

# Back to Business Grants!



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity  
**OFFICE OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Dear Litchfield Chamber of Commerce Members,

Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) announced the \$250-million [Back to Business \(B2B\) grant program](#) to support the continued recovery of small businesses across Illinois. This program building on last year's Business Interruption Grant program and will offer small businesses access to funds that can help offset losses due to COVID-19, bring back workers, and take continued steps to rebuild amid the fallout from the pandemic. **The program will open on Wednesday, August 18, 2021.** DCEO, along with our network of community navigator organizations, is going to be conducting outreach and provide technical assistance to help businesses with this program. As an initial first step, I've listed the links to four webinars in English and one webinar in Spanish that will be conducted over the next few days to help businesses prepare to apply to the program once the program opens on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

DCEO is making \$250 million available for small businesses across the state experiencing significant losses due to COVID-19 under this program. While many business types and industries may apply, businesses in the following industries will be given priority status for grants: restaurants and taverns; hotels; arts businesses and organizations; and more. Additionally, businesses located within Disproportionately Impacted Areas (DIAs), as defined in statute, will be prioritized. I've attached the eligibility guidelines for reference. Two main eligibility requirements include that the business must have been in operation during or before December 2019, and must have experienced a loss in revenue of at least \$5,000 in 2020 due to economic disruptions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

B2B seeks to restore operational losses incurred during the COVID-19 pandemic and will provide grants ranging in size from \$5,000 to \$150,000, commensurate with the amount of losses experienced. To be considered for a grant, applicants must demonstrate a reduction in revenue in 2020 as compared with 2019, and annual revenues of no more than \$20 million in 2019. Businesses must also provide two bank statements, a business

owner ID, and federal tax returns for 2019 and 2020. I've also attached a list of the application question for review and a list of the required documents that will need to be submitted. The application portal will be an on-line application and documents will need to be scanned so they can be uploaded as part of the application. The documentation needed includes the following:

- Business owner ID (ITIN business owners eligible)
- Business's 2019 **AND** 2020 Federal tax returns
- Two business bank statements – one from the period April through December 2020 and your most recent statement



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity  
JB Pritzker, Governor

## Back to Business (B2B) Grants Eligibility Guidelines

*Last Updated: 8/11/2021*

Businesses must meet the following requirements to be eligible for funds available through the Back to Business Grant program. Note that this is a summary, and further terms that recipients must comply with are outlined in the Back to Business Grant Program Certifications and Requirements, found [\[here\]](#).

- 1) Must be an independently owned and operated for-profit corporation or limited liability corporation, partnership, or sole proprietorship authorized to conduct business in the State of Illinois; or a nonprofit;
- 2) Must have been operating during or before December 2019.
- 3) Must have had less than \$20 million in gross operating revenue in calendar year 2019, or a pro-rated amount if in operation for less than a year prior to December 2019.<sup>1</sup>
- 4) Must have experienced a loss in revenue of at least \$5,000 in 2020 due to economic disruptions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 5) Must have had reduced operations due to government orders, public health guidelines, or depressed consumer demand during the COVID 19 pandemic.
- 6) Must have complied with all relevant laws, regulations, and executive orders from the State and federal government, including the social distancing guidelines as promulgated by the Executive Orders of the Illinois Governor.
- 7) The following businesses are not eligible:
  - a. independent contractors or freelance workers that do not operate a sole proprietorship;
  - b. child care providers that have received and/or are registered for [Child Care Restoration Grants](#);
  - c. a private club or business that limits membership for reasons other than capacity;
  - d. a business primarily engaged in speculative activities that develop profits from fluctuations in price rather than through normal course of trade;
  - e. a business that earns more than a quarter of its annual net revenue from lending activities, unless the business is a non-bank or non-bank holding company certified as a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI);
  - f. a business that derives at least 33% of its gross annual revenue from legal gambling activities;

<sup>1</sup> For hotels to be eligible, they must have had less than \$35 million in gross operating revenue in calendar year 2019, or a pro-rated amount if in operation for less than a year prior to December 2019.



## Back to Business Grants Application and Required Documents

*Last Updated: 8/11/2021*

This round of the Back to Business (B2B) Grant Program will make \$250 million available for businesses that experienced losses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

DCEO, through its grant administrator Allies for Community Business (A4CB), will begin accepting applications on Wednesday, August 18, 2021.

Below is a list of the application questions and required documents to apply for the B2B Grant Program. **This document is not an application. Please do not fill it out and return it to DCEO.** This document is designed to allow business owners time to review, assess their eligibility, and gather any documents needed to complete the application. Asterisks represent required fields.

On Wednesday, August 18, this document will be replaced with an online submission portal that will collect applicant information and required documents.

### **Business Owner Information**

Business Owner's First Name\*

Business Owner's Last Name\*

Business Owner's E-Mail Address\*

Business Owner's Title

What is the business owner's social security or ITIN number? \*

Business Owner's Street Address\*

Business Owner's City\*

Business Owner's State\*

Business Owner's Zip Code (5 digits only) \*

### **Demographics – for reporting purposes only**

What gender does the business owner identify as?

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to respond

What race does the business owner identify with?

- American Indian or Alaska Native

[B2B Eligibility Guidelines](#)

[B2B Application Required Documents](#)

[B2B FAQ](#)

Sincerely,

Beth Cherry  
Executive Director

