

Reopen Montgomery Grant Program

Frequently Asked Questions

ELIGIBILITY

1. Who is eligible for this grant?

Any local business (100 or less full-time equivalent employees, for profit or nonprofit) whose principal place of business is in Montgomery County, is in Good Standing with the State of Maryland at the time of application, and has not used, nor will not use, funds received from other Montgomery County grant program for reopening expenses.

2. Are faith-based organizations eligible?

Yes, assuming that they are a nonprofit. All nonprofit and for-profit businesses with 100 or fewer employees whose primary place of business is Montgomery County and have not used, nor will not use, funds received from other Montgomery County grant program for reopening expenses are eligible to apply for a Reopen Montgomery grant.

3. Will sole proprietors who don't have employees be eligible?

Yes, sole proprietors who do not have employees are eligible to apply if they incurred reopening expenses in order to comply with State and County reopening requirements.

4. Are independent contractors eligible to apply for a Reopen Montgomery grant?

Yes, if they incurred eligible Reopening Reimbursable expenses in order to comply with Maryland and Montgomery County COVID-19 health regulations, they would be eligible to apply.

5. Are 'essential' businesses that never closed during the health crisis eligible to apply for a Reopen Montgomery grant?

Yes, if an essential business incurred expenses related to reopening/opening their business for more on-site or face-to-face meetings and interactions with the public in order to comply with State and County COVID-19 health regulations, they would be eligible to apply.

6. If a business/organization is not yet allowed to reopen because of the Phase of Reopening the County is in, can they request reimbursement now for expenses related to reopening that they anticipate they will have in the future when they are allowed to reopen?

Yes, but there is no guarantee that an applicant will be selected through the lottery system or approved if selected.

7. Will family childcare providers be eligible for this grant?

Yes, all nonprofit and for-profit businesses with 100 or fewer employees whose primary place of business is Montgomery County are eligible to apply for a Reopen Montgomery grant. However, applicants must attest that they have not used, and will not use, funds received from other Montgomery County grant programs for reopening expenses.

8. Will nonprofits and small businesses receiving subcontractor grants for HHS funded programs be eligible to apply for the grant program?

All nonprofits and for-profit businesses with 100 or fewer employees whose principal place of business is Montgomery County and have incurred eligible reopening expenses may apply for a Reopen Montgomery grant.

9. Are local outlets of national retail and restaurant chains eligible to apply?

National retail chains are not eligible for this program.

10. Are locally owned franchises of national retail chain eligible?

Yes, if the franchise is locally owned, they are eligible for this program.

11. Can youth services apply to this grant?

All nonprofit and for-profit businesses with 100 or fewer employees whose principal place of business is Montgomery County and have incurred eligible reopening expenses are eligible.

12. Are all nonprofits eligible for assistance?

All nonprofits with 100 or fewer employees whose primary place of business is Montgomery County and have eligible reopening expenses may apply for a Reopen Montgomery grant.

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

If the business meets the eligibility requirements for this grant, then they may apply for a Reopen Montgomery grant.

14. Are there any restrictions for my industry?

There are no restrictions on industries; any business can apply as long as they meet the eligibility requirements.

15. If I have locations inside and outside of Montgomery County, how can I prove more than 50% of my employees work in the County.

Businesses that have locations outside of Montgomery County will be required to provide a "Certified Payroll Report", signed and dated by an authorized officer of the company, meaning a list that includes for each employee on its payroll, a unique employee/position identifier number, the employee's initials, and zip code of business location at which they work. A sample of what this would look like is provided below:

Certified Payroll Report – EXAMPLE

ABC Company

Employee Number	Initials	Full or Part Time	Zip Code of Work Location	Montgomery Co (Yes/No)
02234	ADF	Full	20850	Yes
02345	EMZ	Full	20850	Yes
01256	FDF	Part	22204	No
01378	GFL	Full	22204	No
02685	LEB	Part	20850	Yes
01789	GCC	Full	22204	No
02653	MJB	Full	20850	Yes
02294	JMH	Part	20850	Yes
01742	MKB	Full	22204	No
02912	JEO	Full	20850	Yes

Total company Full-time equivalents (FTE): 8.5

Total Montgomery County FTEs: 5.0

I certify that the information in this report is true and accurate:

Jane Q. Doe, Chief Financial Officer 8/1/2020

Name, Title

Date

16. If I have locations inside and outside of Montgomery County, how can I prove more than 50% of my gross sales come from the Montgomery County location(s).

Proof would consist of profit and loss statements broken down by location or sales tax reports broken down by location.

17. What time period is needed for the report that shows 51% of gross sales come from Montgomery County?

The P&L statements or sales tax reports broken down by location should be at least the most recent 12-month period (if the *business* has been in business at least one year) or the most recent quarter (if the business has been in business less than a year).

REIMBURSEMENT OF ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES – GUIDELINES

18. What is the maximum amount for grant?

The amount for an individual grant is up to \$5,000 based on actual, verifiable expenditures.

19. What expenses are eligible for reimbursement from the Reopening Montgomery grant program?

Expenses incurred to comply with State and County reopening requirements such as:

- Personal Protective Equipment (face masks, face shields, gloves, thermometer, etc.)
- Materials to create Barriers, Dividers, Protected Areas
- Contactless Payment System
- Cleaning Supplies (disinfectant, hand sanitizer, hand sanitizer dispenser, sanitary wipes, etc.)
- Signage (indoor/outdoor instructions, floor decals, etc.)
- Outdoor Furniture (tables, chairs, roping, stanchions, fencing, etc.)
- Disposable Food Containers/Utensils
- Infrastructure improvements (HVAC system upgrades, etc.)

20. Are costs associated with training staff on new health/safety requirements eligible Reopening expenses?

No, unless a business hired an outside firm to provide training on procedures and has a receipt documenting those expenses as being specific to the reopening health & safety requirements.

21. Would a contactless entry system or a contactless payment system qualify as a reimbursable expense under the Reopen Montgomery grant program?

Yes, that would be considered an infrastructure improvement supporting the health requirements for reopening.

22. Can Reopen Montgomery grants be used for businesses/organizations that are maintaining social distancing, i.e., for teleworking, enhanced software, Zoom subscription, etc. costs?

No. The Reopen Montgomery program was specifically created to reimburse businesses and non-profit organizations for expenses incurred to **reopen** their businesses and comply with the State and County's public health requirements.

23. Can a company request reimbursement for health/safety-related items that were purchased prior to March 16, 2020 but the credit card bill was not paid until after the March 16 date?

No, eligible receipt dates for verification must be between March 16, 2020 and 30 days following the date when the County enters Phase 3 of Reopening.

24. If my company has an account with a vendor (i.e., Staples, Costco, etc.) can we submit an Account Order Invoice for reimbursement?

No, proof of payment of that invoice would need to be provided. Proof of payment may be a receipt for the items purchased, a screenshot that online payment was made, or copy of a canceled check for the order.

25. I have an expenditure that is not on the above list. Will it be considered?

The County will consider other expenses if the applicant provides a written statement describing why the expense was needed to comply with State or County reopening requirements. Reimbursement is not guaranteed.

26. What are examples of items not eligible for reimbursement?

- Office supplies
- Rent and payroll
- Marketing expenses
- Inventory

27. What is the allowable time period for eligible reimbursable expenditures under the Reopen Montgomery grant program?

Reopening expenses must have been incurred between March 16, 2020 and 30 days after the beginning of Phase 3 reopening in Montgomery County in order to be eligible for reimbursement.

28. If a company has location(s) inside Montgomery County and outside the County, and can prove either 51% or more of the company's gross sales or 51% or more of the company's employees are located in Montgomery County, can they submit for reimbursement for items that may have been used at locations both inside and outside of the County?

If a company with locations both inside and outside of Montgomery County qualifies as a local business by confirming either 51% or more of the company's gross sales or 51% or more of the company's *employees* are located in Montgomery County, the company may submit receipts for reimbursement of items needed to comply with health and safety regulations required for reopening. The County's intent is to support costs related to reopening inside Montgomery County.

APPLICATION Submission PROCESS

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

Yes, you will need access to a computer since the application is online. You will also need electronic copies of your required documentation, including all receipts, if your application is selected for review via the lottery system.

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

Applications will only be accepted via online submission.

31. Do I have to purchase items in advance, or can I submit a quote?

The reopen Montgomery grant initiative is a reimbursement program. Applicants must submit documentation to confirm their purchase. Acceptable forms of documentation include cash register receipts, credit card statements and vendor receipts. Quotes for equipment will not be accepted.

32. What is the deadline for this grant?

Applications will be reviewed on a random lottery basis, a process that will continue until all funds are expended

33. When will applications be accepted?

The opening date for applications has not yet been determined. Monitor the [Reopen Montgomery Grant Program](#) home page which is where the application will be accessed when available.

34. Will the application be available in multiple languages?

A sample application will be available in English and Spanish. Flyers describing the program will be available in English, Spanish, Amharic, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Korean, and French. A list of resource partner organizations, who can assist in answering questions about the program and application form, will be posted on the [Reopen Montgomery Grant Program](#) home page.

35. What documents do I need to submit?

You will need to provide receipts for items purchased in order to comply with State and County reopening requirements. You also will need to provide a copy of your articles of incorporation or articles of organization (not required for sole proprietors). If you have locations inside and outside of Montgomery County, you also will need to provide documentation establishing that 51% of your revenue is generated in Montgomery County or that 51% of your employees reside in Montgomery County.

GRANT PROCESS

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

Once your application has been successfully submitted you will receive a confirmation email with an application number and a copy of your application. Please keep this information on file.

37. How will Reopen Montgomery grants be awarded?

To be fair and equitable, Reopen Montgomery grants will be awarded to eligible applicants using a lottery system. Batches of applications will be selected regularly via a lottery randomization process (versus a first-come, first-served system) so as not to disadvantage applicants who may need time to gather documentation for their application.

38. If I am selected for the lottery, what happens next?

You will receive an email that your application has been selected for review via the lottery system. At that point, you will have 5 calendar days to submit your itemized receipts and all other required documentation.

39. Do I need to register in the Montgomery County Central Vendor Registration System (CVRS)?

All grant recipients are required to register in the CVRS in order to receive payment. Contact customerservice@eepex.com for assistance with the registration process. Be sure to use the legal business name in your registration. Also include your DBA if applicable.

40. How long will this whole grant process take; when can I expect to receive a grant?

Applications will be approved as quickly as possible after all required documentation is received. You will be notified of your final status by email.

41. How will I get the money?

Checks will be mailed to applicants after final review and an applicant's successful CVRS registration. Be sure to provide the address where you receive your mail.

42. How can I check on status of application?

If your application is selected in the lottery, and you provide all of the required documentation, you will receive instructions for how to check the status. (need to talk to Chris about this)

43. Will my information be kept confidential?

Financial information is kept confidential. Businesses that receive grants, and the dollar amount of the grant received, are public information.

44. Will I need to pay the money back?

This is a reimbursement grant, not a loan. If you meet the criteria for approval and agree to the terms and conditions of the grant, you will not need to pay it back.

45. Is this a one-time payment?

You may be considered for additional payments if you receive less than the maximum \$5,000 grant award with your initial application. You may submit additional reimbursement expenses for consideration; however, you will need to submit a new application for the new expenditure request and this application will be entered into the lottery system.

46. Will this affect other grants that I am applying to?

You will need to check the terms and conditions of any other grants you are or have applied for; however, you cannot use Reopen Montgomery funds to pay for the same reopening expenditures for which you received other Federal, State or County funding. You are ineligible for Reopen Montgomery grant funds if you have used any other County grant funds to pay for reimbursable reopening expenses related to the public health requirements for reopening.

47. If I have additional questions, who can I contact?

Any additional questions should be emailed to: Reopen@montgomerycountymd.gov.