



# NEWS RELEASE

---

900 N. Stiles Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73104-3234, USA • Tel: 405-815-6552 • [OKcommerce.gov](http://OKcommerce.gov)

Media Contact:  
Leslie Blair  
Oklahoma Department of Commerce  
405-815-5241  
[leslie.blair@okcommerce.gov](mailto:leslie.blair@okcommerce.gov)

For Immediate Release  
June 26, 2020

## **Application Goes Live Monday for Oklahoma Business Relief Program**

(Oklahoma City) – Starting Monday, June 29, Oklahoma businesses will be able to apply for grant funds through the Oklahoma Business Relief Program (OBRP). Developed to help local businesses across the state overcome the economic challenges of COVID-19, OBRP offers vital funding for businesses that have suffered revenue loss due to the pandemic.

“We are excited to kick-off OBRP on Monday and get much needed funds to Oklahoma businesses impacted by the pandemic,” said Sean Kouplen, Oklahoma Secretary of Commerce and Workforce Development. “The Commerce team along with the Office of Management and Enterprise Services have been working hard to get this program launched quickly, but also to make sure this program runs as smoothly as possible for both the businesses and the financial institutions that are assisting with the application process and distribution of funds.”

Oklahoma businesses can apply for OBRP through participating financial institutions, which are listed on the Oklahoma Department of Commerce (Commerce) website. Businesses that have suffered a decrease in revenue of 25% from 2019 to 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19 may be eligible. Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis; however, at least twenty-percent of the program funds are designed for minority owned businesses.

Grants will be awarded to approved companies in the amount equal to two months of average total payroll with a maximum award of \$25,000. The funds may be used for business expenses for which the business has not or will not receive reimbursement from another source, such as other federal, state or city grants or insurance proceeds. A service fee of up to \$500 may be charged by the financial institution for businesses that are awarded funds. Award funds may not be used to pay the fee.

A list of participating financial institutions, as well as program details, rules and a pre-application form can all be found at [okcommerce.gov/relief](http://okcommerce.gov/relief).



# NEWS RELEASE

---

900 N. Stiles Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73104-3234, USA • Tel: 405-815-6552 • [OKcommerce.gov](http://OKcommerce.gov)

During the development of the program, Kouplen consulted with the Governor's Minority Business Council (GMBC) to identify and remove potential barriers for minority business owners. A key topic of discussion was to ensure at least 20% of the program funds be designated for minority-owned businesses, which corresponds to the percentage of minority-owned businesses in Oklahoma.

"The GMBC worked closely with Secretary Kouplen to ensure Oklahoma's minority businesses would have a fair chance to participate in the program," said David Castillo, GMBC Chairman. "We anticipate that the un-designated funds will be spoken for very quickly, and we know from the SBA PPP program results that minority businesses were not well represented in the first round due to many of the obstacles minority business owners face. We encourage minority business owners not only to apply for OBRP, but also to check the box designating your business as minority-owned, which may give your business a better chance at being awarded funds."

Minority business owners are not required to apply under the designation, but those who choose to check the minority-owned designation box will be asked to provide either a birth certificate, passport or tribal identification card.

The following is the schedule for the program:

- June 29: Small businesses may begin applying for the economic grants through participating financial institutions
- July 10: Application deadline
- July 17: Distribution of economic grants will begin

Further dates will be announced after the first round of applications for economic grants are received.

Applications sent directly to the Commerce by a business will not be considered for participation in the program.

###