



BRIDGE FUND **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

Eligibility

What types of businesses are eligible for the Bridge Fund?

A small business in the retail, restaurant, or entertainment sector that is an eligible business type (see below, not an exhaustive list); that earned no more than \$5 million in gross receipts in each 2019, 2020, and 2021; and experienced at least a 20% reduction in revenue during the period beginning April 1, 2020 through December 31, 2021 (modified from 30% previously).

- Restaurant:
 - Bakery
 - Bar or Tavern (with tavern license)
 - Cafe
 - Cafeterias
 - Caterer
 - Coffee Shop
 - Delicatessens
 - Food Court
 - Food Trucks
 - Restaurant
 - Vending Trucks or Carts
 - Winery, Brewery, Distillery (with tavern license)
- Retail:
 - Art Gallery
 - Art Supply Store
 - Bookstore
 - Cards, Gifts, Party Store
 - Clothing/Specialty Apparel Store
 - Consignment Shop
 - Convenience Store
 - Corner Stores
 - Dry Cleaner
 - Electronics Store
 - Flooring Center
 - Florist Manufacturer with On-Site Retail
 - Furniture Store
 - Grocery Store
 - Gyms / Yoga, Dance, or Fitness Studios
 - Hair Salon / Barbershop
 - Hardware Store
 - Home Goods
 - Jeweler
 - Laundromat
 - Massage Therapy
 - Nail Salon
 - Pet Supply Store
 - Pharmacy
 - Printing & Signage Shop
 - Specialty Foods Store
 - Specialty Products (e.g. beads, incense, candles)
 - Specialty Retail Store
 - Tuxedo/Dress Rental Shop
 - Waxing Center
 - Wine Shop
 - Winery, Brewery, Distillery (with manufacturer license)
- Entertainment*:
 - Billiard Parlor
 - Bowling Alleys
 - Event Venues
 - Live Music Venues or Concert Halls
 - Movie Theaters
 - Museums (private institutions)
 - Nightclubs
 - Performance Venues
 - Skating Rinks
 - Specialty Experience Venues
 - Theaters

*Businesses that receive an award from the Arts and Entertainment Venue Relief Fund are not eligible to receive an award from the Bridge Fund

How should businesses determine a 20% loss of revenue in order to be eligible for this grant?

You must be able to demonstrate at least 20% reduction in revenue during the period from April 1, 2020, to December 31, 2021 (modified from 30% previously). The calculation will occur during the application review period by City First Enterprises based on the financial documents submitted. Applicants do not need to perform this calculation themselves. Businesses that feel like they suffered revenue loss because of the effects of the pandemic and meet the other eligibility criteria are encouraged to apply.

What are the requirements of my business to be eligible for grant funds?

- A business in the restaurant, retail, or entertainment sector
- Has an active DC Basic Business License, and an active ABRA License, if applicable
- For profit business at a physical location in the District of Columbia
- Has site control of the space
- Currently in operation unless mandated otherwise by public health guidance
- Able to provide a Certificate of Clean Hands dated within 90 days of application
- Generated no more than \$5 million in gross receipts in each 2019, 2020, and 2021
- Must be able to demonstrate at least 20% reduction in revenue during the period from April 1, 2020, to December 31, 2021 (modified from 30% previously). Calculation will occur during the application review period based on the financial documents submitted. Applicants do not need to perform this calculation themselves.
- If a franchise with multiple locations, must be independently owned and operated
- Did not receive an award from the Restaurant Revitalization Fund, the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant, or the Arts and Entertainment Venue Relief Fund
- Owners of multiple businesses may apply for each business separately, as long as each business has a separate EIN, up to a maximum of 5 businesses
- Sole proprietors must be District of Columbia residents

Are there businesses that are not eligible?

The following businesses are not eligible for the Bridge Fund (not an exhaustive list):

- Businesses that are permanently closed and have taken steps to cease business operations under DCRA Corporate Divisions and OTR Guidelines
- Business that are franchises and are not independently owned and operated
- Businesses that received a grant from the Restaurant Revitalization Fund (RRF)
- Businesses that received a grant from the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG)
- Businesses that received a grant from the Arts and Entertainment Venue Relief Fund
- Businesses that receive dedicated state or federal tax revenue
- Online only / e-commerce businesses
- Home-based businesses
- Seasonal businesses (only open for part of the year)
- Not for profit organizations
- Hotels, Bed and Breakfasts, and Inn and Motels
- Professional services companies (Accountant, Insurance, Law Office, etc.)
- Financial Institutions (banks, credit unions, check cashing establishments, pay day lenders, etc.)
- Child care providers
- Entertainment supporting businesses (Audio & Visual, Event Equipment Rental, Photographer, Event Planners, Trade Show or Event Staffing Services, Event Production Companies, Talent Booking Agency, Tour Companies (bus, boat, walking tours), Performance Art Companies (dance companies, theatre groups), Performing Artists, Event Promoters, and Recreational Sports Leagues)
- Health care and social assistance (physicians, dentists, acupuncture and chiropractor offices, etc.)
- Construction and Real Estate (general contracting, architecture, development, property management, realtors, etc.)

- Freelancers (massage therapists, hair stylists, cosmetologists, nail tech, fitness instructors, dance teachers, etc.) who do not own or lease a storefront retail location
- Makers who sell their products in shared retail spaces but do not own or lease a storefront retail location
- Retail or food service pop-ups who do not own or lease space in a retail location

What must the operating status of my business be to be eligible for grant funds?

You must affirm in the application and in the signed grant agreement that your business is currently in operation or is temporarily closed due to public health mandates.

I'm a sole proprietor. Can I apply for this grant?

Yes, sole proprietors are eligible for the Bridge Fund as long as the sole proprietor meets all the eligibility requirements and is a District of Columbia resident.

I operate more than one business. Can I apply for multiple businesses?

Yes, you may apply for up to five locations, so long as each location has a unique EIN and each location meets all eligibility requirements. If a parent company or ownership group operates more than five locations, only five total locations will be eligible.

If I received a grant from the District government, does that count as revenue toward the \$5 million annual revenue requirement?

No, a grant received from the District government will not be counted toward your revenue. Businesses must have earned no more than \$5 million in gross receipts in each 2019, 2020, and 2021. Grants will not be counted as gross receipts.

I received a grant from the Paycheck Protection Program. Am I eligible for this grant?

Yes, businesses that received an award from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) are eligible to apply. However, funding will be prioritized for those businesses that did not receive a PPP award.

I applied for the Arts and Entertainment Venue Relief Fund. Am I eligible for this grant?

Businesses that were eligible for the Arts and Entertainment Venue Relief Fund are eligible to apply for the Bridge Fund. However, if you receive an award from the Arts and Entertainment Venue Relief Fund, you are not eligible to receive an award from the Bridge Fund.

I received a grant from another DC Government agency. Am I eligible for this grant?

Yes, as long as your business meets all the eligibility requirements, you are eligible to apply.

I operate a business but do not have a brick-and-mortar location. Am I eligible to apply?

No, you must operate from a brick-and-mortar location in the District of Columbia and be able to demonstrate you have site control of the space to be eligible for this grant.

I am a sole proprietor and operate my business from my home. Am I eligible for this program?

No, home-based businesses are not eligible. You must operate your business from a brick-and-mortar retail storefront location to be eligible for this program.

What does it mean to have site control?

Site control means that you have the right to operate within a specific space on a continuous basis. You can demonstrate site control through a deed, lease, or sublease, and a Certificate of Occupancy. If you do not have a lease or deed for a space, but you sell goods, serve food, or perform at a space, that does not qualify as site control.

I operate a food truck. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes, as long as your business meets all the eligibility requirements, you are eligible for the Bridge Fund.

Application Process

How do I apply?

Applications for the Bridge Fund must be submitted online via the application portal available through the [ObviouslyDC website](#).

When are applications due?

The deadline for the second period of applications has been extended. Application periods and deadlines for the Bridge Fund are listed below:

Application Period One:

- Opened: Monday, January 24, 2022
- Closes: Friday, February 25, 2022 at 11:59 PM EST

Application Period Two:

- Opens: Saturday, February 26, 2022
- Deadline: Thursday, March 31, 2022 at 5:00 PM EST (extended from March 18)

Please continue to check www.obviouslydc.com/fy22-business-funding-opportunities for any updates. **Applications not received by the March 31 deadline will not be considered.**

I have submitted my application. Will I receive a grant?

A submitted application does not automatically mean a grant will be awarded. The application needs to be reviewed and then selected for an award.

If I am selected for an award, when will I receive my funds?

A disbursement of funds will occur upon completion of the award recommendation, receipt of required documents, and a signed grant agreement. We anticipate that grantees will be notified via email if selected for an award beginning in late March 2022.

What documents do I need to apply for the Bridge Fund?

You will need to provide the following documents with your application:

1. Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) Letter
2. 2019 Federal Tax Return (if operating prior to January 1, 2020)
3. 2019 Monthly Income Statement, showing revenue less expenses with core expenses displayed clearly (rent, payroll, utilities) (if operating prior to January 1, 2020)
4. 2020 Federal Tax Return (if operating prior to January 1, 2021)
5. 2020 Monthly Income Statement, showing revenue less expenses with core expenses displayed clearly (rent, payroll, utilities) (if operating prior to January 1, 2021)
6. 2021 Federal Tax Return (if available)
7. 2021 Monthly Income Statement to date, showing revenue less expenses with core expenses displayed clearly (rent, payroll, utilities)
8. Active DC Basic Business License
9. Active ABRA License, if applicable
10. Certificate of Occupancy (must be current and must be valid if the certificate provides an expiration date)

11. Lease or Deed
12. Certificate of Clean Hands (dated within 90 days prior to application date)
13. Proof of Valid Identification of business owner
14. Payroll or Roster of Employees dated within 30 days of application (including employees state of residence)
15. Landlord Affidavit (stating whether back rent is owed, and if so, amount owed)

Will the District require any additional documents for the Bridge Fund?

In its sole discretion, the District of Columbia and/or City First Enterprises may elect to request additional documents at any point of the application and/or funding process. The District of Columbia and/or City First Enterprises will notify applicants and/or potential awardees of the documentation requirements.

Can I submit the same Certificate of Clean Hands that I used for a previous grant application?

No. A current Certificate of Clean Hands (dated within 90 days prior to application date) must be submitted at the time of the application. Grants will not be disbursed to businesses that do not provide a Certificate of Clean Hands. You can view instructions on how to request your updated certificate online: <https://otr.cfo.dc.gov/page/certificate-clean-hands>.

How do I request an updated Certificate of Clean Hands?

Businesses can request a Certificate of Clean Hands through the MyTax.DC.gov portal. Learn how to navigate this new process by visiting OTR's website: www.otr.cfo.dc.gov/page/certificate-clean-hands.

What if I can't provide my documents in time?

To be eligible for funding, businesses must provide all required documentation at the time of their application.

Can I submit the application via email?

No. All applications must be submitted on the designated online portal no later than Thursday, March 31, 2022 at 5:00 PM EST. DMPED and its program partners are not responsible for unreadable, incomplete, and/or out-of-order submissions.

Can I ask a question about my materials before submitting my application?

Yes. City First Enterprises is administering the Bridge Fund on behalf of DMPED. Please email thebridgefund@cfenterprises.org with your question in as much detail as possible.

Can I ask a question about my application after it has been submitted?

Yes, please email City First Enterprises at thebridgefund@cfenterprises.org for specific questions regarding your application.

Where can I get help with my application?

There are a number of organizations that can provide technical or language assistance with your application. For technical assistance, you may contact your [DC Main Street organization](#) (if applicable) or contact a [Small Business Technical Assistance Community-Based Organization](#).

For language assistance, you can contact the Mayor's Office of Community Affairs at one of the following numbers:

- Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs: (202) 671-2825
- Mayor's Office on African Affairs: (202) 727-5634
- Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs: (202) 727-3120

Please reference the **Bridge Fund Application Guide** which can be accessed on the [Obviously DC website](#). It will help you complete the application and answer common questions. It is designed to give applicants a walk-through of each question in the application and gives specific guidelines on how to fill out the application.

Grant Funds

How much are the grant awards?

Grant awards vary from \$20,000 - \$100,000 for the Bridge Fund.

When will I receive my award notification letter?

We anticipate award notifications will begin in March.

What can I spend grant funds on?

Eligible uses for grant funds are as follows (not an exhaustive list). A more complete list is available on the [ObviouslyDC website](#):

- Business rent or mortgage payments (if you owe back rent, at least 50% of the award must be spent on back rent, up to 100% of the amount of back rent owed)
- Payroll and labor
- Inventory (includes supplies but not items for sale)
- Operating expenses (complete list on [ObviouslyDC website](#))

What expenses are included in “business rent”?

Business rent includes base rent and other occupancy costs like property insurance and common area maintenance (CAM).

Are there expenses that are not eligible to spend grant funds on?

The following expenses are ineligible (not an exhaustive list):

- Decorative painting/landscaping/signage
- Inventory items for sale
- Loan payments
- Professional development
- Refunds for customer order returns or cancellations
- Travel expenses

How long do I have to spend the grant funds?

Grant funds must be spent no later than July 31, 2022.

What happens after I receive the grant funds?

After spending the funds on eligible expenses, you will send reports sharing information on how your business used the funds. Your grant agreement will provide additional guidance on reporting requirements.