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PROGRAM SUMMARY

- GRANTOR:** The State Treasurer's Office of Economic Empowerment
- ADDRESS:** One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108
- PROGRAM NAME:** The Empowerment Grant for Small Businesses: Supporting small businesses experiencing financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- CONTACT PERSON:** Samantha Washburn-Baronie
- E-MAIL:** empowerment@tre.state.ma.us
- DEADLINE:** May 29, 2020
- Attachments:** Attachment A: Grant Application

Section I. Summary

The State Treasurer's Office of Economic Empowerment (OEE) is proud to offer The Empowerment Grant for Small Businesses as an acknowledgement of the devastating economic impact that the COVID -19 pandemic has had on the Massachusetts small business community.

The Empowerment Grant Program aims to support the well-being and continuity of small businesses by providing access to capital and empowerment through engaging in OEE resources.

Grant resources will be focused on small business owners serving Massachusetts Gateway Cities. The State Treasurer's Office of Economic Empowerment encourages minority-owned, women-owned, veteran-owned, and/or immigrant-owned small businesses located in gateway communities to apply. For details, please see Section III.

Applicants are encouraged to illustrate how they can utilize funds to support initiatives that will allow them to continue operating during and/or after the COVID-19 pandemic. Applicants may request **up to \$2,500** for the proposed need.

Application deadline: On or before **Friday, May 29, 2020**. Funding decisions will be made on or around June 12, 2020.

Section II. Program Impact

The Empowerment Grant for Small Businesses aims to help small businesses minimize service gaps and maintain business continuity. Therefore, applicants must demonstrate how they will use grant funding to support business continuity and ingenuity amid the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

The grant funding may be used for the following critical needs:

- Expenses that would not have usually occurred without the COVID-19 pandemic
- Technical upstart costs
- Business continuity assessment and planning
- Marketing, such as paid digital advertisements during and post COVID-19 pandemic
and/or
- General business continuity expenses

Grantees will be given a marketing toolkit and asked to share their acceptance into the grant on social media channels if they are able. Grantees will be required to participate in a webinar for small businesses in June, 2020. If requested, grantees may be paired up with a small business mentor.

Section III. Applicant Eligibility

Applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Must be registered in a Gateway City in Massachusetts. According to M.G.L. ch. 23A § 3A, the 26 Gateway Cities in the Commonwealth are Attleboro, Barnstable, Brockton, Chelsea, Chicopee, Everett, Fall River, Fitchburg, Haverhill, Holyoke, Lawrence, Leominster, Lowell, Lynn, Malden, Methuen, New Bedford, Peabody, Pittsfield, Quincy, Revere, Salem, Springfield, Taunton, Westfield, and Worcester.
- Business that are minority-owned, women-owned, veteran-owned, and/or immigrant-owned are encouraged to apply.
- Must be a “**small business.**” A “small business” means a business that had total annual sales in its most recently completed fiscal year of less than five million dollars and which has a principal place of business within the commonwealth; provided, however, that no loan or loans to a borrower in an aggregate principal amount in excess of \$1,000,000 and no loan for passive real estate purposes shall be considered to be a loan to a small business borrower. M.G.L. ch. 23A, § 57. The term “Small Business” shall also mean a commercial loan of \$1,000,000 or less.
- Business must be in operation for at least **one year.**
- Preference given to small businesses in industries especially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Examples of Categories of Industry:
 - Home cleaning services
 - Personal training/fitness
 - Brick and mortar establishments
 - Personal care services, such as hair and nail salons
 - Other industries, including non-manufacturing goods production & associated services; manufacturing; retail; leisure and hospitality; finance and insurance; healthcare and education; professional services and real estate; business support and consumer services

- Exclusions include businesses that are chains or franchises and multi-level marketing entities.
- Applicants may be asked to participate in providing testimony and other marketing or promotional materials.

Post-Implementation Requirements

Grantees will be required to do the following:

Engage with OEE’s small business financial empowerment resources, which may include:

- a webinar to assist in the planning for the use of the grant fund
- meeting with small business subject matter experts.

Submit the following written materials:

- A report summarizing the grantee’s ability to meet their proposed goals with the funds.
- A budget outlining actual expenses.

The format of the report, budget and evaluation will be determined by the Office of Economic Empowerment. This report is due on or before June 30, 2021. Organizations that do not use the funding for the approved purpose stated in their applications must reimburse the full award amount.

Section IV. Applicant Instructions

Applicants must submit all required items on or before 5PM on Friday, May 29, 2020. The required items include:

- Item 1** - Program Description and Applicant Response Questions (via online form)
- Items 2 - 3** – Commonwealth Forms
 - Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing Form* (Please email form to empowerment@tre.state.ma.us and submit original hard copy with wet-ink signature via mail as soon as possible).
 - Please submit a copy of your W-9 form.*

Item 4 is not required as part of initial grant application process. Item 4 will be due upon notification of a grant award.

- Item 4** *Commonwealth Terms and Conditions and Massachusetts Standard Contract Form* (original hard copy with wet-ink signature via mail to be provided at earliest convenience.)

Required Item 1, (Grant Application) MUST be uploaded to the online form by 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time on May 27, 2020 at <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/the-empowerment-grant-for-small-businesses>.

Required Items (2 & 3) that must be emailed to the Office of Economic Empowerment by 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time on May 29, 2020 shall be sent to: empowerment@tre.state.ma.us

Guidelines for Required Commonwealth Forms (Item 2-4) and Other General Information

- *Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing Form*
- *W-9 Form*
- *Commonwealth Massachusetts Standard Contract Form (upon notified of grant award)*

Please note that only individuals authorized as legal representatives of the applicant may sign contracts and other legally binding documents relating to this grant. **These documents must be signed by an individual designated on the Authorized Signatory Listing Form.** Applicants must complete and submit these forms in their entirety, which requires original ink signatures. Due to social distancing protocols, we will accept a PDF copy of the forms until you are able to provide a wet ink, original file to the Office of Economic Empowerment.

Please also note that failure to include any of the mandatory items may result in immediate rejection of the application. All Required forms may be obtained at <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/the-empowerment-grant-for-small-businesses> or as otherwise listed above.

Upon notification of the grant award, applicant must immediately submit the *Massachusetts Standard Contract Form*. **The Standard Contract Form must be signed by an individual designated on an Authorized Signatory Listing Form. A copy of the signature is acceptable, but the entity must provide a signed, wet ink copy at their earliest convenience.**

Final grant award is contingent on such submission. The OEE reserves the right to cancel the award and select another applicant if the forms are not timely, accurate, properly executed and returned.

Please note that applicable funds must be administered in compliance with relevant federal and state laws, regulations, and policies.

The OEE reserves the right to discontinue, modify or withhold any payments to be made pursuant to this grant or to require a total or partial refund of the grant, if in OEE's sole discretion, the funded organization has not fully complied with the terms and conditions of the grant.

The OEE reserves the right to request additional information from applicants. The OEE reserves the right to waive any minor informality in a response, to request clarification of information from any applicant, and to take any action deemed by the OEE to be in the Commonwealth's best interest.

We may ask applicants to provide a hard copy of their application.

Reasonable Accommodation

Applicants with disabilities that seek reasonable accommodation, which may include the receipt of the Grant Application information in an alternative format, must communicate such requests in writing to the contact person as soon as reasonably possible. Requests for accommodation will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. The request must state that it is based on a disability and specifically identify the accommodation desired. All reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate the requests of applicants with disabilities.

Important Dates and Times

Successful applicants will be notified on or around June 12, 2020. The grant period will be from June 2020 to December 31, 2020. All services provided under this grant, as detailed in your grant proposal, must be completed by December 31, 2020. To ensure each project follows the purpose stated in the original proposal, funded organizations will be required to submit a written report to the Office of Economic Empowerment by June 30, 2021.

MANDATORY FORMS CHECK-LIST

All Required Forms are available at: <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/the-empowerment-grant-for-small-businesses>

Due on or before 5 pm EST on May 29, 2020:

Via online form:

- Item 1** – Grant Application (via online form)

Email the following as soon as possible, and provide a hard copy at a later date of the following documents:

- Items 2 - 3** – Commonwealth Forms
 - Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing Form* (emailed; please provide original hard copy with wet-ink signature via mail)
 - Please submit a copy of your W-9 form.*

Due immediately upon notification of a successful grant application:

Original hard copy with wet-ink signature of the following:

1. *Massachusetts Standard Contract Form* (Not required as part of initial grant application)