

Huntington County receives \$1.2 million PPE grant

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Huntington County received \$1.2 million from the Small Business PPE Grant Reimbursement Program to reimburse businesses for personal protective equipment purchased during the pandemic.

"COVID-19 has altered the work environment for almost every business in our county," Huntington County Commissioner Tom Wall said. "Huntington County wants to help keep our local businesses safe

by reimbursing the cost of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). If you have a small business, this reimbursement grant program can help you outfit your employees with the PPE needed to do their jobs safely."

The program is directed at small businesses in Huntington County and its small communities, however, the City of Huntington has its own grant program separate from this one.

The PPE grant can be used by non-profits, freelance workers, and any other business with 1-20 employees

in Huntington County. PPE that is eligible for reimbursement includes washable face masks, face mask filters, disposable face masks, face visors, hand sanitizer, hand wipes, and gloves.

The grant reimburses businesses for PPE purchased on or after March 1, 2020, through October 31, 2020. Up to \$2,000 of PPE can be reimbursed per application period, for a total of \$4,000 per business.

The first application period is from August 15 to August 31. The second is from October 15 to October

31. The county will only accept applications sent during these two open-application periods.

Interested businesses can apply for the PPE reimbursement grant by printing the application (five pages) and submitting it to Aliza Tourkow, AICP, Economic Recovery Director & Grant Program Manager Consultant with Huntington County. Tourkow's email is aliza.tourkow@huntington.in.us.

An application for the Huntington

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PPE GRANT

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County Small Business PPE Reimbursement Grant Program is available at this link: https://www.huntington.in.us/egov/documents/1596820596_52023.pdf

Business owners with questions should contact Tourkow at aliza.tourkow@huntington.in.us or 260-999-8600.

City of Huntington small business grant program:

The City of Huntington is still accepting applications for \$250,000 in grant funding available to qualifying businesses to be used for working capital, continuing operations and remote work support.

"The City of Huntington was fortunate enough to receive \$250,000 in grant funding from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA)," said Bryn Keplinger, Director of Community Development and Redevelopment. "That's money that comes from the federal government from HUD (Department of Housing and Urban Development) to help protect and save small businesses that's been reallocated during this COVID-19 public health emergency."

The primary objectives of the grants will be to help businesses retain low-to-moderate income jobs and recover from financial harm inflicted during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

"Businesses that are in the city are eligible to apply.

Qualifying businesses, as you read through it you'll figure out that there's some information that must be submitted in order for us to meet federal and state guidelines that businesses do indeed qualify for that low-to-moderate income employment employee retention," Keplinger said.

OCRA has made the funds available utilizing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the HUD.

The grant program is a direct incentive for small businesses to keep their workers on the payroll and businesses in operation.

"Grants made to small businesses under this program are just that - they are grants - they are not loans that will have to be repaid," Keplinger said. "They are funding that small businesses are able to use for any of the approved purposes, which includes supporting remote work, continued business operations and things of that nature. The only restrictions are if businesses did receive PPP (Payroll Protection Program) money, they are unable to use these grant funds and those monies for the same purpose. Most businesses that have had their operations impacted over the last few months certainly have no shortage in areas that they could use this resource for."

Although a competitive application process is being used to decide which businesses are eligible for funds, there were only a handful of applicants in the first few weeks. The City is asking for businesses who have not yet applied or have started ap-

plying and not yet finished the application to send in their applications.

It is important for all applicants to fully read all application materials and submit a timely and complete application. Businesses operating within the City of Huntington may be eligible for a maximum grant amount of up to \$10,000.

"These are federal funds that have been awarded to the state and then trickled down to small communities such as Huntington, so there are a number of restrictions and conditions, so business owners are encouraged to review that information in detail and make sure they have a really good understanding of that," Keplinger said. "Our office is here and we are able to answer questions as they arise from potential applicants. The completeness of application is going to be a major thing with this grant fund rollout because I expect there will be a high demand for this limited amount of funds."

The City is accepting applications in person and online. Visit the City of Huntington website at www.huntington.in.us/city/ and click COVID-19 SMALL BUSINESS GRANT PROGRAM under recent City news.

First announced as an interest-free revolving loan program, the City has obtained OCRA approval to distribute the funds in the form of one-time grants.

To learn more about the City of Huntington's COVID-19 small business grant program and to see FAQs, search for this article at www.h-ponline.com.