

## **UPDATED LINK: New Grant Program Accepting Applications to Help Businesses and Nonprofits Hurt by COVID-19**

*\$15 million available from the new Job Retention Grant Program (JRG)*

**RALEIGH:** Businesses and nonprofit organizations in North Carolina that have experienced interruption due to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic could qualify for up to \$250,000 from a new state grant program, Governor Roy Cooper announced today. The Department of Commerce is now accepting applications for the Job Retention Grant Program (JRG) through the agency's website.

"The Job Retention Grant Program offers another way for employers hit hard by COVID-19 to gain some relief," said Governor Cooper. "This program aims to help employers keep employees on the payroll."

The JRG initiative is supported by \$15 million in federal COVID-19 funds, which the General Assembly appropriated for this use (S.L. 2020-80). Both for-profit and certain types of nonprofit employers may apply for grants through the program, which has a strict application deadline of September 1, 2020.

To qualify for a grant award, applicants must meet certain eligibility requirements, which include:

- The applicant cannot have participated in the federal Paycheck Protection Program, the federal Main Street Loan Program, or the state Rapid Recovery Loan Program.
- The applicant must have maintained at least 90 percent of the number of full-time employees in North Carolina at the end of June 2020 as it did as the end of February 2020.
- The applicant must have had a reduction in sales (in the case of a for-profit business) or receipts (for nonprofits) of more than 10 percent when comparing March-May 2020 to March-May 2019 levels.

Applicants are eligible for a grant up to 125 percent of two months of its 2019 average monthly payroll costs, up to a maximum of \$250,000. All applicants that apply and are eligible may expect to receive some level of assistance, but the actual amount of the grant will depend on the total number of eligible requests received by the program. If requests exceed the \$15 million that's available, then individual grant amounts will be lowered on a prorated basis.

The Department hopes to award grants by early October. All grantees will have to comply with federal and state reporting requirements as a condition of the grant.

The Department is conducting two educational webinars to support people interested in learning more about the JRG program and how to apply for funding. The first session took place Thursday, August 13 and had more than 100 participants.

**The next session will be held Monday, August 17 at 11 am. Registration is required to attend these hour-long sessions, and reservations are being accepted for the following dates by visiting [this website](#).**

More information about the Job Retention Grant Program, including access to the program's online application form, can be found at the Department of Commerce website at [nccommerce.com/jrg](https://nccommerce.com/jrg).