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Washington State Coronavirus Response (COVID-19)

Economic Resiliency Team - Joint Information Center, Camp Murray

DEC. 3, 2020

The Business and Workers update is a weekly newsletter providing news and information to help businesses and workers navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. The information is compiled by the state Economic Resiliency Team (ERT), part of the Joint Information Center.

What should Washington workers and employers know?

Dec. 3, 2020

Quick tips if you're applying for the new round of Working Washington business grants

The [application for the new round of Working Washington business grants](#) is now open. Businesses can apply for up to \$20,000 to offset costs or expenses due to COVID-19. The grants are targeted primarily for small businesses with \$5 million or less in annual revenue that have had to close or significantly curtail operations as a result of current or ongoing public health measures. Examples include full-service restaurants, fitness centers, bowling alleys, or music and event venues.

Priority will be given to applications received by Dec. 11. Some businesses have heard this grant is being processed on a first-come-first-served basis and that is causing many business owners tremendous anxiety. Don't worry – that's not the case! If it takes you a few days to complete the application, that's ok. Applications received until Dec. 11 will all be considered together. If Commerce is able to fund all the eligible

applicants who submit by that time, the department may be able to consider eligible applicants who submit after Dec. 11.

The Washington Small Business Development Council, which has generously been partnering with us to provide support and help to businesses applying for these grants, hosted an informational webinar earlier today and answered a lot of the most common questions and problems business owners are asking about. If you missed it, [you can watch it here.](#)

Here are five tips for businesses who want to apply.

- **Apply during off-peak hours such as early morning or late evening.** Site volumes can be very high during the day which means some applications may experience slow page loading times. This is especially true for businesses who don't have access to broadband.
- **Double-check your spelling and keep an eye on both your inbox and spam folder for follow-up emails.** One of the first steps when you open the portal is to create an account. The system will then send you a verification email that allows you to fill out the application. Be sure to double-check that your email address is correct before you submit it. You'd be surprised how many people type too fast and enter their email incorrectly! If you know you filled in the right email address but don't see the verification email in your inbox within a few minutes, check your spam folders. The verification code times out within 5-10 minutes so it's important to keep an eye in both places for it.
- **If you're applying on behalf of multiple businesses, you'll need a separate UBI number and separate e-mail address for each.** Our team has received many questions from business owners asking if they can apply for more than one business or business location. The answer is yes if each business has a separate UBI number. And if you do apply for more than one grant, the application system will require a separate e-mail address for each application. That may mean you have to create new e-mail addresses for purposes of this application. We know it's not the most elegant solution but this helps us streamline payment notifications and delivery so we can deliver businesses their funds before the Dec. 30 CARES Act deadline.
- **Clear your cache before starting a new application.** If you are submitting multiple applications, you may find your computer preventing you from starting a fresh application. That's because our computers think they're being helpful by storing information and referring back to it. Try clearing your cache – or clearing old

information – before each new application. Don't worry, this is easier than it sounds.

Check the upper right hand of your internet browser window... do you see the three dots near the corner? Click the dots and you'll see a menu appear. One of the options should be about your browser history. Depending on your browser type, that history tab should take you to a menu or option where you can clear your browsing data. If you're having trouble finding where to do this, [this article](#) describes the steps for all browser types. If you don't know what kind of browser you're using, you should be able to see the name of it under the icon on your desktop screen.

- **Don't be afraid to ask for help.** Not quite sure how to answer one of the application questions? Having trouble with the portal website? We know the process can feel overwhelming or confusing. Our partners at the Washington Small Business Development Center are standing by to help. You can email bizgrants@commerce.wa.gov or call 360.725.5003. If you need assistance in a language other than English, our [Business Resiliency partners](#) are also available.
- **Bonus tip: Gather your information before starting your application.** The list of documents and information you'll need is pretty short, but it helps to have it ready.
 - Copy of valid government issued photo I.D.
 - Applicant W-9 Request for taxpayer Identification Number
 - W-9 requires your Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN or social security)
 - W-9 forms can be found here:
<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>
 - For Tribal-member owned businesses: license or certification if business activity is conducted outside the tribal jurisdiction; letter or certification from the tribe recognizing you as a business if business activity is within the tribal jurisdiction.
 - Business gross revenues for 2019 and 2020. You will enter this information in the application and attest to it, but we do not require documentation. (NOTE: Some grant or loan programs require businesses to have been in operation a certain amount of time. This grant program does not have an eligibility requirement associated with business start date.)
 - NAICS code or clear description of your primary business activity. A NAICS code is helpful, but not necessary. If you

have never used a NAICS code, you can learn more here:
<https://www.naics.com/what-is-a-naics-code-why-do-i-need-one/>

Resources for small businesses

Webinars on business-friendly programs, business relief and more

State agencies have partnered to bring monthly [webinars](#) presenting information specific to Washington small businesses. Webinars feature brief presentations from state and federal partners and open-mic Q&A time. The last 2020 webinar will be held on [Dec. 10 at 8:30 a.m.](#)

[Click here to register online.](#)

Health resources

Behavioral health resources for businesses

Since March 2020, the COVID-19 Behavioral Health Group has been working to address the behavioral health impacts of COVID-19 by leading the statewide behavioral health response efforts, providing situational awareness on behavioral health impacts and capacity, building capacity to support long-term behavioral health needs, and providing tools and technical assistance on disaster behavioral health principles to promote emotional wellbeing. Below are some of the resources that the Group has put together over the course of this year:

- [*COVID-19 Guidance for Building Resilience in the Workplace*](#)
- [*COVID-19 Behavioral Health Group Impact Reference Guide*](#)
- [*The Ingredients of Resilience*](#)
- [*How to Deal With Grief or Loss*](#)
- [*Department of Health's Behavioral Health Resources Webpage*](#)

New smartphone tool can help reduce spread of COVID-19

Washington Exposure Notifications (also known as WA Notify) is a new tool that works through smartphones, without sharing any personal information, to alert users if they may have been exposed to COVID-19. It is completely private, and doesn't know or track who you are or where you go.

If another WA Notify user you've been near in the last two weeks later tests positive for COVID-19 and adds their verification code to the app, you'll get an anonymous notification that you've had a possible exposure. This lets you get the care you need quickly and helps prevent you from spreading COVID-19 to the people around you. Find out how to use [WA Notify here](#).

Safe Start update

Gov. Inslee updates restrictions for religious and faith based organizations.

The update clarifies that religious and faith-based organizations can hold outdoor services with up to 200 individuals, regardless of location, so long as physical distancing is followed and face coverings are worn. This modification expands where outdoor services can be held, services are no longer limited to the organization's property or an immediately adjacent property.

Read the full guidance document [here](#).

Find a full list of current reopening guidance [here](#).



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