

SBAM CARES GRANTS FOR SMALL BUSINESS WEATHERIZATION

Frequently Asked Questions



Public Policy Associates, Incorporated is a public policy research, development, and evaluation firm headquartered in Lansing, Michigan. We serve clients in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors at the national, state, and local levels by conducting research, analysis, and evaluation that supports informed strategic decision-making.



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INTRODUCTION

This document answers questions likely to be posed by applicants for the SBAM CARES Act weatherization program. It will be updated frequently as new questions are submitted.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Q. What is the purpose of the program?

A. To reimburse small organizations and municipalities that add temporary capacity outdoors and to make it possible for those outdoor spaces to operate in colder weather.

Q. What is the source of funding for the program?

A. Funds come from the federal CARES Act that provided relief from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q. What organizations can receive funds?

A1. The following types of individual businesses are eligible:

- *Restaurants*, defined as an entity that meets the definition of “food service establishment” under MCL 289.1107 or are licensed as a food establishment by MDARD, excluding soda fountains, industrial feeding establishments, private organizations serving the public, rental halls, catering kitchens, theaters, commissaries, and food concessions
- *Bars*, defined as a business that holds any of the following credentials from the Michigan Liquor Control Commission: a Tavern license, a Class C license, or a manufacturer with an On-Premises Tasting Room Permit
- *Aerobics and sports class facilities*
- *Fitness centers and gyms*
- *Health spas and wellness centers*
- *Final-consumer, fixed-location retailers*
- *Banquet and event centers*

A2. Organizations that incur costs by creating temporary common spaces or amenities for winter outdoor operations of local businesses or for public use (such as new picnic tables, or a common area within a designated social district as permitted by 124 PA 2020). These organizations include:

- Local governmental units
- Private commercial or nonprofit entities

Q. What conditions are there?

A. Eligible entities must:

- Have all valid state and local licenses and permits necessary for lawful operation.
- Have been open for regular operations for at least six weeks prior to application, unless otherwise prohibited by law or public health order.

- Be headquartered in Michigan.
- Agree to comply with any state or federal audits.
- Not be in delinquent tax status.
- Have no more than 50 full-time equivalent employees as of August 1, 2020.

Q. How large are the grants?

A. For commercial property owners and municipalities providing common space for multiple businesses, grants of up to \$15,000 may be requested. For all others, grants will range from \$1,000 to \$10,000.

Q. How do I apply for a grant?

A. All applications must be submitted online at www.MiWinterGrants.org.

Q. Will I need to repay the grant funds?

A. No, not so long as the funds are spent according to the grant agreement.

Q. Who can apply on behalf of the eligible organization?

A. A person who has the legal authority to speak for and enter into agreements for the organization.

Q. When can I apply?

A. Applications will be accepted on November 18, 2020 from noon until 11:59 p.m. Late applications will not be considered.

Q. How will the funding decisions be made?

A. Grants will be awarded on a first-come/first-served basis, although there will be allocations by Michigan Prosperity region.

Q. What information must be included in the application?

A. The application must include:

- Name of applicant organization
- Federal employer identification number
- Name and title of person applying and attestation that the person is authorized to act on behalf of the organization
- Contact information including
 - Physical address
 - Phone number
 - Email address
- Brief narrative that indicates the purpose of the project, what is planned, and the expected capacity expansion
- Date on which all expenses were or will be incurred
- Budgets for:
 - Equipment
 - Materials
 - Delivery
 - Labor

- Self-certifications and agreements
 - Certification of compliance with Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Epidemic Health Orders and Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration COVID-19 Workplace Requirements
 - Certification that all state and local taxes are current
 - Certification that all required state and local licenses and permits are in good standing
 - In the case of a building not owned by the applicant, certification that the property owner agrees to the project
 - Agreement to cooperate fully with any federal or state audit that may be conducted of their grant, as well as any audit conducted by the grant administrator or its agent
 - Agreement to participate in public communications regarding the grant project

Q. Will I be required to submit with the application proof that I meet all of the eligibility rules?

A. No. For the most part, you will simply self-certify that you meet the rules. However, if your certification proves to be false, your application will be rejected. If you have already received funds, you must pay them back. You are required to cooperate with any audit of your grant that may be conducted.

Q. I already spent money for these purposes. Am I eligible?

A. Yes. Grant funds can be used for expenditures made from August 1, 2020 through December 30, 2020.

Q. When will I receive the grant funds?

A. This is a reimbursement program. You will receive the funds after you submit your grant report, including receipts for the expenditures. Payment may take up to six weeks.

Q. The equipment I need is on back-order and I won't receive it until after the December 30, 2020 deadline. Can I still get reimbursed for the costs?

A. Yes, but only if you pay for it no later than December 30, 2020 and have a receipt or paid invoice that proves that you did so.

Q. How do I submit my grant report and receipts?

A. All reports and receipts must be submitted on the same website as the application, www.MiWinterGrants.org.

Q. How long do I have to submit my grant report and receipts?

A. Reports should be submitted as soon as the expenditures have been made, since payments will be processed in the order that reports were submitted. To be eligible for reimbursement, all reports and receipts must be received by 5:00 p.m. on January 15, 2020.

Q. What has to be included in my report?

A. The grant report must include a brief narrative, scanned receipts or paid invoices, and the bank routing number and account to which the funds will be transferred. Receipts must clearly show the date of the expenditure, the items purchased, and the budget line against which they are being charged. You are also encouraged to include imagery such as pictures and videos documenting the completed project.

Q. How can the grant money be used?

A. All funds must be used in support of weatherization of outdoor capacity expansions or increasing capacity for carry-out or delivery service. No other uses are permitted.

Construction of permanent structures is not an allowable use; however, weatherization of an existing permanent structure is permitted. Specifically, the following uses are permitted:

- Upgrades reasonably necessary to increase capacity of carryout or delivery service; however, costs for vehicles are not included
- Construction or installation of a temporary outdoor structure, canopies, or tents for outdoor service, including any reasonably necessary materials, supplies, and labor. Outdoor areas must be ADA compliant.
- Outdoor cooking equipment
- Outdoor furniture and tableware
- Heating equipment and fuel
- Lighting for outdoor areas
- Security devices
- Equipment reasonably necessary to keep the outdoor area safe for workers and guests (e.g., shovels, de-icing materials)
- Equipment reasonably necessary to keep the indoor area safe for workers and guests that is reasonably related to the operation of an extended outdoor service area (e.g., no-slip rugs/mats, floor drying fans, heat blowers)
- Enhanced cleaning and sanitation supplies and equipment
- Installation of physical barriers and signage to implement social distancing

Q. What if my project costs more than expected? Can I apply for more funds?

A. No.

Q. If I have questions or problems with my application, can I get help?

A. Yes. Technical support will be provided through the online application system. Due to expected high volumes, phone inquiries cannot be accepted.

Q. As long as I get my application in before the deadline, does it matter when I submit it?

A. Yes. Qualified applications will be funded in the order received until all funds are committed, although a minimum of 10 grants will be available for each of Michigan's ten Prosperity Regions.

Q. What if something in my application is not allowed? Will the whole application be rejected?

A. No. You will be notified of the problem and given a chance to fix it. If you do not do so, then the entire application will be rejected.

- Q. How will I receive the reimbursement funds?
- A. Funds will be transferred electronically. For that reason, the grant report must include your bank routing number and account to which the funds will be transferred.
- Q. Some of the work may involve hiring a contractor to install the equipment, does the work have to be completed by the December 30 deadline? Would a contract to have the work done meet the requirements?
- A. Not necessarily. Expenses must be incurred by December 30. If the supplies are ordered and purchased, and if an agreement with a contractor has been completed, you may submit paid invoices for reimbursement.
- Q. When will I be notified that I have been awarded a grant for my project?
- A. You will receive an email notifying you of the status of your award within 10 business days of the date you make your submission.