

CDBG-CVR Guidelines

Intro Paragraph

The State of Kansas, Community Development Block Grant – COVID Resiliency (CDBG-CVR) program has been awarded \$2.0 million from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Awards will be made to cities or counties to administer to local businesses for innovative solutions to become more resilient to pandemics like COVID-19. This is a competitive CDBG grant.

According to HUD, states should – “Utilize CDBG-CV funds as an opportunity to modernize facilities owned and operated by small businesses that provide vital services and goods to Low/Mod communities.”

Eligible Applicant

CARES Act funds will be available for a city or county in the State of Kansas, which are defined as “general purpose units of government.” Cities and counties previously awarded CDBG-CV funds in rounds one, two or three are eligible to apply for CDBG-CVR funds.

The cities and counties ineligible include Kansas City, Wichita, Topeka, Lawrence, Leavenworth, Manhattan, Overland Park, and all of Johnson County; and those that have a balance in their CDBG Local Revolving Loan Funds. These entities will not be eligible to apply.

Application Submission Requirements

Applications can be submitted online beginning **June 1, 2023** with an application deadline of **July 31, 2023**. Award notifications are expected to be made soon after.

Funding Amount

Maximum funding per county or city is \$150,000. All grants will be for COVID Resiliency Improvements and administration only.

Reimbursables

Costs can be used for business improvements that directly impact the resiliency of the business to a pandemic-like event or public emergency. Each expense must be documented with an invoice and proof of payment (receipt, bank statement or copy of check). Only improvements done after grant award will be eligible.

Procedural Changes

Procedural changes with CARES Act funds include, the processing of the grantee’s Grant Agreements, Request for Release of Funds and Certification (HUD-7015.15), and Grant Close-out agreements. Based on HUD guidance from April 13, 2020, the grantee can use electronic signatures, scans, or fax. These amendments would only be applied to awarded CARES Act funds. All other CDBG requirements apply.

Other Requirements

Other requirements of the CDBG-CVR are not fully described in this application. However, they still apply and include: National Objective Requirements, Pre-selection of Professional Services, Administrative Requirements for the Program, Citizen Participation Requirements (Public Hearings), Applicable Laws and Regulations - Federal Laws and Regulations, State Law Requirements, State Laws which may be available or applicable, Grant Definition, and Environmental Review Process. Details of these requirements can be found in the [2023 CDBG General Application Guidelines](#).

Cities/Counties must identify which community businesses will be utilizing these funds, how they will be using these funds, and provide that information in the grant narrative.

Application Rating Criteria

Should any document be missing, incorrect or otherwise have deficiencies we will contact the applicant for corrections. Applications will be awarded approximately on a 100-point rubric.

- **Community Needs and Impact - 40 Points**
 - Discuss the project need for the community and business and the impact it will have. This should include information that provides a clear picture as to the specific needs of the community and business that these funds will benefit. Provide information on how these benefits will impact the community and business.
- **Project Narrative - 30 Points**
 - Provide information regarding the scope of the project and how you intend to complete the project within the life of the grant.
 - Include information for each business that will benefit from these funds.
- **Project Readiness – 15 Points**
 - Provide a timeline of the proposed activities:
 - Implementation of new enhancements
 - Anticipated date of beginning work
 - Anticipated date of completing work
- **Project Outcomes - 15 Points**
 - How will you determine these projects are a success? Will there be any measurable outcomes? If so, what tools will you use to measure them?

Threshold Requirements

The applicant must meet all eligibility requirements and the application must include a public hearing notice.

Cities/Counties applying for these funds must identify businesses that would benefit and include information about those businesses in the grant narrative (i.e., names, type, and location).

Eligible Activities for CDBG-CVR

COVID Resiliency Improvements

1. For upgrades allowing businesses to remain open to prevent future closures due to community illnesses and health emergencies. May require a Preliminary Architecture Report depending on the scope.

- a. Any projects that include construction will need to include Davis-Bacon wage rates and potentially an environmental review.
2. Technology, hardware, and software upgrades including infrastructure, devices, and applications.
3. Ecommerce updates including online inventory management and website enhancements.
4. Professional development and training for business enhancements.
5. Other updates that can be directly related to resiliency improvements.

Eligible Grant Requirements

1. All awards are distributed as grants to cities and counties.
2. The National Objective is Job Retention and over 51 percent of employees must meet LMI per company.
3. Businesses with five or fewer employees (including the owner) are eligible to receive up to \$30,000 of CDBG-CVR funding.
4. Businesses with between six and 50 employees (including the owner) are eligible to receive up to \$50,000 of CDBG-CVR funding.
5. Maximum grant of \$50,000 per company.
6. For profit businesses only.
7. Company must have been in operation prior to March 1, 2020.

***Non-LMI communities can still qualify for this funding if not an entitlement community. The LMI requirement is determined by the business and not the city. ***

State Compliance Criteria

The following administrative and financial guidelines apply to the Kansas Small Cities CDBG-CVR program:

1. **Timeliness:** Grantees will have a signed contract with the state within 30 days of award announcement. Project implementation will be initiated within 60 days of the award announcement. Fifty percent of the money awarded must be expended in 90 days. All projects must be scheduled to be completed within 12 months of the project award date.
2. **Administration Allowance:** For the purpose of budgeting, applicants may not propose more than \$15,000 or 10 percent, whichever is less. CDBG-CVR will not replace any existing employee's salaries for administration. **NOTE:** No city or county employee, elected or employed, can separately contract with the grantee to perform any portion of the grant either through an outside firm or directly.
 - a. Commerce will release 25 percent administration funds after receipt of the grantee's signed state grant agreement, 50 percent after first drawdown of funds, 75 percent after 50 percent has been drawn and 90 percent administrative costs prior to receipt of close-out paperwork and clearance of monitoring findings.
 - b. For communities that hire grant administrators using their local procurement policies must pay for the administrators on the local side. At the time of closeout, those administrators paid with local funds will still need 5% of the grant monies held.

3. Professional Assistance: The use of professional services is governed by the provision of OMB Circular A-87 and applicable state, federal and local laws. The selection of services must be done according to CDBG procurement regulations if grant funds will be used for payment. Written agreements shall be executed between the parties detailing the responsibilities, standards, and fees.

4. Environmental Impact: All CDBG-CVR projects are subject to the Federal Environmental Regulations.

5. CDBG-CVR Policy when Applicant Discovers Error after Award Announcement:

a. In the CDBG-CVR application process, unless the State has made a calculation or procedural error, there is no provision to correct applicant error after grant award announcements. The State would be in violation of its own Program Requirements if any application were reconsidered.

b. In all cases, it is the applicant's responsibility to proofread and double-check the accuracy of the information submitted in the application.

c. The mayor/county commission chairman (chief elected official) accepts the responsibility that the information in the application is correct by signing the grant application submitted.

6. Kansas Small Cities CDBG-CVR Administrative Procedure for Request for Information:

a. Kansas Open Records Law

(1) All requests for information from the Small Cities (CDBG-CVR) program will be subject to the Kansas Open Records Law (K.S.A. 1983 Supp. 45-206 et. seq.). The Kansas law requires that all records CDBG-CVR ACT APPLICATION / 4 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT of a public agency be open to inspection. Kansas Small Cities (CDBG-CVR) applications are, as defined by K.S.A. 1983 Supp. 45-207, public records and as such are open for inspection, except as otherwise provided by the Act. All requests must be specifically made in writing.

(2) Copies of file information will not be made due to cost of copying, staff time and constraints.

(3) File information, such as grant applications, may be reviewed in the office during normal working hours.

(4) File information, such as grant applications, may be obtained for private off-site photocopying by use of a "sign out" sheet during normal working hours.

(5) Consensus rating information will be made available under the above procedures. Individual staff notes are not a part of the body of "public information" and, therefore, will not be made available [K.S.A. 45-211(a)(20)].

Technical Assistance

Communities can request technical assistance from Brandon Hutton at brandon.hutton@ks.gov or (785) 480-8554.