

MontcoStrong Non-Profit Resiliency and Restoration Grant Program

Montgomery County Commerce Department

Frequently Asked Questions – September 2020

Q. What is the MontcoStrong Non-Profit Resiliency and Restoration Program? What is the goal of the program?

A. This program is a Montgomery County initiative established by the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners and the Montgomery County Commerce Department in partnership with the Redevelopment Authority of Montgomery County, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, and the Montgomery County Office of Public Health. The goal of the program is to provide 501(c)(3) entities with financial support so they remain resilient as employers and stakeholders in our communities due to the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 global pandemic and to ensure 501(c)(3)s are able to be active participants in the restoration of the wellbeing and the livelihood of our residents, communities, and County, the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners is making available resources for the MontcoStrong Non-Profit Resiliency and Restoration Grant Program.

Q. How is this program being funded?

A. Total available funding is \$5,000,000. Funds include \$5 million from Montgomery County through the Federal CARES Act.

Q. If I am not one of the first applications submitted, does that mean I won't receive grant funding through this program? How long with applications be accepted for?

A. The intent and design of the program is not a first come, first served program. Applications will be accepted from **10am on Tuesday, September 29, 2020** until **3pm on Thursday, October 1st 2020**. Completed applications will be reviewed and considerations for grant awards will be based on satisfaction of eligibility criteria and demonstrated need in the grant application. Particular consideration will be given to eligible applicants supporting COVID-19 response efforts, vulnerable populations, providing direct support to residents who are food, home, or safety insecure, and organizations that are engaged in economic, community, and/or workforce development initiatives. Overall evaluation of need and grant award decision criteria will include:

- Complete and thorough application.
- Well explained and demonstrable need due to COVID-19 disruptions and the recovery process to come.
- Verifiable explanation of activities being undertaken to support residents and/or communities of Montgomery County Pennsylvania.
- Achieves program goal(s) based on the pandemic's impact on vulnerable populations and our communities while also helping to meet the expected needs of restoration of the livelihood of county residents and communities.

Q. What are the eligibility criteria?

A. Eligible applicants for program must meet the following criteria:

- Eligible applicants must be a 501(c)(3) entity, approved by the Internal Revenue Services (IRS), and meet the following criteria:
- Meet at least one of the following –
 - o Have at least one physical location where services are provided from in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania and where services are available to Montgomery County residents/communities;
 - o The organization's scope of service is comprised of at least 50% Montgomery County residents/communities. Scope of service may be the percentage of individuals served and/or the geographic service area of the organization; and/or,
 - o The organization's scope of service includes Montgomery County and at least 50% of its current employees are residents of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania as of the date of application.
- The organization's mission falls into at least one of the following categories –
 - o Food, Health, and/or Housing Insecurity Services;
 - o Childcare/Educational Services;
 - o Mental Health and Wellness Services;
 - o Elder and/or Vulnerable Population Services;
 - o Environmental Stewardship; and/or,
 - o Community, Economic, and/or Workforce Development Services.
- Have been in operation for a period of time such that the organization filed at minimum a 2019 Form 990 and is still in operation as of the date of application.
- Revenues (Line 12 of Form 990) do not exceed \$15,000,000 on the most recently filed Form 990 (2019 or 2020 Form 990 will only be accepted).
- Employed and paying no more than 75 full and part-time employees total as of September 1, 2020.
- Entity must be acting in accordance with its by-laws, mission, and with all legal requirements as a 501(c)(3) entity.

Additional eligibility criteria and information:

- Subcontractors and/or 1099 employees should not be included in the employee count.
- Nonprofits that are in active default (not on a payment plan) with taxes or fees owed to local, county, state, and/ or the federal government may not apply.
- Religious Institutions that do not have a program focus of at least 25% of total revenues supporting food security, housing security, childcare, or rapid reemployment services may not apply.
- Nonprofits engaged in any activity that is illegal under Federal, state, or local law may not apply.

Q. What am I allowed to use grant funds for? What can I not use grant funds for?

A. Eligible grant costs are as follows:

- Accounts payable including utilities, vendors, suppliers, and other eligible non-payroll expenses paid or to be paid between June 1, 2020 through December 1, 2020. This includes payments to insurance providers such as health insurance for employees.
- Rent/mortgage payments on the 501(c)(3)s primary offices/facility in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania paid or to be paid between June 1, 2020 through December 1, 2020.
- PPE or other justifiable equipment necessary to operate safely due to the COVID-19 global pandemic purchase or to be purchased between June 1, 2020 through December 1, 2020.

Grant awards cannot be used for the following costs:

- Payroll expenses/employee pay; this includes payments to 1099 employees and/or those identified as subcontractors.
- The payment of any obligations to the federal, state, and/or local governments.
- To finance an organization, project, activity, and/or location primarily located outside the geographic boundaries of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania.
- The repayment of any debts to private credits or lenders (ex. bank loans or lines of credit).
- Any political and/or lobbying activity.
- Any COVID-19 related expenses already paid for with other relief measures such as state grants or loans, US SBA Paycheck Protection Loans, local or regional grant and/or loan programs.
- Any activities not otherwise specified as allowable costs per the grant agreement.

Q. If we do not receive our grant check until October or November, how are we supposed to spend all of the money by December 1st, 2020?

A. Eligible costs may include allowable expenses that have been paid prior to the receipt of grant funds. For example, if your organization paid its rent every month during the eligible expense period (June 1st, 2020 to December 1st, 2020), you can report those rent payments as the use of funds for this grant (essentially, the organization is being reimbursed for the prior expenses in this case). As another example, if your organization purchased equipment to facilitate remote working during the allowable expense period, this is a type of expense you can submit. We recommend doing this when possible so that you can complete your grant reporting as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Q. I am having trouble accessing the online application form?

A. We are encouraging everyone to be patient in submitting their applications. The online application portal will be available at www.montcopa.org/MSNP. Please note applications will not be formally accepted for review before **10am on Tuesday, September 29, 2020. The online application form will not be available until the application window opens.** We expect that when the program opens the system will be inundated with application submissions. You may need to clear your web browser's cache if you continue to have trouble reloading the application form. Also, please make sure you complete all required sections of the online application form and upload all the required documents.

You can review all of the application questions and requirements in the Appendix of the Program Guidelines; the Program Guidelines are available at www.montcopa.org/MSNP.

Q. Is the number of employees specific to the organization's Montgomery County location or its global employment?

A. The employment total (full-time and part-time) for this program is capped at seventy-five (75) and is the total employment of the organization applying for the grant.

Q. How will the grant applications be reviewed and how will grant award amounts be determined?

A. A multi-disciplinary team will review all grant applications and each team member will make a recommendation based upon the criteria including:

- Complete and accurate application.
- Identify a demonstrable need due to COVID-19 disruptions and the recovery process to come.
- Verifiable explanation of activities being undertaken to support residents and/or communities of Montgomery County Pennsylvania.
- Achieves program goal(s) based on the pandemic's impact on vulnerable populations and our communities while also helping to meet the expected needs of restoration of the livelihood of county residents and communities.

We strongly encourage applicants to provide information on how they will use any awarded grant dollars and to include dollar amounts in that discussion. If your organization does not have the capacity to spend the maximum grant amount, please indicate so. The review team will factor these details into recommendations for grant awards (relative to the availability of program funds and the other eligibility and review criteria as indicated in the program guidelines and this FAQ document). All grant award decisions are final and cannot be appealed. Feedback on grant applications will not be provided per the program guidelines.

Q. Does applying for this grant impact my organization's eligibility for federal and/or state COVID-10 business funding and/or programs?

A. Our understanding, per the U.S. SBA by way of PA DCED, regarding federal programs is that the guidance is to ensure that businesses do not "double-dip" in using federal programs. This became an issue for organizations that applied for both the SBA's EIDL program and the PPP program.

It is ultimately the responsibility of the applicant and/or grantee to take every step to ensure they are following the rules, regulations, and contracting stipulations of all grant and loan programs, regardless of source of funds. Furthermore, grantees for any program, be it from County, State, and/or Federal government, must ensure they are properly reporting and following all rules and regulations lawfully. Unlawful use of funds or untruthful reporting may result in prosecution, fines, and further sanctions.

Q. Our organization is a 501(c)(3), but we are exempt from filing an IRS Form 990 (example – an eligible religious institution) – can we upload other documentation instead?

A. Yes, you can. You should upload financial statement that indicate the organization's annual revenue. You should also explain this in the narrative response to the question "If awarded grant funds, how will the organization utilize the grant award within parameters of allowable costs and how will this help the organization moving forward?".

Q. Our organization has not yet filed a IRS 990 Form for 2019 because our fiscal year is July-June; can we use our filed IRS 990 Form for 2018.

A. After receiving feedback from potential applicants on this issue, we will allow for the submission of an IRS 990 Form for 2018 if the organization cannot provide a 2019 or 2020 filed IRS 990 Form. Applicants with this circumstance should explain this in the narrative response to the question "Basic Description of the organization?" by indicating their fiscal year and if their most recent filed IRS 990 Form is from 2018.

Q. Our organization's revenue is more than \$15 million total, but the portion of which is related to our services in Montgomery County is less than \$15 million. Can we apply?

A. Yes, you can apply and the review process will take this into consideration. Please thoroughly explain this in the application. You may be asked to provide additional information during the review process as well.

Q. How were the program's guidelines, eligibility, and other criteria determined?

A. Program design was based in large part on the following three elements:

- The experiences of the MontcoStrong Small Business Grant Program.
- COVID-19 related grant programs for non-profit entities other Pennsylvania Counties.
- Input from third-party consultants providing Montgomery County guidance on the allowable use of CARES Act dollars.

Q. How will I know if I my organization is awarded a grant?

A. Grant awardees will be informed by the Redevelopment Authority of Montgomery County (MCRDA) via email. In order for funds to be disbursed, the grant contract must be signed and returned following all instructions.

Q. If my organization is awarded a grant, how soon will funds be disbursed?

A. Grant funds will be disbursed within approximately 10-15 business days upon return of a signed and executed grant contract.

Q. The organization expended all of the awarded grant funds. When should I submit my final grant report?

A. Final grant reports, as detailed in the grant contract, should be submitted as soon as all funds have been expended and all required documentation is ready. Grantees are encouraged to submit their final report as soon as they are able to do so.

Q. If my organization is not awarded a grant, what are some other options for my business to get help due to the COVID-19 global pandemic?

A. Montgomery County maintains and regularly updates a list of business information and resources on the County's COVID-19 data hub (www.montcopa.org/COVID-19) and on the Montgomery County Commerce Department's homepage (www.montcopa.org/Commerce).