



# City of Columbus ARP Business Grant Program



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# COVID-19 Small Business Economic Recovery Grant Program

## Program Overview

Columbus Consolidated Government has partnered with the Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce to develop and administer a business relief grant program. The City of Columbus ARP-Business Grant Program will assist small businesses in Columbus that have been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Funding Source

Funding for this grant program is provided under the American Rescue Plan Act through the U.S. Department of Treasury.

## Funding Amounts

Up to \$40,000 in Reimbursable Expenses\* for small businesses with less than 100 employees.

\* Assistance is in the form of a grant with no repayment requirement.

- ARP-Business Grant Program funding must be used for rent/mortgage, utility, and/or operational retrofitting.

## Application Period

Up to \$3,000,000 is available for the ARP-Business Relief Grant Program. Applications will be accepted until all available funds are expended. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until all available funds are committed to eligible businesses and expenses.

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## Program Eligibility

To be considered for the ARP-Business Relief Grant Program, a business must meet all eligibility criteria listed below:

- For Profit businesses that are NOT publicly traded, partially owned by a hedge fund, or a corporate owned franchise.
- For Profit businesses that have a 2020 and 2021 City of Columbus business license. 2022 business license must also be in process before any grant reimbursements are remitted.
- For Profit businesses that are in good standing with the City of Columbus with no outstanding debts or obligations due to the City.
- For-profit businesses located in City of Columbus with less than 100 employees at time of application to the Small Business Economic Recovery Grant Program.
- For Profit businesses with a physical presence of an organization or business in a building or other structure located in Muscogee County. Home-based businesses and multiple independent businesses/locations are ineligible.
- For Profit businesses must demonstrate ongoing business operations and existence before July 1, 2020. Existence shall only be established with the issuance of a business license from the City of Columbus prior to July 1, 2020.
- For Profit businesses that are not in bankruptcy, current with all local, state, and Federal taxes, fees, and be in compliance with all City of Columbus business obligations including, but not be limited to, licensure, insurance, tax obligations and zoning/land use requirements.
- \* For Profit businesses that are operational at the time the grant is awarded.

\*If the businesses temporarily closed due to the pandemic, the business must be opened prior to the grant being awarded.

## Application Process

The ARP-Business Relief Grant Program application will be available online at:  
<https://www.columbusga.gov/arp>

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- Applications should only be submitted by the owner, partner, or authorized corporation member, and Applicant is 51% + majority owner of business.
  - Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.

In addition to the application, the following documents are required:

- Completed W-9 form for business. DBA, Tax ID Number (or Social Security Number for sole proprietor), and Mailing Address for Grant Check must match entries in General Information section.
- E-Verify Affidavit. (Businesses must submit a signed and notarized E-Verify Affidavit regardless of the number of employees).
- Valid State of Georgia issued photo ID of business owner/signatory.
- Copy of current 2020 and 2021 City of Columbus business license. 2022 business license must also be in process before any grant reimbursements are remitted.
- Bills/invoices for expenses meeting eligible reimbursable COVID-19 expenses along with proof of payment.
- Business operating agreement (for multiple owners)
- Copy of 2022 Annual Registration Certificate from the Georgia Secretary of State (if applicable).
- Copy of current lease/rental agreement for business space.

## **Business Financials**

### **For Individuals (Sole Proprietors and individual/single-owner LLCs)**

- Sole Proprietor Certification
- 2020 and 2021 Schedule C (Form 1040)
- Profit and Loss Statement for period in which expenses occurred.

### **For Corporations (C-Corps, S-Corps, corporate Limited Liability Corporations (LLCs))**

- 2020 and 2021 Corporation Income Tax Return (Form 1120 or Form 1120-S)
- Profit and Loss Statement for period in which expenses occurred.

### **For Partnerships**

- 2020 and 2021 Return of Partnership Income (Form 1065)

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- Profit and Loss Statement for period in which expenses occurred.

## **Application Review**

Applications will be reviewed by a selection committee convened by the Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce in consultation with the City of Columbus for threshold requirements and needs evaluation. The application will be scored on a pass/fail basis related to the requirements provided in these guidelines. Applicants recommended for funding will be contacted by the City of Columbus to execute their written agreement which will allow for distribution of funds.

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## Appendix A: Reimbursable Expense Information

### Reimbursable Expenses

To alleviate documentation and tracking of this grant, the City of Columbus ARP-Business Relief Grant Program seeks to reimburse awarded firms for expenses incurred between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2022.

The categories of eligible expenses that the City of Columbus ARP-Business Relief Grant Program can reimburse awarded firms are:

- Space Costs for your business: Rent, Mortgage, Lease and Insurance Costs.
- Utility Costs: Electric, gas, water, internet and phone service directly supporting awarded firms' operations.
- Operational Retrofitting: includes building modification expenses to support enhanced business persistence.
  - o Note: Documentation should include an invoice from a licensed inspector, proof of payment, permit receipts if applicable, as well as proof of occupancy certification.

### Documenting Reimbursable Expenses

To receive payment under the City of Columbus ARP-Business Relief Grant Program, awarded firms must show documentation of the eligible expense(s), listed above of which, they wish to be reimbursed, up to the maximum award that they receive. In addition, awarded firms must show documentation demonstrating that they have paid the cost associated with the Eligible Expense.

### Documentation for Expenses:

- Space Costs: Awarded firms seeking reimbursement for space costs must provide a copy of their Rental, Lease or Mortgage Agreement that clearly states the time period that they are responsible for these costs, and what the monthly costs for these expenses are for their location of operation. Self-rental expenses are ineligible for reimbursement. For this grant, self-rentals include but are not limited to businesses/property owners that rent or lease property to another

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business that is also owned or operated by the same owners/stakeholders of the business that is seeking grant program funds.

- **Utility Costs:** Awarded firms seeking Reimbursement for Utility costs must provide copies of the bill(s) from the Utility provider that clearly associate with the firm and their location of operation. The bill(s) must also clearly state the amount due from the firm and be separated from any non-business-related expenses.
- **Operational Retrofitting Costs:** Awarded firms seeking Reimbursement for operational retrofitting costs must provide copies of an invoice from a licensed contractor, any applicable lien waivers proof of payment, permit receipts if applicable, as well as proof of occupancy certification.

For the Expenses listed above, in addition to the documentation requested, the City of Columbus requires demonstration of proof of costs incurred. Awarded firms must also provide proof that their firm paid the outstanding amounts for these expenses.

This documentation can be in the form of a cancelled check (not a check stub), bank statement clearly stating the payment to the vendor, or an itemized invoice/receipt that is marked Paid and signed by the receipt vendor if cash payments were remitted. Documentation must be accompanied with an attestation from the awardee explaining their method of payment.

### **New Vendor Documentation**

In addition to the documentation above, the City of Columbus will require some basic vendor information to process your payment. These documents include the following items:

- Current Company W-9 Form.
- Copy of 2020 and 2021 City of Columbus business license. 2022 business license must also be in process before any grant reimbursements are remitted.

Please feel free to contact Robert Scott, Community Reinvestment Director, at [scott.robert@columbusga.org](mailto:scott.robert@columbusga.org) or Meghan Richardson, Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce Senior Director of Economic Development, [arp@columbusgachamber.com](mailto:arp@columbusgachamber.com)

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with any questions that you may have about the processes or requirements described above. The City of Columbus and the Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce look forward to assisting you in sustaining and growing your business with providing needed goods, services, and employment to our local community.