

New details on how to apply for a Louisiana 'Main Street' grant

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Louisiana has a new website for businesses to determine whether they qualify for COVID-19 relief grants and sign up for updates before the application period begins.

The federally-financed, state-run "Main Street" program allows certain businesses to apply for up to \$15,000 in grants to cover eligible expenses.

Louisianamainstreet.com asks six questions for business owners to determine if they are eligible for the Main Street program. Some of the requirements are that they have to be located in Louisiana, can't have had more than 50 full-time workers as of March 1, and they can't be a subsidiary of or owned by a larger company with more than 50 full-time employees.

Applications will be available on the website beginning July 28, it says. Business owners can sign up for updates after they determine eligibility.

State Treasurer John Schroder, whose office is managing the program, has advised businesses to gather documents in the weeks before the application period begins. Receipts will need to be submitted in order to be reimbursed for COVID-related costs, he said. A list of eligible expenses is here.

A call center to assist with questions launched on Friday as well, with extended hours to begin July 28. The call center number is 1-888-795-4947. It is currently open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

In the first 21 days of the program, businesses that did not receive a Paycheck Protection Program loan, insurance payment or Economic Injury Disaster Loan from the SBA will receive priority in the state's grant program.

If businesses received money from the PPP, they may also receive money from the Main Street program, the website says. Assistance received from other sources will be subtracted from their claimed amount on their grants, it says.

In the first 60 days, \$40 million will go to businesses owned by women, minorities and veterans, according to Schroder.

The nearly \$300 million program is being funded from an \$800 million portion of federal funds that were initially set aside to help local governments with COVID-19 costs.