



## FY 2023 FOOD ACCESS FUND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **When is the application due?**

The Submission Deadline for Applications for this round is Friday, January 13, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. EST.

### **What is the timeframe to be awarded?**

Applicants will be notified of decisions approximately 45 days from the Submission Deadline for Applications: Friday, January 13, 2023. For awardees, the timeline of the grant agreement is contingent on the submission of compliance documents to the grant teams.

### **How much funding is available for grants?**

There is \$10,688,513 available for funding grants. Maximum grant amounts for each recipient will be calculated based on the costs per square foot amounts provided in Section XV of the Request for Application.

### **Who can we reach out to with questions?**

If you have questions, please email [dmped.grants@dc.gov](mailto:dmped.grants@dc.gov) and we highly recommend submitting questions as soon as possible.

### **Is my location within the eligibility areas?**

To confirm your location is eligible, use the Eligibility Map using this [map](#).

### **Which location is subject to location eligibility?**

When checking the map, you should confirm the new location for which you will be using the funds is in an eligible area. Do not check eligibility for an existing location. Existing locations are not eligible for grant funds.

### **What technical assistance resources are available for completing the application?**

For technical assistance with the application, contact one of the CBOs listed here:

<https://greatstreets.dc.gov/node/1184575>

### **Is a food truck business considered a home-based business?**

No, food trucks are not considered home-based businesses.

### **Is a food truck business eligible?**

Yes, food trucks are eligible to apply, provided the food truck business has 2+ years of revenue-generating operations and is applying for expansion into a physical brick and mortar location.

### **Am I eligible to apply for my food truck business to purchase additional food trucks and expand operations in this manner?**

No, a food truck business can only apply if it expands into a physical brick-and-mortar location.



**Is a brick-and-mortar mobile hub of a mobile food market eligible?**

A mobile hub will be considered eligible if the market component is new and in a physical location. In addition, the main business must have at least two years of revenue-generating operations.

**If I have a food-related business operating for 2+ years, and plan to open a new food-related business/concept under a different name/brand, am I eligible for the fund despite the two-year revenue-generating operations requirement?**

Unlike the first round of the Food Access Fund, new concepts of a different name/brand are eligible, provided the parent business or applicant has at least two years of operating history.

**Does a business itself need to have two years of operating history or can the applicant have 2+ years of history?**

Unlike the first round of the Food Access Fund, applicants or parent businesses that have at least two years of operating history can apply for a new business/concept for this round.

**Can the requirement of at least two years of revenue-generating operations be waived?**

No, DMPED will not waive the 2+ years requirement. This fund is for businesses and food operators that have proven a successful business model.

**If applying for a new concept, can any business type satisfy the two years of revenue-generating operations requirement or does the core business of the applicant have to be food-related?**

The core business of the applicant must be an existing food-related business to satisfy the requirement.

**Can I apply for more than one location?**

Yes, an applicant can apply for more than one location, provided a separate application is submitted for each location.

**Can one application include multiple prospective locations?**

No. Each location must have a separate application submission.

**Will an applicant be eligible to be awarded multiple grants or multiple sites?**

Yes, an applicant is eligible for grant awards for multiple locations. However, the applicant must submit each location through a separate application.

**Can I apply if I do not have a location identified?**

No, a location must be identified with proof of site control submitted with the application. Please refer to the RFA for specific examples of evidence of site control.

**What is a Local Business Enterprise eligible food operator?**

A food operator designated as a Local Business Enterprise, a Certified Business Enterprise category. For more information, visit: <https://dslbd.dc.gov/page/cbe-certification-frequently-asked-questions-faqs>

**Are funds eligible to pay for permits?**

Yes, funds are available to pay for permits, provided the permits are construction-related and included in the Construction budget.



**Is the maximum award for each component (construction, rent, or security) or inclusive of all three components?**

The maximum award per square foot is the total amount to subsidize the total of all three components: construction, rent, and/or security (if applicable). Square footage calculations will be verified by Certificate of Occupancy.

**Can I use these funds if I want to expand my business outside of Ward 7 & 8?**

When expanding a business outside of Wards 7 & 8, please refer to the [Food Access Fund Eligibility Map](#) to determine if the location is within an eligible area.

**How long is a lease term or prospective lease term required for the grant?**

A minimum of 10 years is required for the grant.

**Can the minimum lease term of 10 years consist of options?**

A minimum 10-year base lease term is preferred; however, applicants with base lease terms plus lease options that total a minimum of ten years are also eligible.

**Do you need the Letter of Intent (LOI) or the Landlord affidavit?**

A landlord affidavit must be submitted with the application, in addition to the evidence of site control.

**What role does the Landlord have in the application process?**

The Landlord must fill out the Landlord affidavit, posted on <https://dmped.dc.gov/page/food-access-fund>, certifying they are allowing improvements to the space, confirming lease term, and specifying any tenant improvement dollars, rent abatement, or other concessions that have been provided to the tenant.

**Can I use my current Basic Business License (BBL)?**

No, the current BBL cannot be submitted with the application. All documentation should be related to the new business entity. Since new entities will likely not have their BBL, one is not required to be submitted with the application.

**Can the application be submitted without the Certificate of Clean Hands?**

No, the Certificate of Clean Hands must be received and submitted at the time of application.

**Does the Certificate of Clean Hands need to be obtained at the time of application or at the time of awarding of funds?**

Both. The Certificate of Clean Hands must be obtained and submitted at the time of application to be eligible for an award. If awarded, the applicant must obtain a new Certificate of Clean Hands to remain eligible for funding.

**Can I apply for the grant if the Certificate of Clean Hands is being held up by unresolved issues or in-process solutions?**

No, all issues must be resolved, and a Certificate of Clean Hands obtained by the time of application.

**Does the Certificate of Occupancy milestone apply to the building or the business itself?**

The business itself must obtain a Certificate of Occupancy.



**Does a third party need to complete the Community Impact, Market Feasibility, and Financial Viability?**

Community Impact and Financial Viability sections do not need to be completed by a third party. Only the Market Feasibility section is *recommended* to be conducted by a third party for preference in the scoring criteria but is not required.

**Are there recommended or pre-approved third-party providers for the Community Impact, Market Feasibility, and Financial Viability?**

The District cannot show preference to any District businesses. We do not have a list of recommended or pre-approved third-party providers. Also, only the Market Feasibility section is *recommended* to be completed by a third-party analyzer. For a list of CBOs that may be able to assist with the application and recommendations, see: <https://greatstreets.dc.gov/node/1184575>

**Is the Market Feasibility section waived if in a great street corridor?**

No, all applicants are required to complete the Market Feasibility section including the statement of key conclusions of the analysis.

**Do all regulations apply to open a new restaurant?**

Yes, you must follow and comply with all D.C. Laws and Regulations related to opening a restaurant.

**Are franchises eligible businesses for the Food Access Fund?**

Yes, if the franchise is an eligible restaurant or grocer, they may apply like any other food business.

**How can the recording be accessed?**

The recording will be made available for all prospective applicants on the DMPED and Obviously DC websites.

**What elements of the application are given priority or preference?**

Priority or preference is given to the following criteria:

- Locations in Wards 7 & 8
- Restaurants with a dine-in component
- Market Feasibility assessment conducted by a third-party
- Property owners applying on behalf of locally minority-owned or women-owned businesses

Please refer to the full RFA for all qualifications, requirements, and criteria.