

Philadelphia COVID-19 Restaurant and Gym Relief Program Q+A

1. Q. What is the [Philadelphia COVID-19 Restaurant and Gym Relief Program](#)?

This is the City of Philadelphia's \$12 million grant program designed to provide financial relief to small businesses located in Philadelphia that have been among the most adversely affected by the latest round of pandemic-related restrictions enacted in November 2020. This new program was made possible due to City Council's latest allocation of funding for small business relief in December.

2. Q. How do you determine what qualifies as a gym or restaurant?

To qualify for this program, a restaurant must have indoor dining. Both table service and counter service establishments are eligible as long as some indoor seating is available for customers to consume food—purchased from your establishment—on the premises. Food service must be the business's primary source of revenue. For example, a movie theater that serves food at the snack bar would not be eligible. A photo of the indoor seating area is required with application.

To qualify for this program, a gym or indoor exercise facility is a business whose primary activity and source of revenue is indoor physical fitness. This includes:

- Member-model gyms where members work out on their own
- Studios where customers attend classes such as yoga, martial arts, dance classes, boxing, fencing, and crossfit

A photo of the indoor exercise facility is required with application.

Recreational facilities that dually focus on entertainment and amusement are NOT eligible. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Bowling alleys
- Ice skating rinks
- Axe-throwing facilities
- Rock climbing gyms
- Batting cages
- Other indoor sporting operations that have an entertainment or amusement component

The following businesses are also NOT eligible: self-employed fitness trainers who serve clients in their homes or within another business that is separate from their own business as a trainer; physical therapy, occupational therapy, or rehabilitation centers.

Note: This answer was updated on February 4, 2021 to provide additional clarification for eligible restaurants and indoor exercise facilities.

3. Q. Can someone help me complete the application?

The City's Business Services Team is available at 215-683-2100 or business@phila.gov. Businesses can also contact [these partner organizations](#), who can provide free assistance to businesses who may need help completing the application, including language translation services and technological assistance.

4. Q. How much are the grant awards per business?

Grant awards are estimated to be up to \$15,000 per business, with an expected range of between \$5,000 and \$15,000. Exact award amounts will be determined after we have assessed the applications and total need.

5. Q. What can I use the grant money for, if I am approved?

If approved for a grant, businesses may use the funds as needed to continue operating, including rent or payroll. However, investments in outdoor winterization, improvements in indoor ventilation, and other COVID-related indoor physical space expenses or personal protective equipment (PPE) purchases are encouraged. Grant recipients must maintain records of their grant expenditures for 12 months.

6. Q. How do I check to see if I'm tax compliant?

Businesses can check to see if they're tax compliant at [this link from the Philadelphia Department of Revenue](#).

7. Q. I am not tax compliant and need to get into a payment agreement for my City taxes. How can I enter a payment plan?

The Philadelphia Department of Revenue is [offering flexible payments plans](#) due to COVID-19. Business can also email tax.clearance@phila.gov with the subject line "Restaurant & Gym Relief Program"

8. Q. What is a BIRT number and how can I find mine?

BIRT stands for the "Business Income Receipt Tax" and each business has an Account Number. (The BIRT was formerly called Business Privilege Tax or BPT.) Look at your City Tax Return for BIRT or Net Profits Tax from last year. This number will also appear on any bills or payment coupons you received from the Department of Revenue. It is a 7 digit number.

9. Q. I own multiple different businesses OR I own one business entity that has multiple physical locations. Can I apply for assistance more than once?

If you have multiple commercial locations in Philadelphia, you may submit one application for each eligible business location. However, you must be able to submit separate financial information for each eligible location in order to verify eligibility.

Note: This answer was updated on February 4, 2021 to provide additional clarification.

10. Q. Do I need to be a Philadelphia resident?

No, but your business must be physically located within the City limits of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

11. Q. If my business has subcontractors (that file 1099, rather than a W2), should they be counted in the number of employees?

No. For the question about the number of employees, only include W2 employees, including the owner and all full-time and part-time employees.

12. Q. If my business is new, can I still apply?

Businesses are only eligible if they were open and operating during the fourth quarter of 2019 (October 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019), and they meet all other eligibility requirements listed for the program. A business that was open for only a portion of the

fourth quarter of 2019 is still eligible to apply, but it must demonstrate a 25% decrease in revenue from the fourth quarter of 2019 to the fourth quarter of 2020.

Note: This answer was updated on February 4, 2021 to provide additional clarification.

13. Q. How many awards do you plan to make?

This is a \$12 million program. We won't know until the application period is closed and we understand the total universe of need.

14. Q. When will I find out if I am awarded?

Businesses should expect to hear about the status of their application by the first week of March 2021, depending on how many applications are received.

15. Q. When will businesses actually start receiving the money?

This will depend on how quickly we receive signed grant agreements from the approved businesses. If awarded a grant, checks will be mailed to the mailing address businesses put when submitting the application (if different from Business Address).

16. Q. For 2020 annual revenue, my books are not final. Can I submit a projection?

Yes.

TECHNICAL QUESTIONS

17. Q. I keep pressing submit and my application will not go through. What's wrong?

Scroll to the top of the application page and look for an error message. This should tell you what fields in the application you may have missed. If you did not fill out a field in the application, it will appear in a red color, showing which fields need to be answered.

18. Q. How can I upload my photos and W-9 into the application?

[Go here to obtain a blank W9 form from the IRS](#). You must submit your dated, signed, and completed W-9 in PDF format. You must use the 2018 version of the W-9 form. You can take photos of your documents with your phone and convert them into PDF format using these apps on your phone (for [iOS](#) and [Android](#)).

Note: This answer was updated on February 4, 2021 to provide additional clarification that businesses must submit the 2018 version of the W-9 form.

19. Q. If I need to come back to my application with more information, will my work be saved?

Yes, at the bottom of the application you can select "Save and Resume Later." This will save your answers to the application questions. NOTE: It will **not** save any documents that you have already uploaded.