

# Charlotte CARES for Business Recovery Grant Program

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the Charlotte County business community to confront immense challenges. As a result, on July 14, 2020 the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners approved the Recovery Grant Program to accelerate and assist the reopening efforts of businesses hardest hit by COVID-19.

This year Charlotte County was assigned \$32.9 million from the federal CARES Act approved by Congress. Twenty percent (20%) of those funds, \$6,580,000, will be given to qualified Charlotte County businesses by electronic application through the Recovery Grant Program. The Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners have dedicated \$1,645,000 to be allocated in four separate stages by business group.

Qualified applications for the first stage will be accepted beginning at 8:00 am on Monday, August 3, 2020, on a first-come, first serve basis while the funds last. Qualified businesses that applied but were not allocated funds for a prior business group, will be welcome to apply again (electronically) in a subsequent stage while the funds last. The application form and details about the program are posted on our website, [www.Cleared4Takeoff.com](http://www.Cleared4Takeoff.com).

## **Recovery Grant Program:**

### **Overview**

This funding stream is designed to support Charlotte County businesses by providing a rapid infusion of capital. The program will be rolled out in four (4) separate stages. All grants shall be on a first-come, first-serve basis consistent with the guidelines detailed throughout this report.

Funds must be used to cover operational and working capital expenses during the period March 1, 2020 through December 30, 2020, consistent with the below guidelines:

- Mortgage, rent and utility costs during the period a business is affected by any emergency order. While mortgage payments, rents and utilities are normally ongoing costs, business operations were interrupted by the required emergency order.
- Costs incurred during a reopening process, including the additional business interruption that happens when a business must limit their accessibility to the public, and for displaying and/or communicating state-based requirements for public access.
- Operating costs for the purchase of items meant to protect the public and employees, such as protective masks and hand sanitizer, and other costs incurred by installing required safety measures in order to reopen a business.

In order for a business to be considered for a Charlotte CARES Business Recovery Grant, they must submit a **complete and sufficient application** consistent with the below requirements and criteria. No predetermination on a grant award will be made and a business will only be considered grant awarded when they receive a confirmation email or letter.

### **Eligibility Requirements:**

Businesses are **ELIGIBLE** to apply for a one-time Recovery Grant if the Business:

1. Has been operating since January 1, 2019, has reopened or plans to reopen, and expects to operate at least 12 months after receiving grant.
2. Maintains a principal address in Charlotte County, as reported to the Division of Corporations.
3. Owner (or majority shareholder) resides in Charlotte County.
4. Is not a publicly traded company.
5. Is registered in SunBiz as a for profit company, partnership or corporation; or a non-profit corporation; or can prove that the business is a for profit, sole proprietorship.
6. Has an Active Status and a Date Filed on or before January 1, 2019 as shown on SunBiz, the Florida Division of Corporations website.
7. Has an Active Charlotte County Business Tax Receipt or is Exempt from filing a Business Tax Receipt with the Charlotte County Tax Collector.
8. Has not received, nor intends to receive, assistance through PPP, EIDL, the Florida Bridge Loan Program, business interruption insurance proceeds, and/or any other federal/state/regional/local COVID-19 related relief (applicant shall be required to sign affidavit to this effect).
9. And Owner are current on Charlotte County real estate taxes.
10. Property is not subject to a County Code Enforcement Action or violation of federal, state or local laws.
11. And any Owner of more than 20% of the equity of the Business are not presently suspended, debarred, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency, the State of Florida, or Charlotte County, or are not presently involved in any bankruptcy.
12. And any Owner of the Business, or any business owned or controlled by any of them, have not obtained a direct or guaranteed loan for the Small Business Administration (SBA) or any other Federal agency that is currently delinquent or has defaulted in the last 7 years and caused a loss to the U.S. government.
13. And any Owner of more than 20% of the equity of the Business are not presently incarcerated or, for any felony, presently subject to an indictment, criminal information, arraignment, or other means by which formal criminal charges are brought in any jurisdiction.
14. And any Owner of more than 20% of the equity of the Business, within the last 5 years, has not been involved in any felony involving fraud, bribery, embezzlement, or a false

statement in a loan application or an application for federal financial assistance, or within the last year, for any other felony, and the Business and any Owner of the business has not 1) been convicted; 2) pleaded guilty; 3) pleaded nolo contendere; or 4) commenced any form of parole or probation (including probation before judgment.

15. Maintains an open business bank account.

16. Is properly licensed through Charlotte County or the State of Florida if applicable.

17. Has 100 or fewer full-time equivalent employees as of July 1, 2020.

### **Assistance Offered:**

Award based on number of full-time equivalent employees (FTE's) **as of July 1, 2020**

- \$10,000 award for businesses with 1 to 10 FTE's
- \$20,000 award for businesses with 11 to 25 FTE's
- \$30,000 award for businesses with 26 to 100 FTE's

### **Business Type:**

The Charlotte CARES Business Recovery Grant Program is for any business harmed due to COVID-19

- **Target Sector Industry that suffered a demonstrable economic injury**
  - If your business primary revenue derives from aviation, manufacturing or distribution and your business was “economically injured”. To determine whether your business was “economically injured”, compare your April 2019 revenue to your April 2020 revenue. If the reduction is greater than 25%, then the company qualifies as “economically injured”.
- **Forced to close \***
  - If your business was forced to close by state or county emergency declaration (deemed “non-essential”).
- **Non-Profit that suffered a demonstrable economic injury**
  - To determine whether your Non-Profit was “economically injured”, compare your April 2019 revenue to your April 2020 revenue. If the reduction is greater than 25%, then the Non-Profit qualifies as “economically injured”.
- **Short-term or Vacation Rental**
  - If your establishment was forced to close by state or county emergency declaration.

- **Essential businesses that suffered a demonstrable economic injury**
  - To determine whether your business was “economically injured”, compare your April 2019 revenue to your April 2020 revenue. If the reduction is greater than 25%, then the company qualifies as “economically injured”.

\* To determine whether your business was “**Forced to Close**,” refer to the following resources:

- “Food Service Establishments” as defined in [Chapter 500, Florida Statutes](#), and “[Public Food Service Establishments](#)” as defined in [Chapter 509, Florida Statutes](#).
- Bars, pubs, and nightclubs as described in [Governor’s Executive Order 20-68](#).
- Short-term lodging establishments and vacation rental management companies that collect and remit Tourist Development Taxes.
- Non-essential businesses under [Governor’s Executive Orders 20-112](#), [20-120](#), and [20-123](#).
- Any business subject to any Charlotte County Emergency Order limiting operations.

**Stages/Criteria:**

To maximize impact of this funding and to allow flexibility as conditions warrant, Charlotte County will be accepting applications in stages. A business shall only be eligible to submit a grant application during the stages below in which it meets the criteria. A business eligible to submit their application in Stage One or Stage Two is not precluded from submitting an application in subsequent stages.

FACTOR	Stage One	Stage Two	Stages Three & Four
Application Opens	August 3, 2020	To be determined	To be determined
Application Ends	August 9, 2020	To be determined	To be determined
Funding Level	\$1,645,000	\$1,645,000	\$1,645,000 each stage
Impact	Target Sector Forced to Close Non-Profits	Target Sector Forced to Close Non-Profits Short-term/Vacation Rental	Target Sector Forced to Close Non-Profits Short-term/Vacation Rental Suffered Economic Injury

## Application Documentation:

- **Active State of Florida Division of Corporations Record** as shown on [SunBiz.org](http://SunBiz.org)
- **Current Charlotte County Business Tax Receipt or Written Statement** attesting to your business exemption
- Copy of Business **owner's driver's license**
- **Completed W-9**
- **Payroll Verification as of July 1, 2020**
- **Business Financials – for “suffered economic impact” businesses only**
- Copy of **Tourist Development Tax forms – for Short-term and Vacation Rental**
- **ACH form and a copy of voided check from business account**
- **Completed County Affidavit**

## Accessing the Recovery Grant Program Portal:

- You will access, complete, and submit the Recovery Grant Application through an online portal on the Economic Development Office's website, [www.Cleared4Takeoff.com](http://www.Cleared4Takeoff.com) (Note, County libraries have computer availability for those applicants without access to a computer)
- You will register on the portal by creating a user name and password
- You will be required to attach the required documentation as part of the Application completion and submission process
  - Please gather all required documentation prior to accessing the online portal
- **Applications will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis**
- **All grants are subject to availability of funds**
- Funding will be over 4 stages with proceeds from each stage equal to \$1,645,000
- Access to the portal will begin at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, August 3, 2020

## Notes:

- Florida's Public Records Law provides a right of access to the records of the state and local governments as well as to private entities acting on their behalf. Unless specifically exempted from disclosure by the Legislature, all materials made or received by a

governmental agency (or a private entity acting on behalf of such an agency) in conjunction with official business which are used to perpetuate, communicate, or formalize knowledge qualify as public records subject to public inspection. Note however, that certain items like SSN's can be redacted from a records request.

- Each applicant shall sign a County Affidavit that will include language to the effect that by signing this report, I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the report is true, complete and accurate, and the expenditures, disbursements and cash receipts are for the purposes and objectives set forth in the terms and conditions of this Charlotte CARES for Business Recovery Grant Program. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent information, or the omission of any material fact, may subject me to criminal, civil or administrative penalties for fraud, false statements, false claims or otherwise.
- If an audit shows that all or any portion of the funds disbursed were not spent in accordance with the conditions of and strict compliance with this Program, the Recipient will be held liable for reimbursement to the County of all funds not spent in accordance with these applicable regulations and Program provisions within thirty (30) days after the County has notified the Recipient of such non-compliance.