

The Vallejo City Council has approved a \$250,000 grant program to assist small businesses that experienced severely limited operations or required closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Vallejo Small Business Microgrant Program will provide direct financial assistance to small businesses, the core of Vallejo and Solano County's economy.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a disastrous impact on the national, state, and local economy. Particularly hard hit are small businesses, many of whom have been required to close operations due to State of California and County Public Health orders. The city of Vallejo has received funding from the Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act that will be used to fund grants to our local small businesses.

For-profit businesses based in Vallejo with 20 or fewer full-time employees are eligible to apply for the Vallejo Small Business Microgrant Program. All grants will be distributed under a lottery system.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Business Size – businesses with up to 20 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. One FTE totals 40 hours per week. This can be one employee or any combination of part-time employees whose weekly hours total 40.

Business Type – only for-profit businesses are eligible to receive funds.

Location – the business office or storefront must be located within the jurisdictional boundaries of the City of Vallejo. The business must have been closed, or have had operations severely limited, due to County Public Health orders. Home-based businesses in Vallejo are eligible for this grant funding.

Ownership – only independently owned and operated businesses are eligible. Franchise businesses may be eligible if they 1) own two or fewer businesses; 2) their only location(s) are within Vallejo; and 3) they are not receiving any corporate support.

Other Requirements – all applicants must be in good business standing (current city of Vallejo business license, no liens or judgments, no bankruptcy filings, etc). Each applicant is only eligible for one grant under the program (i.e. owner of multiple businesses cannot apply multiple times for differing business entities).

Funding Limits - grant funds will be distributed in three categories:

- micro businesses with 5 or fewer FTEs are eligible for up to \$5,000;
- businesses with 6-10 FTEs are eligible for up to \$7,500; and
- businesses with 11-20 employees are eligible for up to \$10,000.

Eligible Expenditures - grant funds may be used to pay for:

- Lease/rent payments,
- Payroll,
- Utilities,

- Business supplies (including PPE), and Expenses to comply with CV19 business opening guidelines
- Equipment purchases that expand operations,
- Investments in software or technology that allows for a shift to online operations.
- Other expenses may be eligible as reviewed on a case by case basis.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications will be accepted between October 14 and October 28, 2020. The City of Vallejo is partnering with the Workforce Development Board of Solano County and the Solano Small Business Development Center to screen applicants and administer the grant. Once the application period is closed, a lottery will be held. The application process is two steps:

1. An online application is submitted for consideration. This requires general business information such as responsible person(s), FTEs, and amount of funds requested. Applicants must certify that they have read and understand all eligibility requirements and will comply with all requests for information if selected under the lottery.
2. The lottery will randomize all applicants into a rank order position (i.e. position 1, 2, 3, 4, and so on). All applicants whose lottery position falls within the funding amount available will move to a pre-award phase for underwriting. The pre-award phase screens applicants to ensure compliance with all program requirements. Applicants shall supply all information needed including financial information, identification of uses for funds, verification of good standing, and any other information to verify compliance with requirements. Applicants in compliance will receive a grant agreement and funds will be distributed by Workforce Development Board of Solano County.

Any applicants selected under the lottery that do not comply with program requirements will be removed from the process. The Workforce Development Board of Solano County will continue down the lottery ordered list until all funds are expended.

GRANT AWARD AGREEMENT

All businesses selected and found to meet program requirements are required to enter into a grant award agreement. The agreement requires that funds be used for eligible expenses. Businesses must remain in operation for at least six (6) months after receiving funds. Any business found in violation of the grant award agreement will be required to repay the funds.

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE

For more information or assistance with the Vallejo Small Business Microgrant Program, please email Brianna Boyd at bboyd@solanowdb.org or call 707-863-3500.