation as a for-profit entity since January 2019.
3. Have less than \$1 million in gross revenue/receipts on an annual basis. This can be evidenced by records such as the business' 2018 and 2019 federal income tax return or financial statements.
4. Must have experienced a decrease in gross revenue/receipts of 35% or more due to COVID-19 when comparing March 1 – May 31, 2019 revenue/receipts to revenue/receipts for March 1 – May 31, 2020. This can be evidenced by financial information/records, including, at a minimum, bank statements.
5. Have 30 or fewer employees or 1099 workers as of March 1, 2020. This can be demonstrated by forms such as 2019 Form W-3 (Transmittal of Wage and Tax Statement) or 2019 Form 1096 (Annual Summary and Transmittal of U.S. Information Returns) and payroll reports or checks that evidence number of workers as of March 1, 2020 or statement attesting/certifying that your business has no employees or 1099 workers.
6. Must not have already received any federal assistance (SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan, Paycheck Protection Program, or any other program funded by the federal CARES Act).
7. Business location in Belmont County, Ohio and the grant funding will be used for expenses for that business. This can be evidenced by records such as a mortgage statement, utility bill, and insurance premium statement.
8. Must be able to attest that it is in compliance with federal, state, or county and local requirements applicable to its type of business.
9. Must be able to attest that it is current with all federal, state, county and local taxes and fees.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Grant Funds provided by Belmont County's Small Business Relief Program can only be used to pay the expenses of the business: a) related to the costs of business interruption caused by required closures; or b) that the business faces due to its uncertainty as to its ability to pay due to the pandemic. Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

1. Mortgage costs. Mortgage costs for businesses that are located in or operated out of a personal residence are not an eligible expense.
2. Rent or lease costs. Rent or lease costs for businesses that are located in or operated out of a personal residence are not an eligible expense.
3. Expenses for utilities, such as electric, gas, sewer, water, trash removal. Utility costs for businesses that are located in or operated out of personal residence are not an eligible expense.
4. Salaries, wages or compensation paid to employees or 1099 workers.
5. Materials and supplies related to interruption of the business caused by required closures.
6. Personal Protective Equipment or other COVID-19 related costs such as expenses related to compliance with Responsible RestartOhio.
7. Sole proprietors can use grant funding as income replacement by providing documentation on lost revenue from March 1, 2020 through May 31, 2020 due to COVID-19 so long as no unemployment benefits are being received or are expected to be received by the applicant. If not already submitted, upload the most recent filed Schedule C - Profit or Loss from Business (Sole Proprietorship).

If awarded, all Grant funding distributed as a part of this program must be spent within 60 calendar days of receipt. Grant funds can be used to reimburse eligible expenses incurred from March 1, 2020 through 60 calendar days from receipt of grant funds. At the end of the grant term, the business shall submit an itemized list of all expenditures along with all supporting documentation. Documentation shall be in the form of paid invoices and canceled checks, bank statements, or similar documentation showing payment of Eligible Expenses. If the business cannot properly substantiate its eligible expenses, the business will be required to repay the undocumented grant funds.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

1. Cost of vehicle or equipment leased or purchased after March 1, 2020, except if the purchase of equipment is to comply with Responsible RestartOhio.
2. Personal, non-business expenses of the business or its owner(s).
3. Construction costs.
4. Any tax, license or fee obligations payable to any governmental entity.

PROCESS

1. Application

A business that is interested in participating in the program must fill out the application and provide all documentation to determine if it meets all of the eligibility criteria set forth above. A business can choose to apply for up to a \$10,000 grant. If awarded, all Grant funding distributed as a part of this program must be spent within 60 calendar days of receipt. Grant funds can be used to reimburse Eligible Expenses incurred from March 1, 2020 and ends 60 calendar days from receipt of grant funds. Applications can be submitted beginning **on August 17 through September 18, 2020**

Applications can be submitted via email or dropped off at the County Auditor's Office during regular office hours. Due to the short application period, we do not recommend mailing the application.

- Email to arocchio@belmontcountyohio.org
- Drop off: Belmont County Auditor, 101 W. Main St., St. Clairsville

2. Use of Lottery to Allocate Funding

If applications exceed the amount of funding available for this program, all business that have met all of the eligibility criteria through the application will be entered into a lottery to determine which eligible businesses will receive funding.

3. Documentation Submission

A team consisting of Belmont County Board of Commissioners, Belmont County Auditor, Belmont County CIC, Belmont County Port Authority, Belmont County Tourism, Barnesville Chamber of Commerce, Bellaire Chamber of Commerce, Bridgeport Chamber of Commerce, Martins Ferry Chamber of Commerce, Shadyside Chamber of Commerce, and Saint Clairsville Chamber of Commerce will review and verify the documents. If the submitted information and documents do not demonstrate that the business has met the eligibility criteria, the next business chosen in the lottery will be contacted to submit the required documentation.

4. Payment and Signed Agreement

Once approved for a grant, shall sign and return the GRANT AGREEMENT within 10 calendar days of receipt, and provide its bank account routing number for grant fund payment (see attachment) or an authorized representative can pick-up the check.

5. Close Out Report

Businesses are required to submit a Close Out Report which is expected to include at minimum, jobs retained/created, proof of payment (paid invoices and cancelled checks, bank statements, or other documentation showing proof of payment of Eligible Expenses), and a summary of the impact the funds had on the business and its operations.