

Winter Business Sustainability Grant Program (WBSG)

Program Description

The City of Portland's Winter Business Sustainability Grant Program (WBSG) provides grants of up to \$10,000.

Program Requirements/Eligibility

- If the business has employees, at least 51% of employees must be low/moderate income;*
- If the business has no employees other than the owner(s), then the owner(s) must be low/moderate income*
- There must be sufficient information documenting that the jobs would have been lost without CDBG assistance – Any state or local declaration of closing or limiting business operations is “sufficient information documentation” that jobs would be lost without this grant assistance
- Business must be located within the City of Portland;
- Applicant does not owe outstanding property taxes, fees, or judgments to the City and property must be free of all City liens and encumbrances.

Eligible Funding Items:

Furniture, equipment, heaters, coverings, lighting, barricades, platforms, signage and anything else that is deemed necessary to extend outdoor business operations through the fall and winter. All equipment purchased with these Program funds must meet City licensing and permitting requirements for health and safety.

Application Review Criteria

The following criteria will be weighed when considering applications received, but the City has the discretion to base its approval on other considerations including the applicant's ability to comply with all required city business licensing and permitting requirements:

- Completeness of application package including the following:
 - WBSG Application form;
 - 2019 Business federal tax return;
 - Current balance sheet through at least September 30, 2020;
 - Current profit & loss through at least September 30, 2020;
 - Completed Income Verification Forms for all employees
 - Documentation that jobs would be lost without this grant assistance.
- If the business plans to conduct operations on the public sidewalk or public street, with or without structures, it has pending or approved permits from the City for this purpose;
- If the business plans to conduct operations outdoors on private property adding a structure and/or impervious surface, it has pending or approved permits from the City;

Administration and Approval Process

Applications are due no later than December 9, 2020 at 4:00 PM.

The City's Housing and Economic Development Department is responsible for administration of the Winter Business Sustainability Grant Program. Complete applications will be reviewed by a City staff committee overseeing outdoor winter business activity for final approval decisions. Approved applicants will be required to produce a complete employee list at time of contract signing.

Program Termination

This Program will terminate when all grant funds are expended.

Funding

WBSG is funded by the Community Development Block Grant-CV through the Federal Cares Act. This City Program may not duplicate benefits received from COVID-19 Federal, State or County grants, that is, this Program can only be used to pay for items not already paid for by other government grants.

Purchases that are eligible for grant reimbursement must have occurred after the City of Portland received funding approval from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development which was November 19, 2020.

Definitions

* Low/moderate income is defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as household income at or below 80% of area median income. A chart showing qualified income levels can be found on the City's website at the following link:

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/View/29466>