



Economic Assistance Program for Small Businesses Impacted by COVID-19

Overview

Local small businesses and the creative entrepreneurs who own and operate them help form Canton's unique identity. They provide essential jobs, products and services that keep the local economic engine running.

Because imposed restrictions to slow the spread of COVID-19 have put many of our local small businesses in jeopardy, the Canton Economic Development Corporation (Canton EDC) and the City of Canton have developed an Economic Assistance Program to help those significantly impacted by closures and limited operations.

COVID-19 Economic Assistance Grants

The Canton EDC has committed \$300,000 for COVID-19 economic assistance grants. The board will accept applications and award grants weekly until funds are depleted.

Small businesses significantly impacted by this pandemic may apply to the Canton EDC for a grant equal to their adjusted rent or mortgage and utility expenses for April, May and June, 2020, up to a maximum of \$5,000.

This program is intended to help small businesses survive the disruption by supplementing, not replacing, other economic relief programs. In addition to the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) and Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL), many banks are deferring mortgages and many landlords are offering rent reductions to help. Applicants are required to take full advantage of these programs where they qualify prior to applying to the Canton EDC.

Eligibility & Qualifications

Businesses must meet all of the following criteria based on conditions prior to restrictions:

- Independently owned and operated with a maximum of 25 employees
- Physical and publicly accessible commercial location within the city limits of Canton
- Open during regular weekly business hours
- Temporarily closed or operations limited due to COVID-19 restrictions
- Experienced or projecting a significant decline in revenue or a significant increase in costs due to COVID-19 disruption
- Have applied for other economic relief programs where eligible

Eligibility & Qualifications continued

- Operate a business in one of the following categories: retail (storefront), restaurant, arts and entertainment, personal care (barber shop, hair salon, nail salon, fitness, etc.), medical / dental offices; education/ training, hotels/motels, construction and auto trades, or small manufacturing businesses.

For reference and clarification, here are a few of the ineligible business categories:

- National chains
- Businesses over 25 employees
- Professional / Financial Services
- Grocery stores / convenience stores / gas stations
- Home-based businesses / Independent Contract Workers
- Bed & Breakfast / Bed & Bath Establishments
- First Monday Vendors and Part-Time Businesses
- Nonprofit organizations
- Permanently closed businesses

Eligible expenses allowed under the grant program include:

- Rent
- Mortgage, or Interest on Deferred Mortgage Payments
- Utilities (electricity, phone/internet, etc.)
- Other business needs as approved by the Canton EDC Board

Information required with application:

- Landlord's statement including tenant's address and rent due for period April through June 2020, including adjustments offered or statement of none offered; or
- Lender's information on payments due for period April through June 2020, including available deferment options
- Utility statements for recent 3 months or April-June 2019
- Verification of submitted applications for PPP, EIDL or other economic relief programs
- Completed W-9 Form
- Estimate of revenue losses and/or increased expenses due to COVID-19
- Number of jobs prior to, during and after COVID-19 disruption
- Upon request: Documentation to support ownership, business location and regular hours, number of employees, customary revenue and/or expenditures, application for other eligible relief programs, other statements made in the application, may be required upon request.

Requirements of applicant:

- Re-open after restrictions are lifted
- Resume regular operations as much as practicable
- Retain minimum number of jobs promised in the agreement and provide verification at end of agreement period (1 year)
- Keep or rebuild to the same number of employees as much as possible
- Do everything in your power to stay open for years to come

Grant Application / Award Process:

- Applicant completes on-line application and reviews/agrees to sample contract
 - Attach: Landlord's Statement or Loan Payment Information
 - Attach: Utility bills (recent 3 months or April-June 2019)
 - Attach: Completed W-9 Form
 - Other important information:
 - Estimate of revenue losses and increased costs
 - Verification of application for PPP, EIDL and/or other relief programs, where eligible
 - Number of jobs before, during, and after disruption (number of jobs to be retained is required in the contract)
- Staff reviews application for completeness, eligibility and Priority Ranking Based on Type of Business and Need
- Board reviews applications, approves contracts, and signs approved checks at weekly meeting
- Staff notifies applicant and sends contract for signature
- Staff distributes check upon receipt of signed contract and W-9 Form (if not already received)
- Applicant re-opens and retains jobs when restrictions are lifted
- Applicant provides written verification of jobs and operations quarterly during 1-year contract