



## Nicollet County CARES Business Relief Grant Program

### **Goal:**

To provide assistance to small businesses in Nicollet County adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Grant Terms:**

Grants of up to \$10,000 for eligible expenses:

Businesses without employees (self-employed persons, sole proprietors, independent contractors, homebased business, etc.): Grants of up to \$5,000 for eligible expenses. Applicants must certify that the business is the primary source of income and may be asked for additional documentation to validate this statement.

Businesses with 1-20 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees in addition to the owner: Grants of up to \$10,000 for eligible expenses.

### **Eligible Expenses:**

Grant funds can be used for up to six months of expenses during the period of March 1, 2020 – August 31, 2020 which may include rent payments, mortgage payments (excluding property tax), property and liability insurance, utilities, payments to suppliers/vendors, health and safety costs associated with reopening (personal protective equipment (PPE), plexiglass barriers, exterior seating, signage, cleaning supplies, masks, etc.), temporary COVID-19 costs related to restrictions on business activity and increased technology costs to enable alternative work forms. Applicants will be asked to submit documentation to support eligible expenses at the time of application.

### **Eligible Businesses:**

For profit or not-for-profit businesses with a physical establishment in Nicollet County. Not-for-profit businesses must have at least one FTE employee to qualify. Self-employed persons, sole proprietors, independent contractors and homebased business must have a physical establishment in Nicollet County or be a resident of Nicollet County.

Must not have more than 20 FTE employees. A FTE employee is defined as working, on average, 40 hours a week (a 10 hour/week employee equals .25 FTE, 20 hour/week employee equals .50 FTE, etc.).

Must have been operating prior to March 1, 2020.

Must be licensed (if applicable) and in good standing as of March 1, 2020. Must be current and active with any required business registrations with the Office of Secretary of State as of March 1, 2020. Must be current on property taxes prior to July 15, 2020 (if applicable).

Businesses may only request funds one time under this program.

The business must demonstrate it experienced business interruptions or was adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic by:

Fully or partially suspending operations in 2020 due to an executive order issued by the Governor of Minnesota between March 16, 2020 and August 31, 2020; **OR**

Experienced a reduction in gross revenue of 25% or greater for two calendar months between March 1, 2020 to August 31, 2020 as compared to the same calendar months in 2019.

**Ineligible businesses and expenses include:**

- Agriculture crop and livestock operations.
- Corporate chains, multi-state chains (except those owned by local franchisee).
- Businesses in default conditions prior to March 1, 2020.
- Businesses that primarily derive income from gambling.
- Businesses that primarily derive income from passive investments; business-to-business transactions, real estate transactions; property rentals or property management; or billboards.
- Government entities/departments.
- Businesses suspended or debarred from doing work with the federal government.
- Payment of partial mortgage/utility costs based on IRS rules for home-based businesses.
- Certain taxes and fees including those that are considered revenue for federal, state, or local governments, including property taxes.
- Replacement of lost revenue.
- Lobbying for any purpose.
- Payroll expenses.
- The grant amount requested cannot have been previously reimbursed by another federal or state program. For example, if the applicant received a PPP loan and used it to cover rent expenses from March, April and May of 2020, this grant may not be used to cover rent expenses for March, April or May of 2020 but could be used to cover rent expenses for June, July or August of 2020. Using two sources of funds to cover the same expense during the same time period is considered “double-dipping” and is strictly prohibited. If this occurs, applicants will be required to pay back grant funds to the County.

**Documentation Required**

- A completed application. Applications will be available at <https://www.co.nicollet.mn.us/800/Nicollet-County-CARES> beginning September 14, 2020.
- Certificate of incorporation or other legal documentation with the official business address (i.e., articles of organization, certificate of limited partnership, certificate of limited liability partnership, articles of incorporation, W-9, DBA, etc.).
- Documentation of the number of employees your organization employs. Acceptable documentation includes: State of Minnesota unemployment report detailing the number of employees and hours worked for that quarter, a State of Minnesota Payroll Form 941, or IRS form W3. Reports/forms can be from calendar year 2019, 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2019, or 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2020. Not required for self-employed persons, sole proprietors, independent contractors and home businesses.
- Income/expense statements for two calendar months between March 1 and August 31, 2020 where the business experienced a reduction in gross revenue of 25% or greater. Also provide the income/expense statements for the same calendar months in 2019. If the financials fail to show loss/impact of loss, please explain with additional documentation. This is only submitted if your business was not eligible for this grant under a closure due to Minnesota Governor Executive Order.
- Invoices and statements to substantiate eligible expenses incurred.
- IRS Form W9 to accept payment (submit upon notice of grant approval).
- Other additional documentation that may be requested by Nicollet County or their representative to determine eligibility and grant award amount or to complete an audit of funds awarded.

## **Ranking Criteria**

If the amount of requested grant funds exceeds available funding, priority will be given:

- First priority will be given to businesses that requested funds for pandemic related health and safety costs associated with operating their business.
- Second priority will be based on the order the completed application was received.

## **Grant Application Period**

Grant applications will be accepted until 4:30 p.m. on October 2, 2020. It's anticipated that funds will be distributed in October.

## **Acknowledgments and Data Privacy**

The applicant acknowledges that Nicollet County retains final authority to determine if a business is eligible or not, and whether to approve a grant or not.

The applicant acknowledges that some data provided for this grant funding may be public and will be governed by the Minnesota Data Practice Law.

Additional acknowledgements and disclosures are also included in the application.

## **Informational Sessions**

The County will host two informational sessions to provide an overview of the grant program as well as the application process. The sessions will be recorded and posted to the County website in the event that you are not able to attend. You can register for a session [here](#).

- Wednesday, September 16, 12 pm – 1 pm
- Thursday, September 24, 9 am – 10 am

## **Questions**

Please contact:

Ryan Krosch, Nicollet County Administrator, [caresact@co.nicollet.mn.us](mailto:caresact@co.nicollet.mn.us), (507) 934-7204

OR

Heather McCormick, Nicollet County Finance Director, [caresact@co.nicollet.mn.us](mailto:caresact@co.nicollet.mn.us), (507) 934-7204.