



## **About the Rocklin Business Retention Grant Program**

### **Where does this money come from?**

In June 2023, the Rocklin City Council approved relief funds to support small businesses that opened in Rocklin between 2019 and 2020. They selected Sierra Business Council to act as a third-party administrator of these funds. SBC will solicit and process applications, provide technical support, and maintain compliance with Federal guidelines.

### **How much funding is available?**

The City of Rocklin has allocated \$500,000 to the Business Retention Program.

### **What are the sizes of the awards?**

Qualified businesses may receive up to \$15,000 based on six months of rental reimbursement up to \$15,000. Actual amount will reflect rent paid during mandated closure due to COVID-19. Awards are subject to evaluation and availability of funds.

### **Will I need to pay the money back? Is this a grant program or a loan program?**

This is a grant program, not a loan, so you will not need to pay the money back. The only exception is if you do not use all the funds, or if you do not use them in the manner stated on your application.

### **What can funds be spent on?**

Grant funds may be used to offset or reimburse businesses for costs related to the negative impacts of COVID-19 that have not been covered by funds received from other COVID-related programs, including:

- General business operations
- Payroll expenses
- Supplier payments
- Rent, lease or mortgage payments for the business property
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and/or sanitation supplies and equipment
- Investments in software or technology that allow for a shift to online operations
- Equipment purchases that expand and/or modify operations

### **Are funds allocated on a first-come, first-served basis for qualified applicants?**

No. No applications will be considered until the application period has closed on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 4:59 PM PST.

## **Eligibility for Businesses**

**How do I know if my business is eligible for funding?**

Before applying, everyone must go through an eligibility screening process, which will determine whether or not their business is eligible to apply. If your organization is deemed eligible, then you will be automatically directed to the application. You can review the eligibility screening and application process at [www.rocklin.ca/arpa](http://www.rocklin.ca/arpa)

If you are deemed eligible, you will be automatically directed to the application. If you are deemed ineligible, you will not be able to proceed to the application. After reviewing the eligibility criteria below, please call Sierra Business Council at 530-582-5022 if you believe there has been a mistake in your eligibility process so that we can correct it.

### **Eligibility requirements for small businesses:**

A business must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible to receive a grant:

- The business must have been newly opened and operational in Rocklin between January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020. Business cannot have had a physical presence in the City of Rocklin prior to January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019; OR
- The business must have expanded their physical footprint between January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020 by either: moving to a larger location, opening a second location, or a comparable increase in commercial square footage that meets the criteria
- The business must be a brick and mortar commercial operation outside of their home that is not an ineligible business type.
- The business must have been ordered to close and/or stop operations due to state-mandated COVID-19 restrictions.
- The business is an existing for-profit business with no more than **25 full-time equivalent employees (“FTEs”)** and no more than \$3,000,000 in annual gross sales as of December 31, 2020. An FTE is defined as an employee who works at least 2,080 hours per year over a 12-month period. Part-time employees may be considered an FTE employee for purposes of this Program (for example, two part-time employees who regularly work 1,040 hours per year can be converted to one FTE and identified as one FTE on the Program application).
- A business is defined as a sole proprietorship, a partnership, a corporation, a limited liability company, or other lawful business entity with an active registration to operate within the State of California and engaged in for-profit operations.
- The business is physically located within the boundaries of the City of Rocklin.
- For businesses with multiple locations, only the Rocklin location(s) can be used to qualify for a grant under the program, and all grant funds received must only be used to support Rocklin business operations. Multiple locations within Rocklin operating under a single business entity will be considered one business for purposes of the program.
- The business is in good standing with the City of Rocklin (e.g., possess a valid business license and where applicable, is in compliance with all applicable zoning and permit requirements, is current on all city bills and obligations, and is not subject to any liens or judgments by the city-related to the business).
- The business is in compliance with all city, state, and federal laws and regulations related to the operation of the business.

- Business owners that own multiple businesses are only eligible for one grant.

**Can I apply if I received funds from the California Relief Grant program or Placer Shares?**

Yes, you can apply if you received funds from the California Relief Grant program or Placer Shares.

**Can I apply if I received funds from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) or the EIDL?**

Yes, you can apply if you received funds from the Paycheck Protection Program or other pandemic-related grant or loan programs.

**Do I have to be a U.S. citizen to apply?**

No, you do not need to be a U.S. citizen to apply.

**Ineligible Criteria**

**What would make my business ineligible to apply for a grant?**

The following businesses are **not** eligible to apply for the program:

- Businesses that opened in Rocklin prior to January 1, 2019 or after December 31, 2020  
OR
- Businesses open in Rocklin prior to December 31, 2020 who did NOT expand their physical footprint between January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020 by either: moving to a larger location, opening a second location, or a comparable increase in commercial square footage that meets the criteria
- Businesses that received a grant from the Rocklin Business Retention Program Round I that was open from June 15th to July 14th
- Nonprofit organizations
- Professional, nonretail businesses (for example: architects, lawyers, medical professionals, accountants, etc)
- Businesses that do not have a City of Rocklin business license.
- Businesses that were deemed essential and not required to close/stop operations at any point due to COVID-19.
- Businesses that do not have a physical storefront in Rocklin.
- Businesses and/or business owners with a 20% or greater ownership interest with tax liens without a repayment plan in place.
- Businesses and/or business owners with a 20% or greater ownership interest planning to file for bankruptcy or currently involved in bankruptcy proceedings.
- Businesses and/or business owners with a 20% or greater ownership interest with current or pending legal claims or lawsuits.
- Retail with only online offerings

- Real estate agents and independent brokers
- Independent vacation home businesses, such as Airbnb or VRBO
- Financial businesses primarily engaged in lending, such as banks, finance companies, and factors
- Passive businesses properties owned by developers, corporations, trusts or individuals (“Parties”) where these parties do not operate a business that occupies at least 51% of the property.
- Life insurance companies
- Pyramid sale distribution plans and multi-level marketing businesses
- Businesses deriving more than one-third of gross annual revenue from legal gambling activities.
- Businesses engaged in any illegal activity under California and/or federal law.
- Private clubs and businesses, which limit the eligibility or number of memberships for reasons other than capacity.
- Government-owned entities (except for businesses owned or controlled by a Native American tribe)
- Businesses principally engaged in teaching, instructing, counseling, or indoctrinating religion or religious beliefs, whether in a religious or secular setting.
- Businesses with an owner who is incarcerated, on probation, on parole, or has been indicted for a felony or a crime of moral turpitude.
- Businesses primarily engaged in political or lobbying activities.
- Speculative businesses.

### **How does eligibility screening work?**

To access the application, you must first pass the eligibility screening, which will determine whether or not your business is eligible for funds.

## **Applying for the Grant**

### **How do I apply?**

You can apply online on this website. You can begin the application process at <https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=cbc>

### **When does the application open?**

The application period opens on September 8 at 9am. This is **NOT** a “first come, first served” program, so ***you can complete your application at any time before the deadline***. You can save your in-progress application, so it does not need to be completed in one sitting. Please take your time to complete the application. Incomplete applications will **NOT** be accepted.

### **What’s the deadline to apply?**

No applications will be accepted after the deadline of 4:59 PM Pacific Time on October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023. There will be no exceptions. This is NOT a “first come first served” program, so you can complete your application any time before the deadline.

**Does the application save once I have started it?**

Your application will AUTOMATICALLY save once you start it. You can leave the application or close the browser at any point, and the application will be automatically saved when you return.

You can also click the "SAVE APPLICATION" button at the bottom of the form to see a summary of your in-progress application.

**Do I have to fill out the application online? Can I submit my application via mail or in person?**

All applications must be filled out online. No physical applications will be accepted. Applications can be filled out with a mobile phone. If you need help accessing a computer with Internet access, please visit your local library for free access.

**How can I get help with my application?**

If you need assistance, you can contact Sierra Business Council, the grant administrator, at 530-582-5022, or email [info@sierrasbdc.com](mailto:info@sierrasbdc.com)

**I own/operate more than one business. Am I allowed to submit an application for each business/nonprofit I own if they meet the qualifications?**

No, you may only apply one time even if you own, co-own, or operate multiple businesses or nonprofits. Only one business will be eligible.

**My business has multiple locations. How do I know if I qualify?**

For businesses with multiple locations, only employment and revenue figures for the Rocklin location(s) can be used to qualify for a grant under the program, and all grant funds received must only be used to support Rocklin business operations. Multiple locations within Rocklin operating under a single business entity will be considered one business for purposes of the program.

**If my business is declined, may I reapply?**

You may not reapply if your application is declined. Please make sure you complete the application accurately and completely. A decline will likely be for ineligibility or incomplete applications. Please see eligibility information above.

**What documentation will I need to submit my application?**

Applicants who are eligible will be asked to provide backup documentation, including but not limited to:

- City of Rocklin Business License
- An executed lease agreement for a physical retail space in Rocklin. Note: additional documentation to prove the validity of the lease will be required, like a copy of cleared check for rent payment
- [W-9 Tax Form](#) (for disbursement of checks)
- A photo, screenshot or scanned copy of a valid government-issued photo identification

### **Why do I need to fill out a W-9?**

SBC is required to report grant funding information to the United States Treasury at the end of the year, which is done using W-9 forms. Filling out a W-9 now will help us send out checks more quickly to successful applicants. No funds will be disbursed without a W-9 and applications will be deemed incomplete without the W-9.

### **How do I upload the required documents?**

When you get to the upload part of the application, you can search your device for the document you need, and then upload it.

### **Do I need to submit all the documents? What if I don't have all the documents that I need to apply?**

You must submit ALL the required documents. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

### **What if I have multiple locations for a single business, which address should I use?**

Please select what you might consider the "primary" business location.

### **What if I accidentally made a mistake or entered incorrect information on my application?**

You can save and edit your application until you submit it. You do not need to complete it all in one sitting. Please take your time on your application and do not submit it until you are sure it is complete and correct.

### **What do I do if I need a W-9?**

You can click to fill out a blank W-9 Form [in English](#) or [in Spanish](#).

### **What is the definition of a woman-, veteran- or minority-owned business?**

- For woman-owned: Be at least 51% directly owned and controlled by one or more women.
- For veteran-owned: Be at least 51% directly owned and controlled by one or more veterans.
- For minority-owned: To be certified as a minority-owned business, your company must be at least 51% owned, operated, and controlled by a minimum of one owner whose racial or ethnic background is Asian Indian, Asian Pacific, Black, Native American or Hispanic, as defined by the U.S. Small Business Administration 8A program for Disadvantaged Businesses (see 13 CFR §124.103). To read more, please [click here](#).

### **Do applicants receive a confirmation that they submitted their application?**

Yes, you will receive a confirmation email upon submission of your application.

## **Selection Process**

### **Are funds allocated on a first-come, first-served basis for qualified applicants?**

No. All qualified applicants will be considered together once the application period is closed. Should eligible applications exceed the amount of funding available, the selection process will be conducted by way of an electronic lottery

### **How will applications be selected to receive funding?**

All applications received between September 9 and October 6 WILL be considered. This is NOT a “first come first served” program.

## **Receiving Grant Funds**

### **How will I be contacted or know if I will receive a grant?**

You will be notified by email. Be sure to check your email regularly, including your spam folders.

Emails to applicants will come from Sierra Business Council  
<administrator@grantinterface.com>.

### **Will I be contacted if I do not receive a grant?**

Yes, you will be notified by email whether or not you receive a grant.

### **If I am selected to receive a grant, how much money will I get?**

Available funds are limited and not all eligible businesses may be assisted. Grants will be awarded to qualified/eligible businesses based on six months of rental reimbursement up to \$15,000. Actual amount will reflect rent paid during mandated closure due to COVID-19. Eligible businesses may receive less than the maximum amount.

### **How will I receive funds?**

A paper check will be sent to the mailing address on your application.

### **Am I required to set up a new bank account specifically for these funds?**

No.

### **Will there be more grants available in the future?**

At this point in time, no additional grant cycles are planned.

### **Is my small business taxed on this grant?**

The Grant Program cannot provide tax advice to those who receive payments. The administrators recommend that claimants consult with personal tax advisors for any questions regarding tax liability for these payments. Any taxes associated with accepting or using the grant funds are the responsibility of the awardee.

## **Using Grant Funding**

### **If my business receives a grant, what can I use the money for? What can't I use the money for?**

Grant funds may be used to offset or reimburse businesses for costs related to the negative impacts of COVID-19 that have not been covered by funds received from other COVID-related programs, including:

- General business operations
- Payroll expenses
- Supplier payments
- Rent, lease or mortgage payments for the business property

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and/or sanitation supplies and equipment
- Investments in software or technology that allow for a shift to online operations
- Equipment purchases that expand and/or modify operations

**What's required of me if I receive a grant? Are there any strings attached?**

If selected, you must use these funds for valid COVID-19 related expenses identified in your application. Funds may not be used for a different business or personal expenses. Funding is not transferable.

**Do I have to pay the money back, like a loan?**

No. The funds you receive are a grant, not a loan, and do not need to be paid back.

**Other Questions**

**My business is struggling, I need help. Where can I go?**

You should contact the Sierra Small Business Development Center for free business counseling by sending an email to [info@sierrasbdc.com](mailto:info@sierrasbdc.com).

**If I have questions after reading this FAQ, what do I do?**

Call Sierra Business Council, the grant administrator, at 530-582-5022, or email [info@sierrasbdc.com](mailto:info@sierrasbdc.com)