

# City of La Crosse

## Small Business Relief Grant (2) Program

### GUIDELINES

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

2021 SMALL BUSINESS RELIEF GRANT PROGRAM(SBRG)- In response to the continued economic hardships experienced by small businesses resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of La Crosse is launching the 2021 Small Business Relief Grant Program in an effort to retain jobs and stabilize local businesses. The primary Community Development objectives of assistance to low- and moderate-income persons will be achieved as grants to retain jobs for City residents. This Program is a gap financing program in response to the COVID 19 outbreak for businesses that have lost business as a result of social distancing.

The City of La Crosse Department of Planning and Development has modified existing economic development programs to create a combined funding mechanism that will serve businesses with up to twenty fulltime equivalent (20 FTE) employees at the time of application. Grants provided will be up to the amount of 3 months' rent per business.

#### 2.0 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

##### 2.1 Eligibility and Terms

Eligible businesses may be awarded up to the value of the most recent 3 months' rent (working capital) in grant funds through the SBRG application process.

##### 2.1.1 Eligibility

For-profit business registered in City of La Crosse jurisdictional boundaries with up to 20 FTE employees , subject to restrictions set forth in 24 CFR 570.203 regarding Special Economic Development projects.

Must have been in business one full year previous to February 1, 2020 with 2 years of tax returns

Owner is 18 years or older

Applicant is majority owner of business

Business must be a brick and mortar business.

Evidence of significant loss of revenues

Business must not be in bankruptcy

Business and business owner(s) must be current with all local, state and federal taxes, fees, and any other debt payments to the City of La Crosse.

Owner has or will have a valid SS #, EIN & DUNS

The business owner must meet the following requirements and agree to the following criteria:

1. The business must be a small business with 20 or fewer full-time equivalent employees (including the owner)

2. EITHER - The business is a micro business with 5 or fewer full-time equivalent jobs (including the owner) and the owner's single household income is under 80% of the La Crosse County Area Median, less than \$43,050

OR – The owner must agree to create or retain a job for a person who's household or single household income is under 80% of the La Crosse County Area Median, less than \$43,050. The job creation or retention requirement must be met within 12 months.

OR- The business meets Low-Moderate Area requirements, meaning that their services principally benefit the surrounding Low-Moderate Income Census Tract neighborhood.

Business does or will have active liability insurance within 30 days

Not have a conflict of interest with the city of La Crosse

### 2.1.2 Ineligible Applicants

An ineligible existing business applicant is one that has a physical business location or registration outside of the City of La Crosse jurisdictional boundary.

Nonprofit organizations are not eligible businesses and will not be considered for funding.

Other ineligible businesses include payday grant businesses, liquor and tobacco stores, pawn shops, firearm or other weapons dealers, adult entertainment, passive real estate investments, or home-based businesses operating without appropriate zoning and/or permits.

A business that is listed on the Federal Debarred list (SAM search)

### 2.1.3 Terms

Grants awarded on a first come, first served basis to eligible businesses

Project report provided to City within 60 days of fund draw down.

## 2.2 Program Service Area

Financing under this Program is available to eligible for-profit businesses registered and located within the City of La Crosse jurisdictional boundaries. The location of the business will be determined by the place of business administration and registration address.

## 2.3 Funding Source and Reimbursement

The Relief Program is funded through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds provided by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to the City of La Crosse. As such, these funds have Federal requirements, as described below.

Funds will be disbursed to the applicant for documented eligible project expenses.

## 2.4 Eligible Use of Funds

The City of La Crosse Planning and Development Department or their designee will review the project scope of work submitted in the application. Grants are restricted to rent and/or non-city owned utilities only.

## 2.5 Applicant Capacity

The City or its designee must confirm that the business and the applicant(s) possess the capacity to execute the project proposal to be successful with the use of CDBG funds. As such, grant applicants for the SBRG Program are required to demonstrate management capacity and ability to successfully operate a business through their applications.

## 2.6 Job Creation

Unless a business applicant's owner is a member of a low-/moderate-income household and the business qualifies as a HUD-defined microenterprise, then creation of at least one job held by a low-/moderate-income household is required to access funds in this program. At least 51% of the positions created must be held by employees who are a member of a low-/moderate-income household. Staff to determine the National Objective in application review process.

## 3.0 PROGRAM DETAILS

### 3.1 General Credit Requirements

Outstanding debts from municipal citations, child support, taxes owed to federal and state agencies, and delinquent property taxes do not disqualify applicants IF proof of formal payment arrangements is provided.

Applicants may elect to submit personal credit information if they feel it would strengthen their application.

### 3.2 Other Requirements

Provide a valid DUNS number and CAGE code

Provide evidence of how the business was negatively impacted by Covid-19.

Provide evidence that there are no duplication of benefits (DOB), in other words that the business is not receiving financial assistance from multiple sources for the same purpose and that all costs are necessary and reasonable for responding to the impacts of the Coronavirus.

### 3.3 Program Administration

The City, or its designee will:

Originate SBRG funds

Market the SBRG program based on funds availability

Accept and process applications

Complete an Environmental Review

Complete Income Eligibility qualification and document number of employees

Review and underwrite application requests

Determine national objective of the project

Ensure timely disbursement of funds

Maintain agreement documents and fiscal records

Administer grants used for this program.

Ensure compliance with program guidelines

Provide the City, Economic Development Commission, and Community Development Committee program updates

### 3.4 Grant Terms and Conditions

Financial assistance from the program is designed to keep businesses operational and retain jobs.

Grant – the funding is in the form of a grant.

Allow the City to collect certain income and demographic data from applicants and their employees.

Amount – up to 3 months value of most recent rent

## 4.0 PROGRAM OPERATIONS AND GRANT PROCESSING

### 4.1 Marketing and Outreach

Program marketing will be conducted by the City and its designee, and will affirmatively target women and minority-owned enterprises. Examples of marketing include media coverage with ads in local papers and distribution of marketing brochures to local chamber of commerce and business networking organizations. Presentations may be scheduled for these groups as well as real estate groups, local commercial banks and other organizations. The local Small Business Development Center (SBDC) or other similar entity may be used as a referral agency.

### 4.2 Equal Opportunity Compliance

The SBRG Program will be implemented in ways consistent with the City's commitment to State and Federal equal opportunity laws. No person or business shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity funded in whole or in part with CDBG program funds on the basis of his or her religion, religious affiliation, age, race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, marital status, familial status (number or ages of children), physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or other arbitrary cause.

### 4.3 Application Review

Applications to the SBRG Program are presented by business owners/agents to City staff, or its designee. City staff, or its designee will award grants on a first come, first served basis in the order that applications are received and deemed eligible.

### 4.4 Confidentiality

All personal and business financial information will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law.

### 4.5 Grant Execution

Agreements for approved grant applications will be drafted and circulated for signatures to:

Applicant  
City of La Crosse – Mayor  
City of La Crosse – Clerk

### 4.6 Exceptions and Special Circumstances

The City will not make exceptions to policies and procedures outlined in the program guidelines derived from HUD requirements. The City, however, reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to deviate from City-imposed policies and procedures in extenuating circumstances. A request for exception to program guidelines shall be submitted to staff in writing by applicant. Exceptions are defined as any action which would depart from policy and procedures stated in the guidelines.

#### 4.7 Grant Closing Process

Upon successful completion of application process, City staff, or its designee will prepare for the grant closing by preparing the grant closing documents. CDBG funds will only be disbursed for reimbursement to the Grantee for documented eligible project expenses submitted with the application.

#### 4.8 Dispute Resolution and Appeals Procedure

Applicants whose applications are not deemed eligible have the right to appeal the decision of the City, limited to procedural errors in the selection process. In the event that no such procedural errors are found to have occurred, the decision of the City shall be final. An aggrieved applicant may, within seven (7) business days after the selection of prospective eligible projects, appeal in writing to the Director of Planning, Development & Assessment or their designee. The appeal must state all facts and arguments upon which the appeal is based. The Director, or the appointed Designee, will review the content of the City's Small Business Relief Grant Program Guidelines, the applicant's application, and the facts which form the basis for the appeal. The Director, or the appointed Designee, will render a written decision within thirty (30) business days of the receipt of the appeal.

## APPENDIX A -

### Business Owner Income Documentation and Conflict of Interest Certification

**INCOME** is defined as the annual gross income (before deductions) of all family and non-family members 18+ years old living in the household. All sources of income must be counted from all persons in the household based on the anticipated income expected in the next 12 months.

Please circle which box applies to you, match household size (number of family members) to income:

Number of Family Members in Household (Select one)	Annual Income Select Which Household Size and Income Applies to You	
1	\$43,050 or less	Above \$43,050
2	\$49,200 or less	Above \$49,200
3	\$55,350 or less	Above \$55,350
4	\$61,450 or less	Above \$61,450
5	\$66,400 or less	Above \$66,400
6	\$71,300 or less	Above \$71,300
7	\$76,200 or less	Above \$76,200

Please check your ethnicity (pick 1 of 2):     Hispanic/Latino         Non-Hispanic/Latino

Please check your race (pick 1 of 10 choices):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White   | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian   | <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian & White   | <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native & White |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaii/Other Pacific Islander                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African American & White         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native & Black/African American | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Multi-Racial                     |

**APPLICANT STATEMENT:** I hereby declare that any person(s) employed by the City of La Crosse, who has direct or indirect personal or financial interest in this application or in any portion of the profits that may be derived there from, has been identified and the interest disclosed below. (Please include in your disclosure any interest which you know of. An example of a direct interest would be a City of La Crosse employee, City of La Crosse Council Member, City of La Crosse Community Development Block Grant Committee, who would be paid to perform services under this proposal. An example of indirect interest would be a City of La Crosse employee who is related to any officers, employees, principal or shareholders of your firm or to you. If in doubt as to status or interest, please disclose to the extent known). I hereby certify that the information on this form is complete and accurate. If necessary, I will provide the information required to verify this data (e.g. pay stubs, bank account statements, etc.). I, therefore, authorize such verification, and I will provide the supporting documentation, if necessary.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ (printed)

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Disclosed Conflict of Interests:**

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## [Appendix B - Helpful links](#)

**City of La Crosse- Planning and Economic Development** - <https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/your-government/departments/planning-economic-development>

**Federal EIN** – <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online>

**WI Business Resources** - <https://openforbusiness.wi.gov/>

**WI Dept of Financial Institutions** - <https://www.wdfi.org/corporations/>

**WI Dept of Revenue:**

- <https://www.revenue.wi.gov/Pages/Businesses/New-Business-home.aspx>
- <https://www.revenue.wi.gov/Pages/Form/with-home.aspx>

**WI Dept of Workforce Development** - <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/ui/> <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/wc/>

**Dun & Bradstreet (DUNS)** – <https://www.dnb.com/duns-number/get-a-duns.html>

**CAGE code** - <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>

**HUD Section 3 Registration:**

- **Info:** <https://portalapps.hud.gov/Sec3BusReg/BRegistry/What>

**Register here:** <https://portalapps.hud.gov/Sec3BusReg/BRegistry/RegisterBusiness>