



REINVEST DUPAGE GRANT PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is the goal of the program?

- Help small businesses recover from negative business impacts caused by COVID-19.

Who is eligible for the grant?

- For profit, incorporated business (e.g., LLC, S Corp, Partnership, Sole Proprietorship, etc.), not-for profit entities and independent contractors (1099 workers/gig workers) who meet the additional eligibility requirements.

To qualify, what date does my business need to have been in business?

- On or before January 1, 2019.

For businesses and nonprofits - what is the maximum annual revenue my business can have and still qualify?

- Annual gross revenue of less than \$20 million.

For 1099 - what is the maximum annual income I can have and still qualify?

- Annual gross income of less than \$250,000.

How much money is in the program?

- A total of \$30 million dollars has been allocated to the program over a four-year period.

What are the eligibility requirements of the program?

- Must be located in DuPage County, Illinois.
- Must have been in business on or before January 1, 2019.
- Must be able to document a significant negative business impact from COVID-19.
- Must be able to document that the losses of revenue are equal to or greater than grant amount requested.
- Must be in good standing. Secretary of State Certificate of Good Standing (for corporations and LLCs) or valid business license, or other proof of good standing within the County. Note that some municipalities within DuPage County require a business license and some do not. Check with your municipal office for specific requirements.

What if I received a previous grant from the DuPage County Program (called the DuPage County Small Business Relief Grant Program in 2020)?

- You are still eligible to apply for this program.

What if I received prior Covid relief funds from another unit of government?

- You are still eligible to apply for this program.

Will previous receipt of Covid relief funds from the DuPage County Small Business Relief Grant program or other sources be taken into consideration (e.g., PPP, EIDL, BIG)?

- Any amount of forgivable relief funds you received from other sources must be reported on your application and will be considered revenue and used to determine revenue decline.

What if I have not completed my tax return for 2020?

- It is your responsibility to provide verifiable and complete information that may be used to determine your revenue loss and business expenses. ST-1 Forms, Profit and Loss Statements from generally recognized business software providers (QuickBooks, etc.) may be sufficient at the discretion of the grant review staff and grant committee. Homemade spreadsheets, hand-written note and personal bank statements will not be accepted.

Where to do I apply?

- Apply online at <https://www.choosedupage.com/reinvest-dupage/> beginning June 28, 2021, at 9:00 am CST.

If I meet the minimum qualifications, will I automatically qualify for funding?

- No. There are several levels of review to determine grant eligibility. See “HOW IT WORKS SECTION” from the website for additional details. You will be kept informed of your application status at various points during the review process.

Application Process Questions

My application does not work, what should I do?

- Email reliefgrant@choosedupage.com and someone will contact you.

Will I be contacted if I am missing information on my application?

- Someone from the grant review staff will contact you by email if additional information is required after submission of an application.

Will I receive notification that my application is received?

- Yes, you automatically receive an email confirmation from donotreply@choosedupage.com after submitting the application. Note, this email may go into a junk or spam folder so be sure to check.

What kind of assistance is available to help complete the application process?

- The application process has been designed to be straight forward and easy to use. We advise applicants to work with their tax or financial advisor. General questions for applications may be sent via email to reliefgrant@choosedupage.com

Can I change my application after it has been submitted?

- No, all applications are final. You may submit a new application if your application contained any errors. For duplicate or updated entries, we will consider the last application submitted.

Can I mail my application?

- No, all applications must be submitted via the website portal.

I started my application but did not complete it and left the website before clicking submit. Can I go back and start where I left off?

- No. The application system does not allow for this.

Does it matter when I submit my application?

- Yes. All applications are reviewed on a first come first served basis and there is a fixed amount of funds in the program.

Application Supplemental Documentation Questions

If I meet the minimum qualifications, what additional documents will I be required to supply?

- The 2020 and 2019 business tax returns. If you have not yet filed the 2020 return, provide the most recent tax return and your year-end 2019 and 2020 financial statements.
- Documentation from 2019 and 2020 that report revenue.
- Evidence of operational expenses (rent statement, payroll run, etc.)
- Certificate of Good Standing from the Illinois Secretary of State or valid business license (if required), or other proof of good standing within the county. Note that some municipalities within DuPage County require a business license and some do not. Check with your municipal office for specific requirements.
- Completed Form W-9.

Are all documents listed on the grant application website required?

- All documents listed are required.

How do the supplemental documents get submitted?

- We use a secure file sharing system called SmartVault. You will receive an email with instructions on how to set up an account in SmartVault and how to upload documents after initial application review.

What format can I submit my documents in?

- Documents should be provided in PDF format. Documents with multiple pages should be submitted as one PDF document. For example, a 30-page tax return should be submitted as one document and not 30 separate pages.

Can I upload multiple documents for each document type?

- Yes. Multiple documents can be uploaded.

Are electronic signatures accepted on the tax documents?

- Yes.

My taxes are electronic and not signed, will you accept them?

- Electronically self-prepared taxes are acceptable.

Eligibility Questions

I do not pay rent or mortgage. Is my business eligible for this grant?

- Yes. Other operational expenses (payroll, utilities, etc. are qualifying expenses).
Programmatic expenses (fundraisers, corporate events, etc.) are not eligible expenses.

Am I eligible to apply if I am a seasonal business?

- Yes.

Am I eligible to apply if I am a sole proprietor?

- Yes.

I operate my business out of my home. Can I use grant funds to pay for my personal mortgage, utilities, and other costs associated with my home?

- To use grant funds to pay for any costs associated with your home, you must show proof of the business use of your home by providing the IRS form Schedule C or appropriate P and L statement, financial statement, etc. The grant amount requested may not exceed the costs which are directly related to the business use of your home.
- It is your responsibility to provide verifiable proof of business expenses.
- Separate consideration will be given to expenses associated with the operation of your business not defined as the business use of your home.

I started my small business during the Covid pandemic. Am I still eligible?

- No, you must have been in business by January 1, 2019.

Will grant award determination take into account industry type?

- No.

Are not for profits eligible?

- Yes, for operational expenses only. Program expenses do not qualify.

Are 1099 independent contractors and gig workers eligible?

- Yes, for business related expenses associated with their business efforts, not for replacement of wages.

Do applicants have to demonstrate a negative impact from COVID-19?

- Yes. Applicants need to demonstrate that COVID-19 impacted their business resulting in a decline in revenue.

If I have received funds from the Small Business Administration from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) or the Emergency Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program, can I still be eligible?

- Yes. However, these funds will be considered revenue and used in determining your actual revenue decline.

I own a business in DuPage County and a business outside of DuPage County – can I still apply?

- Yes, but only for the business in DuPage County. If the business files a joint tax return for both locations, it is the applicant's responsibility to determine and prove that the DuPage County location meets all the program requirements.

How is revenue defined? My business often does not get paid for work until 2-3 months after we complete it.

- Actual year to date revenue is required. Invoices and billed receivables are not acceptable forms of revenue documentation.

I own a business with multiple locations. Can each of the locations be eligible to apply and receive a grant?

- Multiple applications are allowable if each business has its own FEIN number and separate tax returns are filed for each business.

Does my home-based business qualify?

- Yes, if all other eligibility criteria are met.

Communication Questions

How do I check the status of an application?

- Applicants will receive email communications from Choose DuPage at various points during the process. Be sure to add the reliefgrant@choosedupage.com email to your address book to avoid those emails going into a junk folder.

Funding Questions

What are eligible grant uses?

- The grant is intended to support business operating costs such as payroll, rent, utilities, replenishment of inventory and other costs arising because of losses due to COVID-19.

Will I be taxed on the grant amount?

- Check with your accountant to determine tax liability.

Will any of the grant money have to be repaid?

- No. Provided that grant awards are used in accordance with the guidelines of the program, grant awards are not repaid.

What is the size of the awards?

- For businesses and nonprofits - the maximum grant amount is \$50,000 or 4 months of eligible expenses, whichever is less.
- For 1099- the maximum grant amount is \$15,000 or 4 months of eligible expenses, whichever is less.
- For businesses, nonprofits and 1099 workers, the grant amount may not exceed the Covid 19 eligible revenue decline.

Will receiving a grant impact other federal assistance or unemployment insurance eligibility?

- Consult your tax advisor.

Award Questions

How will grants be awarded?

- Grant recipients will be notified if their application has been approved by the County Board.
- Checks are mailed to grant recipients by the County Finance Department.

Who is selecting the grant awardees?

- Final selection of grant recipients is made by the DuPage County Board.