

FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND

FAQs

**FREDERICK 2021 ONLINE SALES AND TECHNOLOGY GRANT**

Grant Applications will be **OPEN** 11:00 am on October 21, 2021 and will **CLOSE** 3:00 pm on November 5, 2021\*

**1. What is the purpose of this grant program?**

The **Online Sales and Technology Grant Program** aims to help small businesses and farms located in Frederick County do business in an increasingly digital economy. This grant program has been created by Frederick County Government ("FCG") with grant funding of \$221,546 in federal American Recovery Act funds designated by the Maryland Department of Commerce for Frederick County businesses impacted by the COVID-19 health crisis.

**2. What is the maximum grant award?**

The maximum grant award available to any one applicant cannot exceed \$10,000. Individual awards will be based on evidence of eligible expenses and the number of applications. An applicant may be approved for an amount less than requested.

**3. When can I apply for the grant?**

Grant applications open Thursday, October 21, at 11:00a.m. and close on Friday, November 5, 2021 at 3:00PM. \* Application period may close earlier than stated when all available funding is exhausted. You are encouraged to apply early.

**4. Where do I apply?**

The application process is electronic and can be completed at:

<https://ww3.frederickcountymd.gov/EconomicDevelopmentGrants>.

**5. How do I know if I am approved and when will funds be distributed?**

Decisions about the application are **only sent via email** so please provide contact information that will be monitored. FCG will not be responsible for unanswered emails sent to the business. If approved for a grant your business will be notified via email and will be required to respond and provide additional information. Failure to comply could result in the loss of an approved grant award. OED and Frederick County will not be responsible for non-responsive awardees.

If approved, you will receive an email notification of your award no later than November 20<sup>th</sup>. This is a 2-step grant process and you will be required to submit additional information after approval in order to receive your funds. Please be The funds will be electronically deposited through an **ACH direct deposit no later than December 1, 2021.**

**6. What are the eligibility requirements?**

Applicant must:

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1. Be physically located in Frederick County, MD and occupy a commercial space (unless business is a farm);
2. Currently be in operation;
3. Have 20 or fewer total employees full-time & part-time (excludes the owner),
4. Have been established and operating in Frederick County MD prior to March 9, 2020;
5. Be a for profit business entity
6. Be in "Good Standing" with the State of Maryland and Frederick County;
7. Not be in bankruptcy or litigation that would restrict the receipt of grant;
8. To receive reimbursement for a prior purchase, you must have purchased after March 9, 2020 eligible equipment or services needed to operate or expand online sales or permit or expand telework opportunities for employees;
9. To request reimbursement for a future purchase, you must: (1) know the items and purchase price and (2) provide a purchase order or contract with cost, and:
10. Submit dated evidence of payment to document requested funds;

#### **7. Can I mail my application in or drop it off somewhere?**

No, applications will only be accepted via online submission.

#### **8. Will I get confirmation that my application has been received?**

Yes, once your application is successfully submitted the application portal will automatically generate a confirmation screen and confirmation email.

#### **9. How do I verify my business is in Good Standing with the State of MD?**

Please use the link below to learn how to check your business standing. Most often a business is not in good standing due to failure to submit the 2021 annual report or pay the annual fee. If your business is a sole proprietorship you are not required to be registered with the State of Maryland and this would not pertain to your business. However, if you elected to register with the State of Maryland as a sole proprietor then you are subject to this requirement and your business must be in good standing or active.

#### **How to Determine if your business status is "Active" or in "Good Standing".**

A. Look up your business' status on the SDAT website. Search on the legal name of your business as registered with the State of Maryland. You may also choose to search on your Dept. ID number from your original filing if you have that information.

<https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch/Search>.

Note the status of your business using the **General Information tab**: Is it "Active" or "Inactive"? Is it in "Good Standing"? What "Business Type" is it? Note: Only legal entities (i.e. corporations, LLCs) can be in "Good Standing", while others (Sole Proprietorships and General Partnerships) can only be "Active" or "Inactive".

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After searching your business through the “Business Entity” tab, take a screen shot of the “Good Standing” or “Active” notation under the “General Information” Tab. The screen shot must include a current date and time stamp of your screen. Current is defined as being between the open and close dates and times (noted above) of the grant program. The screen shot proving “Good Standing” will need to be uploaded with the application. The image or pdf files are permissible not to exceed 2MB. If you are unable to upload your file please reach out to [oed@frederickcountymd.gov](mailto:oed@frederickcountymd.gov)

If your business is NOT in good standing, please refer to these instructions [Steps to Ensure Active and Good Standing Status With the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation](#)

**10. My business is closed. Can I apply?**

No, the business must have been established and operating on or prior to March 9, 2020 and still operating at the time of application.

**11. How is “Operating” defined for this grant?**

Operating means that a business is actively and currently conducting transactions and customers of the business are able to purchase the goods or services of the business.

**12. Are sole proprietors eligible?**

Yes. As long as the business meets all eligibility requirements, noted below in answer 17, and can demonstrate a history of operations and provide supporting documentation, it may be organized under any legal structure.

**13. If I have already received funds through other grants programs can I apply?**

Yes, but priority will be given to those applicants that have not received prior grant funding from certain programs. Please see the online application for complete details.

**14. What expenses can be covered by the grant?**

This grant can be used to start or expand online sales or telecommute opportunities and can cover both equipment and technology services including digital marketing, e-commerce platforms and mobile marketing if it is new to the business. Salaries and wages are not to be paid out of this grant. Examples of eligible expenses include:

- Website upgrade to include, expand, or facilitate online sales
- New website development for the purpose of online sales
- Purchase of laptops or other devices for remote work capabilities
- Hardware & software upgrade and subscriptions related to the above.

**15. If I own multiple small businesses, can I apply for each location?**

Yes. Each application must have a separate commercial address.

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**16. Is the County able to provide support to immigrant-owned businesses?**

If the business can comply with all the requisites required for this grant, and can meet all other eligibility requirements described in Question 6 above it is eligible to apply.

**17. Will the application be available in multiple languages?**

The application will be available in English. Google translate may assist with different languages.

**18. Will you need a computer to submit the application?**

Yes, you will need access to a computer, laptop or smartphone since the application is only available digitally. To avoid technical issues, recommended browsers are Chrome and Edge.

**19. Is my information on my application kept confidential?**

While financial information will be kept confidential, the names of businesses receiving grants, and the amount they receive, are public information and may be included in press releases issued by the County.

**20. Is this grant considered taxable income to me or my business?**

Frederick County Government cannot provide tax advice and recommends that you consult with a tax professional. However, it is possible that relief grant funds may be reported as taxable income to the businesses. If awarded, the recipient will receive a form 1099-G from Frederick County Government for the tax year.

**21. What are the priorities for this funding?**

Pursuant to guidelines outlined by the State of Maryland, Frederick County Government seeks to provide limited financial relief to locally owned and controlled businesses that have or intend to expand their sales functionality to include online digital sales and or provide telecommute work opportunities for staff, as needed in response to the COVID 19 impact. Businesses with commercial space or agriculture based businesses within Frederick County, Maryland and employing 20 or fewer employees are eligible. Frederick County hopes main street businesses, “mom & pop shops”, minority, women and veteran owned businesses will apply.

**22. Will I need to pay the money back?**

This is a grant, not a loan, so you will not need to pay it back as long as you comply with all of the terms and conditions of the Grant Contract Agreement.

**23. What is the record retention for the expenses related to this award?**

All eligible grantees receiving an eligible grant will be required to maintain records evidencing compliance with the requirements of the eligible grant for a period of five (5) years from the date of the eligible grant.

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**24. Is this a one-time payment?**

Yes.

**25. Are these grant funds subject to audit?**

Yes. All eligible grantees receiving an eligible grant will be required to permit any duly authorized representative of the County to inspect and audit all records and documents of the eligible grantee relating to the eligible grant.

**26. If questions are not addressed in this FAQ what can I do?**

If you have questions about the Grant program, please email the Office of Economic Development at [OED@FrederickCountyMD.gov](mailto:OED@FrederickCountyMD.gov).