

PROGRAM FAQs

I HAVE NOT RECEIVED ANY ASSISTANCE, WHEN CAN I APPLY?

Applicants that have not received any prior assistance, and who do not have a pending application for any other assistance, can apply immediately when the program opens and will receive first priority during the first 30-days of the application opening.

I HAVE RECEIVED ASSISTANCE IN THE PAST AND STILL NEED ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE, WHEN CAN I APPLY?

Applicants that have received prior state or federal assistance, or who have a pending application for assistance, will be able to apply, however, only applicants who have not received prior state or federal assistance may be awarded in the first 30 days from when the program opens.

I OPENED MY BUSINESS/PURCHASED MY BUSINESS IN 2020, CAN I APPLY?

Yes, a newly opened or purchased business is eligible for the program as long as it shows a tax loss for 2020. The only difference in the application is that you will not be required to provide tax returns for 2019 and will only provide Profit and Loss statements for those months that you were in business or making payments on your operations.

MY BUSINESS IS CURRENTLY CLOSED, CAN I STILL APPLY?

Yes, businesses who have been temporarily closed because of COVID-19 can apply for an Economic Recovery Bridge Program award. For those businesses not currently operating, a brief, written description of its good-faith plan to reopen will be required when applying.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Once the Vermont Economic Recovery Bridge Program is live, the applicant will complete an online form using a web-based portal. For applicants that have not received previous Vermont grants through this system, they will be able to create a new account, For those that have

already received Vermont grants, they can log into their existing account. In both cases, the applicant will complete an application specific to the Economic Recovery Bridge program.

IF I AM UNABLE TO COMPLETE THE APPLICATION DO I NEED TO START OVER?

No, once you begin your application, the application portal will save each page that you have completed. If a page is only half completed and you leave the application, the application portal will save up to the last page completed.

WHAT DOCUMENTATION WILL I NEED TO COMPLETE THE APPLICATION PROCESS?

This program is for those who have documented losses due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. That documentation will need to be uploaded to support the losses claimed, as well as for calculating the award amount. Be sure you have the following documents available to reference and upload to successfully complete your application:

- A monthly Profit and Loss statement for each month between January 2020 and April 2021
- 2020 Federal Tax Return
- 2020 State Tax Return
- 2019 Federal Tax Return
- 2019 State Tax Return
- Invoices for the same one month of each eligible business fixed expense
- Award letters for prior benefits received (if any)
- Notice of loan amounts forgiven

WHAT ARE ELIGIBLE FIXED EXPENSES?

- Commercial mortgage or rent;
- Insurance, electricity;
- Heat, water;

- Sewer service;
- Telecommunications Service; and
- Internet service.

ARE PROPERTY TAXES AN ELIGIBLE FIXED EXPENSE?

No, property taxes are not an eligible fixed expense. If your property taxes are escrowed into your mortgage, you will need to enter only the amount of principal and interest and be sure the invoice itemizes the total payment by principal, interest, taxes, insurance, etc.

IF MY BUSINESS IS OPERATED FROM MY HOME, ARE MY FIXED EXPENSES ELIGIBLE?

If your home is used for your business, the expenses will be limited to the “Business Use of Home” percentage claimed on your Federal and State tax returns.

WHAT IS A DUNS NUMBER AND DOES MY BUSINESS NEED ONE TO APPLY?

A DUNS number is a unique, non-indicative 9-digit identifier issued and maintained by Duns & Bradstreet (D&B) that verifies the existence of a business entity. Businesses must have a DUNS number to apply for an award because it is American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funded program.

HOW DO I OBTAIN A DUNS NUMBER TO SO MY BUSINESS CAN APPLY FOR AWARD?

Follow the webform here: <https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/> to obtain a FREE DUNS number. Your address must be consistent with the Vermont Secretary of State record. If you do not already have a DUNS number, one can be obtained usually in one or two business days.

What do I do with my DUNS number when I receive it?

Once you have your DUNS number, you will need to register it in the System for Award Management (SAM). SAM is a free government operated site. To register in SAM, to www.SAM.gov.

For further information on DUNS and SAM, go to:
<https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayFAQPage.do>

HOW ARE THE AWARDS CALCULATED?

Awards will be calculated as three times the sum of fixed monthly expenses as evidenced by uploaded invoices.

WHAT IS THE MAXIMUM AWARD AMOUNT?

Economic Bridge Recovery awards are capped at the lesser of the adjusted net loss, 3 months' fixed expenses or \$150,000. Adjusted net loss is the cumulative net loss during the - COVID-19 period from 3/2020 through 4/2021, plus any non taxable prior assistance.

CAN I RECEIVE AN AWARD IF I AM NOT IN GOOD STANDING WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE, DEPARTMENT OF TAX, OR DEPARTMENT OF LABOR?

No, only businesses that are in good standing with the these Departments may be awarded.

DO I NEED TO USE MY AWARD BY A CERTAIN DATE?

If a business obtains an award from the Economic Recovery Bridge Program for qualifying losses incurred, there is no deadline by which businesses must spend the funds. Awarded funds are intended to supplement the businesses as it recovers from Covid-19 induced losses.

AM I LIMITED IN THE USE OF MY AWARDED FUNDS?

Funding must be used for normal or traditional purposes of business and must not be used for personal expenses. Awardees attest during the application process that all awarded funds will be used to resume or

supplement business operations, and should be used to pay necessary expenditures and costs directly associated with your business' response to COVID-19. If it is found that this award was issued due to error, misrepresentation of facts, or fraud in your application, you will be required to return the funds to the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development.

AM I REQUIRED TO MEET ANY PERFORMANCE MEASURES IN CONNECTION WITH MY AWARD?

You do not need to take any action to accept the awarded funds. The award information for the Vermont Economic Recovery Bridge Program is provided under General Award Information in the Award Letter sent.

IS THIS AWARD TAXABLE?

Yes, Economic Recovery Bridge Awards are subject to Federal and Vermont state taxes.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I SHOULD BE CONCERNED ABOUT A DUPLICATION OF BENEFITS?

ACCD issued the Vermont Economic Recovery Bridge Program to provide economic support to those businesses in Vermont that have suffered costs and/or economic losses as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency. There are (and have been) several other sources of support available for businesses, including (but not limited to) the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL). The State recognizes that these other programs only cover a portion of the costs and/or lost revenues that businesses face as a result of COVID-19, and believes that it has appropriately designed the program to provide support beyond these programs, and that addresses the portion of costs/lost revenues not covered by other sources of funding.

Because applicants may have received funding from sources other than the Economic Recovery Bridge Program, an applicant may experience what is called a "duplication of benefits."

For the Economic Recovery Bridge program, your business will be at risk of duplication of benefits if, at the time of application, your business' COVID-19 related total revenue decline is less than the total amount of aid your business has received from:

- Vermont Economic Recovery Programs
- Forgiven PPP loans,
- EIDL Advance Grants,
- Business interruption insurance, and
- Any other State or federal grants or credits your business has received related to COVID-19.

Applicants to the Vermont Economic Recovery Bridge Program will be asked to provide information about the amount of funding that the business received from other sources including: PPP Forgiven loans, EIDL Advance grants, Restaurant Revitalization fund, Shuttered Venue Operator Grants, and any other federal grant or credit reimbursement for COVID-19 related damages or expenses at the time of application. Applicants will also certify that they would not use their Vermont Economic Recovery Grant to cover any expenses for which they have already received other reimbursement. Going forward, should additional assistance be made available, businesses should not apply for multiple sources of assistance based on the same losses compensated for with the Vermont Economic Recovery Bridge Program Funds. Businesses that have a duplication of benefits may need to repay awarded funds later if it appears that the proceeds from the Vermont Economic Recovery Bridge Program, plus any of the above listed sources of assistance, exceed the aggregate amount of the business' losses up to the time of application

Businesses that sought funding from sources other than the Economic Recovery Bridge Program are strongly encouraged to consider if the total funding received from all sources may put them at risk of having a duplication of benefits. If you have questions about the calculation of a

potential duplication of benefits, for your specific organization, we recommend that you contact your accounting or legal professionals.

If you believe that your organization has received a duplication of benefits, you may return the amount of the duplication received from this program by following these steps:

1. Please send an email notification to accd.covid19@vermont.gov with a cc: to paul.williams@vermont.gov explaining that you are returning Economic Recovery Bridge Program funds as a result of a duplication of benefits and the amount being returned
2. Make your check out to: State of Vermont
3. Include the application number and the award number on the check, and
4. Send the check to:
ACCD
One National Life Drive
Davis Building, 6th Floor
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

DO I NEED TO MAINTAIN RECORDS AS A RESULT OF RECEIVING AN AWARD?

Awardees must maintain all records pertaining to the use and expenditure of their award. Records include any written or recorded information, regardless of physical form or characteristics, which is produced or acquired by the awardee in the performance of this agreement. Records produced or acquired in a machine-readable electronic format shall be maintained in that format. The records described shall be made available at reasonable times during the period of the award and for five years thereafter or for any period required by law for inspection by any authorized representatives of the State or Federal Government. If any litigation, claim, or audit is started before the expiration of the five-year

period, the records shall be retained until all litigation, claims or audit findings involving the records have been resolved.