



Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

Back to Business (B2B) Grants Eligibility Guidelines

Last Updated: 8/11/2021

Businesses must meet the following requirements to be eligible for funds available through the Back to Business Grant program. Note that this is a summary, and further terms that recipients must comply with are outlined in the Back to Business Grant Program Certifications and Requirements, found [here].

- 1) Must be an independently owned and operated for-profit corporation or limited liability corporation, partnership, or sole proprietorship authorized to conduct business in the State of Illinois; or a nonprofit;
- 2) Must have been operating during or before December 2019.
- 3) Must have had less than \$20 million in gross operating revenue in calendar year 2019, or a pro-rated amount if in operation for less than a year prior to December 2019.¹
- 4) Must have experienced a loss in revenue of at least \$5,000 in 2020 due to economic disruptions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 5) Must have had reduced operations due to government orders, public health guidelines, or depressed consumer demand during the COVID 19 pandemic.
- 6) Must have complied with all relevant laws, regulations, and executive orders from the State and federal government, including the social distancing guidelines as promulgated by the Executive Orders of the Illinois Governor.
- 7) The following businesses are not eligible:
 - a. independent contractors or freelance workers that do not operate a sole proprietorship;
 - b. child care providers that have received and/or are registered for [Child Care Restoration Grants](#);
 - c. a private club or business that limits membership for reasons other than capacity;
 - d. a business primarily engaged in speculative activities that develop profits from fluctuations in price rather than through normal course of trade;
 - e. a business that earns more than a quarter of its annual net revenue from lending activities, unless the business is a non-bank or non-bank holding company certified as a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI);
 - f. a business that derives at least 33% of its gross annual revenue from legal gambling activities;

¹ For hotels to be eligible, they must have had less than \$35 million in gross operating revenue in calendar year 2019, or a pro-rated amount if in operation for less than a year prior to December 2019.

- g. a business engaged in pyramid sales, where a participant's primary incentive is based on the sales made by an ever-increasing number of participants;
- h. a business engaged in activities that are prohibited by federal law or applicable law in the jurisdiction where the business is located or conducted. (Included in these activities is the production, servicing, or distribution of otherwise legal products that are to be used in connection with an illegal activity, such as selling drug paraphernalia or operating a motel that knowingly permits illegal prostitution);
- i. a business that derives a majority of its income as an owner of real property that leases that property to a tenant or tenants under a lease agreement;
- j. a business principally engaged in teaching, instructing, counseling, or indoctrinating religion or religious beliefs, whether in a religious or secular setting;
- k. a government-owned business entity (except for businesses owned or controlled by a Native American tribe);
- l. a business primarily engaged in political or lobbying activities;
- m. a business that manufactures or sells at wholesale, tobacco products, liquor or that manufactures or sells firearms at wholesale or retail;
- n. a night club or strip club;
- o. an employment agency;
- p. a pawn shop;
- q. a liquor store;
- r. a storage facility or trailer-storage yard or junk yard;
- s. an establishment similar to any enumerated above; or
- t. a business in which a majority owner has a financial or familial connection to a director, principal shareholder or leadership member of the Department or Department's partner under the program.

Priority Industry Definitions

We have identified a set of "Priority Industries" that have experienced particular and prolonged hardship throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Those industries are defined as follows. When determining whether they are included in an industry as described below, nonprofits should not include donations in the calculation when calculating the share of revenues derived from an activity.

- 1) Hotels
 - a. Businesses providing lodging on a short-term basis, including hotels, motels, inns, hostels, and bed and breakfasts.
 - b. This does not include vacation rentals.
- 2) Restaurants and bars that are eligible for but have not received a [Restaurant Revitalization Fund \(RRF\)](#) grant
- 3) Arts organizations and businesses that include the following categories:
 - a. Live venue operators or promoters, theatrical producers, live performing arts organization operators, and talent representatives that are eligible for but have not received a [Shuttered Venues Operating Grant \(SVOG\)](#)
 - b. Performing or presenting arts organizations

- i. A business or organization that has as its primary mission or integral to its primary mission the performance or presentation of the arts to the public, including the artistic disciplines of dance, film, literary arts, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts.
 - c. Arts education organization
 - i. A business or organization that has as its primary mission or integral to its primary mission the provision of arts learning, or has over 50% of its business activity related to providing arts education.
 - d. Service providers and organizations for the arts
 - i. Businesses that primarily provide services for the arts sector, including vendors in design, sound, equipment rental or preparation, casting, hair and makeup, talent management, booking, photography/videography, and printing; and service organizations for the arts sector that provide professional services, training, and technical assistance.
 - ii. Over 50% of earned revenue is derived from performing the activities listed above for the arts sector, including arts events, performances, and exhibits.
- 4) Clothing and electronics retail establishments (excluding e-commerce)
 - a. Business consists of at least one physical establishment that primarily provides goods for sale on-site to end users in the following industries:
 - i. Clothing and/or accessories
 - ii. Consumer electronics
 - b. Over 50% of revenue is derived from on-site (i.e. not via electronic order) retail sales of goods to end users.
- 5) Dry-cleaning and laundry services (excluding coin-operated)
 - a. A business or organization that primarily provide laundering, drycleaning, or specialty cleaning services for clothing and textiles.
 - b. This does not include businesses that primarily provide self-service, coin-operated laundry equipment for self-directed use by clients.
 - c. Over 50% of revenue must be derived from compensation for providing dry-cleaning and laundry services.
- 6) Home health care services
 - a. A business or organization that primarily provides health care services in a patient's home for illness or injury, including wound care, patient and caregiver education, intravenous or nutrition therapy, injections, and/or monitoring of serious illness and unstable health.
 - b. Over 80% of revenue must be derived from compensation for providing health care services in a patient's home.
- 7) Childcare providers
 - a. Only includes child care providers that have not received and/or are not registered for [Child Care Restoration Grants](#), as providers that have received and/or are registered for Child Care Restoration Grants are not eligible for B2B grants.
- 8) Barbershop and salon services
 - a. A business or organization that provides hair, nail, and other services related to the certifications below.

- b. Eligible businesses must hold an active certificate of registration as a barber, cosmetologist, esthetician, nail technician, hair braider, or hold an active certificate of registration to operate a barber shop or cosmetology, hair braiding, esthetics, or nail technology studio business pursuant to Article IIID of the Barber, Cosmetology, Esthetics, Hair Braiding, and Nail Technology Act of 1985.

9) Indoor recreation

- a. A business or organization that provides an indoor facility with usable indoor space designated for indoor play or fitness activities. This may include indoor bowling alleys, skating rinks, trampoline parks, indoor playgrounds, field houses, laser tag, arcades, and indoor sports facilities.
- b. Facility capacity must be greater than 100 people, except for trampoline parks and indoor playgrounds, which are all eligible regardless of capacity.
- c. Over 50% of revenue is from ticketing and fees to participate in indoor recreation activities and associated services, such as shoe rental.

10) Gyms and fitness centers

- a. Business consists of at least one physical establishment that is open to members or the general public to participate in activities related to physical fitness on-site.
- b. Business has a current membership agreement or liability waiver required of all health and fitness centers open to the public.
- c. This does not include businesses that exclusively provide mobile or remote services and do not operate a physical establishment where members or the public engage in physical fitness activities on-site;
- d. Over 80% of revenue is derived from fees, including membership fees, to participate in fitness activities.

11) Tourism and group transportation (excluding taxis, limos, or rideshare)

- a. Includes tourism promotion, campgrounds, agritourism, tourist guides, tour operators, travel agents, short-term vehicle rentals, charter buses, interurban and rural buses, and shuttle services.
- b. This does not include taxis, limos, ridesharing, or businesses that are located in areas that are frequented by tourists that do not participate in the tourism-related activities described above.

12) Spectator and social event support services

- a. Businesses that provide services for events, including equipment rental or preparation, hair and makeup, caterers, photographers/videographers, promoters, event planners, florists, and printers.
- b. Over 50% of revenue must be derived from performing the activities listed above for the purposes of an event.
- c. Does not include venues, businesses, or organizations that are eligible for Shuttered Venues Operator Grants (SVOG).

13) Museums and movie theater operators that are eligible for but have not received a [Shuttered Venues Operating Grant \(SVOG\)](#)