

ACCD Economic Recovery Grants

Sec. ##. Sec. 1 of Act 115 (2020) is amended to read:

Sec. 1. DEFINITIONS

As used in this act:

[\* \* \*]

(2) "Eligible business" means:

(A) The business is a nonpublic, private organization that:

~~(i)~~ is domiciled or has its primary place of business in Vermont;

and

~~(ii) has one or more employees in Vermont.~~

(B) The business is:

(i) organized and operated on a for-profit basis, including a sole proprietor, partnership, limited liability company, business corporation, cooperative, or mutual benefit enterprise; or

(ii) organized and operated on a nonprofit or low-profit basis,

including a mutual benefit corporation, public benefit corporation, and a low-profit limited liability company.

(C) The business was in operation on or before ~~February 15~~ March 1, 2020.

(D) The business:

(i) is open for business at the time of application; or

(ii) is closed for business due to the COVID-19 public health

emergency but has a good-faith plan for reopening.

Sec. ##. Sec. 3. Of Act 115 (2020) is amended to read:

Sec. 3. CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY ECONOMIC RECOVERY

GRANTS; AGENCY OF COMMERCE AND COMMUNITY

DEVELOPMENT

(a) Authorization; appropriation.

**Commented [VJ1]:** This change is intended to open the program to sole proprietors, as the Agency has heard from several who were not able to access funding.

**Commented [VJ2]:** This piece is high lighted because the Agency would like to discuss some feedback we have been receiving from the non-profit community who have unique revenue streams.

**Commented [VJ3]:** The Agency would like to suggest changing the date a business had to be in operation in order to receive funding. The Agency received feedback from "very new" businesses who were unable to show revenue loss from previous years. This is a suggested edit – but needs more discussion.

ACCD Economic Recovery Grants

(1) Of the funds available in the Coronavirus Relief Fund, the amount of ~~\$20,000,000.00~~ \$73,000,000.00 is appropriated to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to provide grants to eligible businesses pursuant to this section in coordination with the Department of Taxes, provided that the Agency will determine the most effective and fair distribution of funds among the following specific areas:

- (i) Supplemental Emergency Economic Recovery Grants to lodging, dining, and entertainment businesses pursuant to this section, provided that the businesses demonstrate additional need and additional losses;
- (ii) New businesses, non-profit businesses, and businesses with more than 30-percent loss as defined in this section;
- (iii) Businesses applying through the Vermont Sole Proprietor Stabilization Program; and
- (iv) Members of the Vermont Ski Areas Association to make necessary COVID-19 related improvements at ski areas to allow them to welcome skiers safely back to their businesses.

(2) The Agency shall identify local, regional, and State economic development organizations with whom it may partner to most efficiently distribute grants under the Program, which may include the Vermont Economic Development Authority, regional development corporations, community action agencies, and private institutions.

(b) Requirements for grant applicants. An eligible business may apply for a grant for an eligible use if the business experienced:

ACCD Economic Recovery Grants

- (1) a 75 30 percent or greater reduction in revenue in any ~~one~~-three-month period from March 1, 2020 to September 1, 2020 as compared to the same ~~one~~-three-month period from March 1, 2019 to September 1, 2019; or
- (2) In the case of a new business established between September 1, 2019 and March 1, 2020, a 30 percent or greater reduction in revenue in any one-month period between February 2020 and September 2020.

**Commented [VJ4]:** The Agency would like to extend grants to businesses with less than 50% loss. There were several businesses who applied that were just under the 50% threshold. The recommend here is to lower the revenue loss threshold, and extend the loss requirement to be shown over a three month time.

(c) Grant amount; terms.

- (1) The Agency shall establish a formula for determining the amount of grant awards, which shall include a maximum grant amount. In determining the grant amount for a non-profit organization, the Agency shall consider the organization's total revenue, including grants and charitable contributions.
- (2) The Agency shall consider whether and by how much grant awards should be adjusted based on whether an applicant has received financial assistance from other sources.

Sec. ##. Sec. 4 of Act 115 (2020) is amended to read:

Sec. 4. GUIDELINES; REPORTING

- (a) Guidelines. Not later than ten days after the effective date of this act, the Department of Taxes and the Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall publish guidelines governing the implementation of their

ACCD Economic Recovery Grants

respective programs, which at minimum shall:

- (1) establish application and award procedures;
- (2) establish standards to determine whether a business has its primary place of business in Vermont;
- (3) establish standards for eligible uses of grant funds;
- (4) establish standards governing the amount of grant awards:
  - (A) to ensure the equitable distribution of funds among regions and among business types, sizes, and sectors; and
  - (B) to ensure that grants are based on need and will have a meaningful impact on the business's continued viability;
- (5) establish procedures to ensure that grant awards comply with the requirements of the CARES Act and that the State maintains adequate records to demonstrate compliance with the Act;
- (6) establish procedures to prevent, detect, and mitigate fraud, waste, error, and abuse; and
- (7) establish procedures to ensure that grant applicants are in compliance with State and federal employment and labor laws.

ACCD Economic Recovery Grants

(b) Reporting. The Agency and Department shall:

(1) provide weekly updates and information concerning grant

guidelines, awards, and implementation to the committees of jurisdiction of the

General Assembly, including the distribution of funds among the four approved areas identified above in paragraphs (i) – (iv) in Section ##. ; and

(2) submit a report to the General Assembly on or before ~~August~~ November 15,

2020 detailing the implementation of this section, including specific

information concerning the amount and identity of grant recipients, which shall

be publicly available.

**\*\*\*Buy Local Consumer Stimulus\*\*\***

SECTION XX

(1) (A) authorization and appropriation: \$60,000,000.00 to the Department of Tourism and Marketing for the Restart Vermont marketing program to encourage visitation, relocation and consumer spending in Vermont to support businesses that have suffered economic harm due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

(B) Eligible uses for the funds appropriated in subdivision (A) of this subdivision (1) include:

(i) \$50,000,000 for a statewide consumer stimulus program with direct incentives to maximize the consumer spending power of Vermonters, to support restaurants, retail stores, lodging

ACCD Economic Recovery Grants

establishments, tourism and cultural attractions, and other businesses suffering economic harm due to continued capacity and travel restrictions imposed in response to COVID-19.

(i) \$10,000,000 for marketing activities that promote:

(aa) travel to and within Vermont to increase consumer spending at tourism, hospitality, retail, and related businesses;

(bb) purchase of locally-made products to support Vermont producers;

(cc) Vermont as an ideal place to relocate in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic to bring new residents and businesses to the state to provide additional economic activity in Vermont communities to support businesses impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency.