

# Ingham County Sunrise Program Small Business Relief Grants

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### 1. Where do businesses apply?

The link to the application platform and all related grant program details is available at [www.purelansing.com/sunrise](http://www.purelansing.com/sunrise).

### 2. When will the application be available?

The application will launch at 9:00 a.m. Monday, June 28 and be open until 11:59 p.m. Friday, July 30.

### 3. How much funding can businesses apply for?

Grant funding levels will vary and are generally determined by the applicant business or organization's employment levels. Standard grants will range from \$5,000 to \$25,000. More detail can be found at [www.purelansing.com/sunrise](http://www.purelansing.com/sunrise).

### 4. Is the funding first come, first served?

Funding is *not* first come, first served. There is no inherent benefit in applying on the first day of the application period versus the last. All completed applications received within the application period will be considered based on the quality of the application.

### 5. What can grant funds be used for?

Similar to a number of past COVID-19 relief programs administered by the Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP), grant funds can be spent on a range of regular working capital expenses including payroll, mortgage/rent, utilities, maintenance, inventory and PPE and other pandemic-response supplies and equipment, and for the purpose of mitigating the negative financial impact of COVID-19 on the business or organization.

### 6. Who is eligible to apply?

A wide variety of for-profit businesses and nonprofit organizations in Ingham County with fewer than 100 employees are eligible to apply. A full list of eligibility requirements is available at [www.purelansing.com/sunrise/eligibility](http://www.purelansing.com/sunrise/eligibility).

### 7. Who will administer the grants?

Ingham County has selected and contracted LEAP to design and manage the Ingham County Sunrise Grants Program.

### 8. How are these grants funded?

The Ingham Sunrise Grants Program is possible thanks to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and more specifically the [Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds](#) included in ARPA. These funds are being distributed to every local and state government in the United States via a formula that considers population size and other factors. Ingham County is slated to receive approximately \$56 million, half of which is received in 2021 and the rest in 2022. Ingham County's Board of Commissioners authorized \$11 million out of the county's first tranche of funds for the purpose of small-business relief and economic recovery via the Ingham County Sunrise Grant Program.



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**9. What are the business application categories included in this program?**

There are a variety of grant categories as part of the Ingham County Sunrise Grant Program, including Retail/Goods/Services, Tourism/Hospitality, Restaurants/Eateries/Taverns, Nonprofits, Sole Proprietors and New Businesses During Pandemic (established since 1/1/2020). Two additional categories for Business Incubators and Childcare Providers emphasize capacity building and will likely be characterized by fewer grants at higher dollar amounts. Additional detail on grant categories is available at [www.purelansing.com/sunrise/categories](http://www.purelansing.com/sunrise/categories).

**10. How was the funding allocation determined for the various categories?**

LEAP has previously coordinated a variety of other small-business relief programs since March 2020 and has followed closely other state and federal relief programs, economic activity across the Lansing area and Ingham County and effects on specific industries, types of workers and populations. The sum of these insights contributed to the development of business categories and determination of initial planned funding allocation for each, with the input and guidance of Ingham County. The overall goal of this program is to address disparities, fill gaps and support the industries and populations who have been most harmed by the pandemic.

**11. Who can help me if I have questions with my profile or application responses?**

There is a built-in “Ask a Question” feature at [purelansing.com/sunrise](http://purelansing.com/sunrise) that will be monitored regularly throughout the application period. A diverse array of partner organizations and specific contacts can be found at [www.purelansing.com/sunrise/help](http://www.purelansing.com/sunrise/help) specifically to help you successfully complete and submit your application. The LEAP team has also developed a video tutorial series to assist applicants with understanding basic aspects of the application process, which can also be found at [purelansing.com/sunrise](http://purelansing.com/sunrise).

**12. How do I know which grant category I should apply for?**

The eligibility profile step in the application platform was built with specific questions to route applicants into the appropriate category based on the business’s industry or type of business, number of workers, business location and establishment date. Additionally, the uniform application module is required for all applicants and makes up the bulk of responses required. Once the uniform application is completed, it is saved with the user’s profile and can be used again if there is a need to shift an applicant into the correct category if they were to somehow end up in the wrong place.

**13. Are franchise businesses eligible to apply?**

Franchise business locations in Ingham County are only eligible to apply if they are majority owned by individuals local to Michigan. (insert: Corporate owned and operated franchises aren’t eligible to apply).

**14. Are home-based businesses eligible to apply?**

Yes, home-based businesses at an Ingham County address are eligible to apply. If the home-based business is a single worker firm or self-employed, it will fall into the Sole Proprietor category, regardless of business type. Similarly, if the home-based business was established after January 1, 2020, it will fall into the New Business During Pandemic category.

**15. Do I need to live in Ingham County to be eligible for this program?**

No, the business owner’s residence is irrelevant to eligibility, except in the case of a home-based business where residence and business location are the same. Geographic eligibility for this program is



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based purely on the applicant having a physical business location (including home-based) in Ingham County that generates revenue and employment (including self-employment / sole proprietors).

**16. Why are some categories described as “non-food”?**

Any business or nonprofit that primarily derives revenue from food or beverage service should apply in the Restaurants/Eateries/Taverns and not in one of the categories with (non-food) listed after it.

**17. What if I am a sole proprietor / one-person firm and also a childcare provider?**

Because of the scale of a one-person business, even though there is a dedicated category for childcare providers, a sole proprietor in childcare is encouraged to apply in the Sole Proprietor category to be considered against other similarly sized businesses in varied industries, rather than in the childcare provider category in which fewer grants will be awarded at higher funding levels for the purposes of capacity building for expanded operations.

**18. What if I am a one-person nonprofit?**

A one-worker nonprofit belongs in the Nonprofit category rather than the Sole Proprietor category, which will all be for-profit businesses of various industry types. Nonprofit consideration and additional application questions focus on mission and various other items less relevant for for-profit enterprise, so even as a very small nonprofit it is best that they apply in Nonprofit category.

**19. What if I am a one-person business incubator?**

A one-worker business incubator belongs in the Incubator category rather than the Sole Proprietor category, which will all be for-profit businesses of various industry types. Incubator consideration and additional application questions focus on business clients served and various other items less relevant for a specific for-profit enterprise, so even as a very small incubator it is best that they apply in Incubator category for consideration.

**20. What is meant by “underrepresentation” as referenced in Ingham County Sunrise Grant Program materials?**

“Underrepresentation” refers to specific demographics and populations that are represented within the businessowner community at a far lower rate than their respective share of the total population would predict. Underrepresentation for the purposes of the Ingham County Sunrise Grant Program is defined as businesses owned by Black, Indigenous or people of color (BIPOC), women, veterans, people with disabilities and people who are LGBTQ+.

**21. Why is consideration being given toward underrepresented business owners as part of the Ingham County Sunrise Program?**

Ingham County and LEAP recognize that the pandemic has not affected everyone equally, and research has shown businesses owned by the defined underrepresented populations suffered worse outcomes due to the pandemic. There is now substantial literature and data documenting the disproportionate impacts COVID-19 on BIPOC- and women-owned businesses across the nation ([University of Michigan](#), 2021; [CBS News](#), 2021; [CO](#), 2021). Similarly, workers earning under \$40,000 annually and working in industries considered “non-essential” or unable to shift to remote work were most vulnerable to employment shocks and were heavily disrupted by COVID-19. A large majority of these types of jobs are filled by the same identified underrepresented populations.



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**22. What constitutes a “worker” for application questions?**

The application uses the word “worker” in an attempt to more broadly include full-time employees, part-time employees, owner(s), seasonal workers, contractual workers, etc. that are regularly compensated by the applicant business or organization. If ever used interchangeably with employee, this broader definition is what is intended for the purposes of this grant program.

**23. What is the timeline for receiving grant funds through this program?**

LEAP anticipates competitive relief grant funds will be distributed in three tranches based on category: the first by August 31, the second by September 30 and the third by October 31. Full detail on the review process can be found in the Review Process and Scoring Criteria document at [www.purelansing.com/sunrise](http://www.purelansing.com/sunrise).

**24. Will grant awards be made public?**

Yes, as with all past relief programs administered by LEAP, all grant awards will be listed publicly as soon as they are finalized and ready to be announced by Ingham County, providing business name and grant amount in each case at [www.purelansing.com/sunrise](http://www.purelansing.com/sunrise).

