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# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEC. 2, 2020

## Applications open for new round of state Working Washington business grants

### **Businesses encouraged to apply by Dec. 11**

OLYMPIA, WA --- Small businesses struggling to survive the impact of COVID-19 can apply now for up to \$20,000 in a new round of \$50 million in state Working Washington grants. Priority is focused on businesses with annual revenues of \$5 million or less in 2019 and those most impacted by the recent public health measures, as well as businesses in sectors that have experienced significant, cumulative impacts. Examples include full-service restaurants, fitness centers, bowling alleys and music and event venues.

Information and applications for this third round of Working Washington Business Grants are available through an online portal on the Washington State Department of Commerce website at [www.commerce.wa.gov/bizgrants](http://www.commerce.wa.gov/bizgrants). Commerce encourages businesses to apply by Dec. 11.

"We know this pandemic is taking an economic toll," Gov. Jay Inslee said. "While this is a significant relief effort, I can't say that it will help everyone. We continue working together with legislators, state agencies and partners to secure more support to see us through this surge and into the longer term recovery ahead."

The grants are funded by CARES Act dollars and must be distributed by the state before Dec. 30. Commerce Director Lisa Brown said that leaves only a small window of time to process applications and distribute funds. The agency is launching a “10 Days of Biz Grants” push on social media and with local partners to get the word out to business owners who are understandably overwhelmed managing the added demands of their day-to-day operations.

“Small businesses are the heart and soul of our communities, and what make our neighborhoods unique. Most operate on small margins in the best of times, and today is even more challenging,” said Commerce Director Lisa Brown. “We intend to distribute these funds as quickly as possible to the businesses that need it most. The application process is simple, and we’re asking everyone to help us spread the word. Together, we can help our small businesses get through this holiday season.”

Grants can be used only to cover expenses or costs incurred due to COVID-19 and that were necessary to continue business operations.

Certain nonprofits may also be eligible if they have a primary business activity that falls into a similar high-impact category, for example a nonprofit full-service restaurant or nonprofit music venue.

If the Department of Commerce is able to fund all the eligible applicants from the priority pool, and funds remain, the department may be able to provide grants to additional businesses or nonprofits from other sectors or who have annual revenues larger than \$5 million.

### **Application information**

The online application portal is open at [www.commerce.wa.gov/bizgrants](http://www.commerce.wa.gov/bizgrants). Additional information about eligibility and prioritization is also posted there.

All applications received by Dec. 11 will be prioritized. Site traffic may be high so page load times may be impacted. Applicants are encouraged to be patient or try accessing the site during non-peak hours such as early morning, late evening or the weekend.

If Commerce is able to fund all the eligible applicants who submit by Dec. 11, the department may be able to consider eligible applicants who submit after that date.

Following is a checklist of the information business owners need to have ready to apply:

- Applicant W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number
- Copy of valid government issued photo I.D.
- 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.
- 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: [What is a NAICS Code?](#) and [explore NAICS codes](#) to see which one fits your business.

This additional \$50 million in Working Washington grants is part of a total \$70 million in business relief announced last week by Gov. Jay Inslee. The remainder will go toward funding all qualified businesses that applied in earlier rounds of the state's resiliency grant program. *(NOTE: Businesses who applied for the resiliency grant program do not need to take any action).*

Business owners who have questions about the grants can email [bizgrants@commerce.wa.gov](mailto:bizgrants@commerce.wa.gov) or call (360) 725-5003.

Commerce has partnered with local associate economic development organizations (ADOs) and the Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to help businesses who have questions or need help with their applications.

Funding for the additional business grants is from the state's remaining Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES Act) dollars. In addition to the total \$70 million for business grants, Gov. Inslee's \$135 million funding package announced last week also provides \$30 million for a new business recovery loan program to be developed and launched in the first quarter of 2021, as well as adding \$20 million to the state's current rent assistance program and \$15 for low-income home energy assistance programs. Individuals seeking information about rent assistance or energy assistance will need to contact local providers who administer those funds. Information about who to contact and resources available are on the ["You and Your Family" page](#) the state's COVID-19 website.

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