

STEELE COUNTY, MINNESOTA
ECONOMIC RELIEF GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

In response to the passage of the Economic Relief Package by the Minnesota Legislature, Steele County has created a grant program and allocated \$715,000 to support for-profit, private businesses and nonprofits impacted by Executive Orders related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Applications will be accepted from January 7 until 5:00 p.m. on February 12, 2021.

Note: For-profit, private business and nonprofits who have previously received financial assistance, from any level of government, are eligible for this program.

TERMS

All for-profit, private businesses and nonprofits (collectively referred to as businesses) who apply and meet the eligibility criteria below will be considered for funding. Grant funds will be awarded to businesses after the application deadline. The program is subject to funding availability from the County. The County retains the authority and discretion to approve or deny an application, and reserves the right to subsequently add further priorities, change eligibility criteria, or discontinue the program in response to changing circumstances.

The County will allow applicants who submit incomplete applications to provide the missing information by February 19, 2021. If the missing information is not received by 5:00 pm on February 19, 2021, the application will be deemed ineligible.

ELIGIBLE BUSINESSES

Businesses must meet and be able to demonstrate all of the following criteria at time of application submittal in order to be eligible for the County Economic Relief Grant Program:

- Physically located within the political boundaries of Steele County.
- Active/in good standing and have no current tax liens on record with the Secretary of State.
- Were directly or indirectly impacted by an Executive Order related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

INELIGIBLE BUSINESSES

- Business that derive income from passive investments without operational ties to operating business; real estate transactions; property rentals or property management.
- Business that primarily focus on speculative activities based on fluctuations in price rather than the normal course of trade.

GRANT AMOUNT

While there is no grant limit or specified award amount for this program, applicants are required to provide justification on the grant amount they request. Applicants may receive a grant amount less than their requested amount. Awarded grants will be sized based upon need, number of eligible grant applications, and other applicable review criteria determined by Steele County.

USES OF GRANT FUNDS

Grant funds may be used to cover eligible expenses between November 20, 2020 to March 15, 2021. Funds may be used to cover operating expenses or other critical business expenses to modify operations as a result of the public health emergency, including but not limited to the following:

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1. Lease or mortgage payments
2. Payroll
3. Utilities
4. Insurance
5. Property taxes
6. Payments to suppliers
7. Business consulting fees related to COVID-19
8. Reopening costs or safety improvement costs (i.e. personal protective equipment, plexiglass, cleaning products, etc.)
9. Increased service or programmatic costs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic

RIGHT TO DENY

The County retains absolute authority and discretion to decide whether or not to accept or deny any particular grant application under the Economic Relief Grant Program.

INDEMNIFICATION

Any recipient of Economic Relief Grant funds through Steele County is exclusively responsible for the lawful use of the funds and should consult with his or her own legal, financial or other professional services to ensure compliance. All grant recipients shall be required to indemnify Steele County and any officers or consultants acting on their behalf.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Prior to applying, please review the Program Guidelines to determine if your business is eligible.

1. Application forms will be accepted from January 7 until 5:00 p.m. on February 12, 2021.
2. Application forms may be submitted to CRFApplications@co.steele.mn.us or fax to 507-444-7470.
3. The County will accept hard/mailed in applications; however, please note processing may take additional time.
4. Application requirements will include:
 - Basic details about the business.
 - Narrative description and estimated calculations of the negative impacts on a business by an Executive Order related to COVID-19.
 - Information about other grants received.
 - Proposed use and amounts of funding requested.
 - Supporting documentation and application attachments.
5. Upon submission of application, applicants will receive an email confirmation receipt of application.
6. The application will be reviewed for completeness and eligibility upon receipt. The primary contact listed on the grant application will be notified of completeness. If information is missing and/or additional documentation is necessary, County staff or consultant will reach out to the primary contact and request the information. All applicants will be given until 5:00 p.m. February 19, 2021 to submit missing information and/or additional documentation.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions, please contact: CRFApplications@co.steele.mn.us, or you may call Steele County Administration at (507) 444-7400.