



City of  
**OAKLAND**  
California

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News from: **Economic & Workforce  
Development Department**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**City, Main Street Launch Open Grant Program for  
Oakland Small Businesses**

***\$4 million in CARES Act Funds Available to Support Small  
Businesses Impacted by COVID-19***

*Oakland, CA* – The City of Oakland received \$36.9 million in State of California CARES Act funding. More than \$4 million of those funds will go to the **Oakland CARES Act Small Business Grant Program** to support Oakland small businesses that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The program anticipates distributing \$10,000 grants to 402 Oakland small businesses. Grants may be used to cover day-to-day operating costs, such as worker payroll, rent and fixed debts. The application period for the small business grants opened today (Tuesday, September 22) at 1 p.m., and ends at 5 p.m. on Monday, October 12, 2020. Online applications in four languages are available at:

<https://mainstreetlaunch.org/oakland-cares-act-grant/>

“Many Oakland small businesses that employ our residents and provide vital goods and services for us all have suffered greatly during the closures to combat the spread of COVID-19,” said Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf. “These CARES Act-funded grants are meant to help sustain the local, independent merchants that add so much to our community as they pivot to new business models for the pandemic and post-pandemic economies.”

Eligibility requirements:

- Be an existing for-profit business since March 1, 2019 with a commercial location in Oakland
- Be able to demonstrate adverse business impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic
- Have gross revenues under \$2,000,000 in 2019
- Have a current City of Oakland business license
- Have no City of Oakland life safety code violations
- Be in compliance with all County Health Orders and State Regulations
- Have not received a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan of more than \$10,000
- Have not received a grant from the Oakland CARES Fund for Artists and Arts Non-profits
- Have at least one, but no more than 50 full-time equivalent employees, including the business owner(s)

(more)

The following businesses are not eligible for funding through this grant program: Nonprofits, passive income real estate businesses, cannabis-related businesses, adult entertainment businesses, franchises, any business involved in bankruptcy proceedings or religious organizations (See FAQs for complete list).

Disbursement of grants funds to the selected recipients is anticipated to be completed by Friday, October 30, 2020.

The grants will help prevent displacement and closures of small businesses that contribute to the City's diversity, vibrancy and character. Distribution of the CARES Act grants for small businesses is through a partnership between the City of Oakland's Economic & Workforce Development Department and Main Street Launch. A trusted intermediary focused on equitable economic development, Main Street Launch is administering the Oakland CARES Act Small Business Grant Program.

"Main Street is looking forward to helping Oakland's small businesses at this critical moment in the city's recovery from the pandemic," said Jacob Singer, CEO of Main Street Launch. "By helping the City provide these grants to support Oakland's dynamic small business community, we collectively envision a time when we will all be able to gather together again in support of the businesses that make Oakland a unique and lively place to work and live."

To assist applicants, answers to frequently asked questions have been posted at: <https://mainstreetlaunch.org/oakland-cares-act-grant/> Support for technical questions is also available by emailing [oakfaq@mainstreetlaunch.org](mailto:oakfaq@mainstreetlaunch.org).

To align with the Oakland City Council's direction and equity goals, the funds will be allocated to prioritize both geographic diversity throughout Oakland, and districts containing vulnerable communities, as represented by the [Opportunity Zone-qualified and Opportunity Zone-designated census tracts](#). \$2 million of grants have been specifically earmarked for businesses located in Opportunity Zone-designated census tracts. These historically vulnerable communities were selected based on aggregated demographic characteristics of each tract's resident population as reported by the U.S. Census.

This is the latest CARES Act-funded grant program launched by the City of Oakland. Grant programs for [low-income renter and homeowner relief](#) and [artists and arts nonprofits](#) as well as an [RFQ to fund support for low- and moderate-income renters and homeowners](#) were announced earlier this month. Learn more about the \$36.9 million in CARES Act Funding at: <https://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/coronavirus-aid-relief-and-economic-security-cares-act-funding>

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