



# Laurel Strong

## COVID-19 Small Business Grant Program

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## About the Program

The City of Laurel Department of Economic and Community Development (Laurel ECD) will administer the Laurel Strong COVID-19 Small Business Grant Program. This Program will award grants in the amount of \$500 to \$10,000 to businesses located within the City of Laurel. The total fund dedicated to this Program is \$335,000. The goal of this Program is to provide financial support to businesses that have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds to support this program are provided locally through the CARES Act, via the City's Coronavirus Relief Fund Agreement with Prince George's County.

- \$115,000 of the fund is dedicated to businesses with a single physical commercial location within the City of Laurel limits and 10 or fewer full-time employees
- \$115,000 of the fund is dedicated to minority, women, and veteran owned businesses with a single physical commercial location within the City of Laurel and 10 or fewer full-time employees
- \$60,000 of the fund is dedicated to businesses with a single physical commercial location within the City of Laurel and 10 or more full time employees
- \$25,000 of the fund is dedicated to childcare businesses with a physical location within the City of Laurel
- \$20,000 of the fund is dedicated to non-profit businesses that have a physical location within the City of Laurel

Applications will be accepted and reviewed on a first-come, first served basis. Submission of an incomplete or inaccurate application may result in ineligibility. Please read all grant terms and application instructions before starting and submitting your application. One application per business entity is accepted.

## 1. Grant Terms

The City of Laurel will provide grants in the amount of \$500 to \$10,000 to small businesses within the City of Laurel incorporated boundaries that are able to prove a loss of revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

General Requirements: The grants shall only be used to cover costs that: (1) are necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to COVID-19; (2) were not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020; and (3) were incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020 and ends on December 30, 2020. The determination as to whether the proposed use of funds by any applicant are eligible for funds from this grant shall be determined by the City of Laurel in its sole judgment, based upon applicable criteria, and is not appealable. The following constitutes examples of generally eligible and ineligible funds, though the City retains the right to determine otherwise based upon the facts of any application:

- Use of Funds
  - Commercial rent payment(s)
  - Commercial mortgage payment(s)
  - Commercial utility payments
  - Safety improvements to the property related to COVID-19 (i.e. social distance markings, plexiglass installation, etc.)
  - Personal and single-use PPE (i.e. face masks, hand sanitizer, gloves, etc.)
  
- Ineligible Expenses
  - Personal expenses
  - Payroll expenses
  - Residential rent or mortgage payments
  - Property improvements not related to COVID-19 health and safety requirements
  - County or City of Laurel property taxes, and other governmental bills and obligations

## 2. Eligibility

- The business and/or business owner(s) shall not have previously received any funding for their business from the [CARES Act](#), [Maryland COVID-19 Emergency Relief Grant Fund](#), or the [Prince George's County COVID-19 Business Relief Fund](#)
  - The business must have been negatively affected by, and the purpose of the requested grant shall be directly related to, the COVID-19 pandemic
  - The business must be able to demonstrate a loss of revenue between March and July 2020
  - [The business must be able to demonstrate that it was unable to operate or operated at a reduced capacity due to COVID-19](#)
  - The business must have a physical commercial location within [the City of Laurel incorporated boundaries](#) and a current signed leasing contract or proof of ownership of the property
  - The business was established with a valid City of Laurel use and occupancy permit prior to March 16, 2020
  - The business must have at least one full-time employee that is currently employed and, on the payroll, or be an established sole proprietorship
  - [The business must be in good standing with the State of Maryland](#)
  - The business and all business owners must be current on all City, County, State, and Federal tax payments
  - The Applicant is not engaged in any illegal activity (as defined by Federal guidelines)
- Ineligible Business Types or Persons
    - Houses of Worship
    - Home-Based Businesses
    - Banks and Financial Institutions
    - Food Trucks
    - Corporate-Owned Franchises
    - Businesses that do not have a physical commercial location
    - More than one physical commercial location of any business within the City of Laurel
    - Business located outside of the incorporated City of Laurel municipal boundaries
    - Businesses that do not have a current or valid City of Laurel use and occupancy permit
    - Businesses started after March 16, 2020
    - Businesses in which City Staff and/or elected officials of the City have a financial interest of at least 25%.

## How to Apply

### Application Instructions

- Please read all eligibility requirements thoroughly before beginning your application.
- The application may not be updated after submission. Please make sure your application is correct and complete before submitting.
- Only one application submission per business entity will be considered.
- Submission of an incomplete and/or inaccurate, application may disqualify a business from being awarded funding. Please check your application for completeness and accuracy before submitting.
- Review the Application Deadlines written below. No applications will be accepted after the deadline.
- Applications must be submitted through the online application portal
- If assistance is needed with the application, please contact [ECD@Laurel.md.us](mailto:ECD@Laurel.md.us)

### Information Needed for Application

- Legal Business Name (DBA Business Name, if applicable)
- Type of Business Entity
- Tax ID/EIN Number
- Business Industry
- Business Address
- Dedicated Funding Eligibility
  - Women Owned Business
  - Minority Owned Business
  - Veteran Owned Business
  - Childcare Business
  - Non-Profit Business
- Business Ownership (Names of Owners and Percent Ownership)
- Application Contact Person
- Business Start Date (Issue Date of City of Laurel Use and Occupancy Permit)
- Number of Employees (Full Time and Part Time)
- Amount of Funding Requested for Immediate Need
- Proposed Funding Budget
- COVID-19 Impact
  - Business Closure (Timeline)
  - Staffing Layoffs
  - Loss of Revenue
  - Change in Business Operations
  - Purchase of PPE and other health and safety equipment
- Other Financial Assistance – applied for, awarded, and/or received

## **Required Application Documents**

- Signed Lease Contract for Commercial Space OR Proof of Ownership of Commercial Property where the business resides
- Financial statement showing Gross Revenue for the period of March 1, 2019 through July 1, 2019
- Financial statement showing Gross Revenue for the period of March 1, 2020 through July 1, 2020
- Most recent Employee Roster/Payroll
- City of Laurel Use and Occupancy Permit
- Business Plan

## **Application Deadlines**

Applications will be accepted beginning September 4, 2020 at 9:00 am.

The deadline to apply will be October 2, 2020 at 11:59 pm or once 500 applications are submitted – whichever is sooner.

Applications will only be accepted electronically through the online application portal. One application per business entity will be accepted.

Applications will be accepted and reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis. Submission of an incomplete or inaccurate application may result in ineligibility. If you have any questions regarding this grant opportunity, please email [ECD@Laurel.md.us](mailto:ECD@Laurel.md.us)

## **Grant Funding Agreement**

- The information contained in this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.
- I understand that all awarded funds must be expended no later than December 30, 2020.
- I acknowledge that awarded funds may only be used for eligible expenses that were outlined in my Program application under “Purpose of Funding”.
- I agree to maintain (and provide, if necessary) documentation following generally accepted accounting principles regarding the manner in which the funds are expended, including but not limited to financial reports and receipts.
- I understand and agree that records related to the use of grant funds must be produced promptly upon request from the City of Laurel and are subject to audit.
- I understand and agree that if I receive funding from the Laurel Strong COVID-19 Small Business Grant Program and I do not use all of the funds by the December 30, 2020 deadline, or use the funds for expenses other than the authorized purposes outlined in my Program application, I will be required to return the awarded funds to the City of Laurel.
- I understand and agree that if the business, which is currently operating, permanently closes before receiving the Laurel Strong COVID-19 Small Business Grant Program funding, or if the business is currently closed and it does not open within 30 days of receiving Program funds, I will be required to return the awarded funds to the City of Laurel.
- I certify that I have the authority to legally bind the business.
- I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the City of Laurel, Prince George’s County, and the elected officers, employees, agents and/or other representatives of each of said governmental entity, for any Small Business Relief Grant funds received from Prince George’s County through the City of Laurel that the federal government, the State of Maryland or Prince George’s County determines were not used for eligible expenditures.
- If all of the above outlined requirements are not met in full, or if any information provided on this application is found to be false or incorrect, the business will be deemed immediately in default and funds shall be returned to the City of Laurel within 30 days of written notification of default. I also agree that, if I accept Laurel Strong COVID-19 Small Business Grant Program funding, I will be bound by the obligations and liabilities described in this application, and that the City of Laurel shall have the right to enforce those obligations and liabilities in any manner provided by law.
- By signing below, the applicant represents, warrants and certifies that the information provided herein is true, correct, and complete. I also understand and agree that this application, combined with award of a Laurel Strong COVID-19 Small Business Grant, constitutes a binding contract, and shall be deemed a valid original instrument if delivered electronically.