

Maine Tourism, Hospitality & Retail Recovery Grant

November 30, 2020

- The Maine Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) announces the Maine Tourism, Hospitality & Retail Recovery Grant Program.
- The funding for his program originates from the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund.
- The grants are awarded to directly alleviate the disruption of operations suffered by Maine's customer facing small businesses and organizations in the tourism, hospitality, and retail sectors due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- DECD, in collaboration with our economic development and business support partners, is offering a final round of targeted grant funds to provide some revenue loss relief due to COVID-related business disruption.
- The program is governed by Federal CARES Act requirements and Maine cannot expand eligibility to organizations excluded in the Federal legislation.
- Funds will be awarded to the first 2,500 approved applications on a “first come-first served” basis to eligible businesses and organizations in the following industry classifications:
 - Accommodation and Food Services
 - Retail Trade
 - Arts, Entertainment and Recreation
- Eligible applicants may receive up to \$20,000.
- The application portal will go live Wednesday, December 2nd at 9:30AM.
- The program draws on recommendations from industry and the distinct needs of businesses and organizations on the front lines serving customers that have been highly impacted by the threat to public health.
- COVID-19 has created an unprecedented financial crisis for these businesses in Maine and throughout the country.
- With input from industry, we have created a grant program that allows businesses to determine their most urgent needs specific to their individual business.
- This program is designed to get funds to eligible businesses using available and verifiable data that the business has already submitted to the State of Maine allowing for a streamlined application process.

Eligible Applicant will:

- Be a customer facing service business or organization highly impacted by the COVID-19 restrictions, including restaurants, bars and taverns, tasting rooms, lodging, and/or retail establishments, that has experienced a 20% or greater loss in gross sales as reported to Maine Revenue Services on Sales Tax Returns comparing March 2019 through September 2019 to March 2020 through September 2020 for monthly filers, and April 2019 through September 2019 to April 2020 through September 2020 for quarterly filers;
- Gross sales must be between \$24,000 and \$12MM annually;
- Have a Maine sales and use tax account with Maine Revenue Service;
- Be headquartered in Maine (as registered with the Maine Secretary of State Office);
- Be current and in good standing with all Maine State payroll taxes, sales taxes, and state income taxes (as applicable) through September 30, 2020;
- Be in good standing with the Maine Department of Labor;
- Not be in bankruptcy;
- Not have permanently ceased all operations;
- Be in consistent compliance and not be under any current or past enforcement action with COVID-19 Prevention Checklist Requirements
(<https://www.maine.gov/decd/covid-19-prevention-checklists>)

Ineligible to apply include, but not limited to:

- 501(c)(4), 501(c)(6) Trade associations
- Gambling
- Adult Entertainment
- Country clubs, golf clubs, other private clubs
- Fraternal orders

Eligible Uses of Grant Funds:

- Suggested business/organization expenses may include but are not limited to:
 - Payroll costs and expenses;
 - Rent or mortgage payments for business facilities (unless otherwise waived by lessor/lender);
 - Utilities payments;
 - Purchase of personal protective equipment required by the business/organization;
 - Business related equipment;
 - Investments that will support your business's/organization's long-term sustainment;
 - Expenses incurred to replenish inventory or other necessary re-opening expenses; and
 - Necessary operating expenses.

Grant Funds May NOT Be Used For:

- Depreciation expense
- Entertainment
- Lobbying
- Goods and Services for Personal Use
- Fines, Penalties, Damages and other Settlements
- Operations outside of Maine
- List is not all-inclusive, so check with DECD if you are not sure.
- This grant is considered reportable income; therefore, funds received from this grant must be included with reportable income at tax time and are subject to audit. For applicable businesses, a Form 1099 will accompany any awarded grant monies. Businesses/organizations will be liable for any misuse of funds.
- Again, this grant program is **first come, first served**. Applications may be submitted at any time and the portal will close with funds are committed, or on a date when processing time is insufficient to meet that CARES Act deadline of December 30, 2020.
- Questions that are not addressed in instructions at <https://www.maine.gov/decd/tourism-hospitality-retails-recovery-grants/faq>, call 800-872-3838 and press 3, or email BizAwards.DECD@maine.gov.
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- Maine state tax questions should be directed the Maine Revenue Service Taxpayer Contact Center at 207-624-9784 or email at taxpayerassist@maine.gov.