

SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE GRANT FUND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



CALVERT COUNTY
Maryland

1. When are grant applications being accepted?

Applications will be accepted for submission beginning Jan. 4, 2023 through Jan. 31, 2023.

2. Who is eligible for the Calvert County Small Business Assistance Grant Fund?

Businesses must meet the following criteria:

- Be a for-profit business located in Calvert County, Maryland
- Be a legally-recognized business in good standing with the State of Maryland as determined by the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT)
- Be current on all county tax liabilities (paid in full)
- Be in operation for at least two years and making positive revenue

**Note: If your business is not making positive revenue, you are still eligible to apply. However, you will be required to provide justification explaining why your business is not making positive revenue.*

- Have a minimum of two employees but not more than 100

3. Who is NOT eligible for the Calvert County Small Business Assistance Grant Fund?

- Nonprofit entities - [501(c)(3), 501(c)(6) or 501(c)(19)]
- 1099 independent contractors
- Corporate-owned franchises or chain entities

4. How much funding is available for each applicant?

Applicants may request up to the maximum grant amount of \$50,000.

5. What can the funds be used for?

The funds must be used for expenses that expand the visibility and sustainability of the business. Examples of allowable uses include but are not limited to:

- Purchase of expanding and/or new inventory offerings
- Workforce training and development
- Capital improvement projects
- Hiring new employees
- Website development and/or improvements
- Business expansion costs
- Other costs associated with investing in the growth of the business

6. Are there any restrictions on what the funds can be used for?

Yes, there are certain restrictions. You may not use the awarded funds on the following:

- The purchase of alcohol, tobacco, vaping or related items
- To pay off existing debts or loans
- Rent and/or mortgage payments

7. How do I access the grant application?

You must submit an initial inquiry to formally request an application here: www.ChooseCalvert.com/Grant. Once your request is received, an email with a unique application link will be provided to you within 24 hours.

8. How long will this process take and when can I expect to get the money?

Applications will be approved as quickly as possible based on the volume of submissions. This is a multi-step process, which includes the following steps:

1. Submit the request for an application as mentioned above.
2. Submit the electronic application through the unique link provided by Economic Development staff.
3. Once the application is received, it will be reviewed for basic eligibility requirements.
4. If the application meets the basic eligibility requirements, the applicant will receive an email from the Calvert County Department of Economic Development with instructions on how to submit required documents.
 - *The applicant will have seven business days to submit all required documentation. If documentation is not submitted in seven business days, the application will not be processed and will lose its place in the review process.*
5. If awarded, the grant recipient will be notified by email and will receive a grant agreement and related forms to be signed by the applicant.
6. The applicant will have seven business days to upload the agreement and payment forms.
7. Payments will be made through wire transfer to the applicant within a week after agreement and payment form submission.

9. What documentation is required?

- Fully completed application
- Number of full-time, part-time and 1099 employees (numbers will be needed for application)
- IRS W-9 Form
- Last two years of business tax returns filed (first two pages only)
- Copies of detailed paid invoices and receipts or quotes for reimbursement of eligible expenses. Receipts accepted for eligible uses from Jan. 1, 2022 up to six months after grant launch.
- Copies of any licenses the business is required to possess
- Most recent 941 Form that shows the numbers of employees

10. Will I be required to report on how I plan to use the funds?

Yes, you will be required to provide a detailed project narrative on how the grant will improve the business as a part of the application process. If the business is awarded the grant, you will also be required to report on how the funds were spent and provide documented proof of the qualifying expenditures.

11. Can I be reimbursed for any previous expense my business has incurred that meet the allowable expense criteria?

Yes, you must provide receipts for eligible expenses incurred from Jan. 1, 2022 through July 3, 2023.

12. Will you need a computer to submit the application?

Yes, you will need access to a computer since the application is only available online.

13. Can I mail my application in or drop it off somewhere?

No, applications will only be accepted via online submission.

14. Will I get confirmation that my application has been received?

Yes, once your application is successfully submitted you will receive a confirmation email that will also include instructions for uploading required documents.

15. How will award decisions be made?

Awards will be made based on a predetermined point system. Due to limited funds, not all applications will receive a grant award.

16. Who will be charged with reviewing the applications and verifying the accuracy of the documents received?

All applications will be reviewed by a Grant Review Committee. This committee will be approved by Calvert County Government's County Administrator and Director of Finance & Budget.

17. When will I receive notification of my award?

You will receive notification of your award within three weeks of the application closing date.

18. When will I receive the grant disbursement?

You will receive your grant disbursement within one week of your submission of the Grant Contract Agreement and ACH form.

19. How will I receive the grant disbursement?

Electronic payments will be made through the county's online ACH bank payments. An ACH form will be provided to you to complete the electronic payment upon application and award request approval.

20. How can I check on status of application(s)?

The applicant will receive an email notification when the application is received. In order to expedite processing, we will communicate with the applicant via email after a decision is made. If additional documentation is needed to support your application, you will receive an email.

21. How will award decisions be made?

Awards will be made based on a predetermined point system. Points will be awarded based on the business' ability to meet basic eligibility requirements and to demonstrate its capacity to implement the proposed project plan as described in the project narrative. Due to limited funds, not all applications will receive a grant award.

22. Will my information be kept confidential?

Yes. Your financial information is strictly confidential. However, the names of any business that receives a grant and the dollar amount of the grant awarded are considered public information.

23. Will I need to pay back the money?

No. This is a grant, not a loan, so you will not need to pay it back as long as you comply with all the terms and conditions of the Grant Contract Agreement.

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

Calvert 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. If awarded, the recipient may receive a 1099-G form from Calvert County Government for the tax year 2022.

25. Is this a one-time payment?

Yes.

26. How long do I have to spend the funds?

Grant funds must be spent within one year of the funds being awarded.

27. If I have additional questions whom may I contact?

If you have any additional questions or require support with your application process, please call 410-535-1600, ext. 2881 or email grant@calvertcountymd.gov.