

COVID relief grant for hospitality businesses opens March 15

A new COVID relief grant for eligible hospitality industry businesses opens for applications March 15, 2021.

SEDA-Council of Governments (SEDA-COG) is urging businesses to apply as soon as possible for the COVID-19 Hospitality Industry Recovery Program (CHIRP) grants since funds may be quickly exhausted.

Businesses can apply at the Community Giving Foundation's website at www.csgiving.org from March 15, 2021 until the funds are exhausted or June 15, 2021.

Grants will range from \$5,000 to \$50,000 and the funds will alleviate revenue losses and pay eligible operating expenses due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

SEDA-COG has contracted with 10 of its member counties to manage a total of \$7.3 million in grants on their behalf. SEDA-COG will receive the applications and determine eligibility and grant amounts. SEDA-COG also will disburse the funds to awarded businesses.

Eligible hospitality industry businesses include hotels, restaurants, bars, and taverns. These businesses must fall within eligible industry codes which include the Accommodations subsector NAICS code (721) or Food Services and Drinking Places subsector (722) found here:

<https://www.naics.com/search/>

Eligibility includes, but is not limited to, having fewer than 300 full-time employees; a net worth that does not exceed \$15 million; a 25% reduction in gross receipts in 2020 compared to 2019; and be located within Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, or Union counties.

Priority will be given to businesses that did not already receive COVID relief funds; that were subject to closure following the disaster emergency declared by Gov. Tom Wolf on March 6, 2020; and had more than a 50% reduction in gross receipts from March 31, 2020 to Dec. 31, 2020 compared to the same time period in 2019. For a full listing of eligibility requirements and prioritization guidelines, visit www.csgiving.org.

The grant program was created from Act 1 of 2021, which was passed Feb. 5. Statewide, it provides \$145 million in funding assistance to the hospitality industry businesses adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic through the state Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED).

For more information, contact SEDA-COG Grants Manager Betsy Lockwood at 570-522-7265 or elockwood@seda-cog.org.

As a community and economic development agency, SEDA-COG enhances the quality of life and economic advantage for residents and businesses in 11 central Pennsylvania counties through its vital partnerships and initiatives. SEDA-COG also is an advocate for the interests of its communities at the state and federal levels. For more information, visit www.seda-cog.org.