

2022 Norwalk COVID-19 Small Business Assistance Program

The Norwalk COVID-19 Small Business Assistance Program was established to provide limited, one-time direct financial assistance to eligible Norwalk small businesses that employ **between 2 and 20 employees** and that have been adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Program is funded through a grant from the City of Norwalk's American Rescue Plan Act Funds and will expend a total of **\$745,000 over the next 3 years**. The Program is intended to aid eligible Norwalk businesses to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus pandemic. Consequently, use of the funds must be directly related to the pandemic and resultant public health emergency.

Eligibility

To be eligible for assistance under this program, applicants must be a **for-profit business enterprise that is physically located within the City of Norwalk and that employs between 2 and 20 employees**. The business must have been in operation during the pandemic and be current on its federal, state and local tax obligations. The business must be able to demonstrate satisfactorily that it has been negatively impacted by coronavirus pandemic.

Previous grantees are still eligible to apply only if the grant amount that they are eligible for is greater than \$5,000 in Phase 1 of this program. For example, if a business won the last lottery and received \$5,000 but has 13 employees and is now eligible for the \$10,000 grant, they may apply. If they are selected in the lottery again to receive the award, they will be made whole resulting in an additional \$5,000, \$10,000 between Phase 1 and 2 of the program.

Grant Amounts and Availability of Funds

There are at a minimum, **51 grants** available at this time. They are broken down as follows:

34, \$5,000 awards to businesses with 2-5 employees (10 reserved for WMBE Businesses);

11, \$10,000 awards to businesses with 6-15 employees (4 reserved for WMBE Businesses);

6, \$15,000 awards to businesses with 16-20 employees (2 reserved for WMBE Businesses).

This can change pending the outcome of the lottery based on previous grantees being made whole. **The total program amount is \$370,000 for year 1.** Applications will be accepted for a period of three weeks. After this time, the City will review the applications and insert eligible applications into a lottery for selection broken down by employee count. 35% of the total funding will be reserved for Women and Minority Owned Businesses.

Use of Funds

Funds are intended to allow eligible Norwalk businesses to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the pandemic. Funds may be used for job retention, rent, utilities, personal protection equipment, improvements made to adhere to state and local guidelines, equipment related to the pandemic, and other legitimate costs deemed appropriate. **Applicants are asked to be as specific as possible regarding the proposed use of the funds.** Applicants should attach paid invoices, receipts or other documentation to support their request. Funds may not be used for payment of non-business expenses, for political or lobbying activities or for any other purpose deemed inappropriate or expressly prohibited by federal regulations.

Application Process

The online application is available at <https://forms.gle/obN7W5e4mVVJ6RaC7>. Applicants should note that all information submitted in connection with this application is subject to verification. Non-disclosure or the making of false or misleading statements will result in disqualification, forfeiture of benefits and/or criminal prosecution under the laws of this State.

Required Documentation

Applicants may be asked to provide documentation as required by program staff to determine eligibility. Incomplete applications may be excluded from grant consideration. Tax and financial information provided as part of this application process will be maintained as confidential and will only be used by program staff for determining eligibility and participation in the program.

Grant Approval Process

All submitted applications will be reviewed on the stated eligibility requirements and tax obligations by the Department of Economic and Community Development. Once the applicant is confirmed as eligible, applications will be chosen via a lottery system at random. The lottery results are final.

Once an applicant has been approved to receive funding, they will be required to execute a grant agreement with the City of Norwalk and provide a w-9 form. Both forms will be provided in a grant package following the approval notification.

Questions & Assistance

If you have any questions or need assistance with your application, please email Sabrina Church at schurch@norwalkct.org or call 203-854-7948.