



# City of Winooski

Vermont's Opportunity City

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## COVID-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grants Program Guidelines **DRAFT 2**

### SECTION 1: GENERAL PROVISIONS

#### A. Introduction

In August of 2022, the City of Winooski allocated fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) from the municipal funds received through the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) for the purpose of establishing a nonprofit COVID-19 Recovery Grant Program.

#### B. Purpose

The purpose of the Winooski COVID-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grant Program is to help nonprofits meet increased demand of Winooski residents experiencing COVID-19 pandemic health, housing, and economic impacts. Nonprofits are facing years of sustained expense increases due to both increased demand and now increasing inflation. This grant program has been designed to address these issues.

Helping nonprofits meet the needs of Winooski residents in turn will help stabilize Winooski residents.

#### C. Funding Amount

The maximum grant per nonprofit from this program is \$10,000. If demand for this grant program is high, a smaller amount may be awarded than requested.

#### D. Grant Period

Grant funds shall be spent within twelve (12) months.

### SECTION 2: ELIGIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

#### A. Eligible Applicants

- Organization types:
  - Unregistered, unincorporated charitable or mutual aid organizations that serve Winooski residents.
  - State registered nonprofit corporation.
  - Nonprofit corporation with 501(c)3 status with the United States Internal Revenue Service.
  - Organizations with a nonprofit fiscal sponsor that is state registered or has 501(c)3 status.
- Organizations that have provided, are currently providing, or will provide services:
  - To Winooski residents related to COVID-19 impacts.
  - Related to food security, shelter, and distribution of COVID related health information will be prioritized.

#### B. Eligible Uses of Grant Funds

Use of the funds is not restricted (i.e., funding is unrestricted, and so can be used for general operating expenses), as long as the non-profit organization itself is eligible as described in 2A above. Examples of how funding may be used include, but are not limited to, capital purchases and support, equipment and supplies, staff salaries and benefits, indirect/soft costs, and all

other necessary expenditures required for a nonprofit entity to continue its services to Winooski residents. If the non-profit intends to pass through any or all of the grant, the sub-grantee(s) must be listed and a case made for the pass-through.

**SECTION 3: EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Criteria		Score
A. Demonstrates that requested amount is reasonably related to the service provided to Winooski residents	0 – Does not meet criteria 1 – Meets a need that isn't quantified or is hard to verify 2 – Budget showing spending on Winooski residents	
B. The organization made changes in response to COVID in service of Winooski residents	0 – Does not meet criteria 1 – Indirect benefit to Winooski residents 2 – Direct benefit to Winooski residents	
C. Services are provided to low-income, Limited English Proficiency, new American, BIPOC, immunocompromised, disabled, LGBTQIA+, neurodivergent, or other marginalized residents, or those who frequent Winooski and are unhoused.	0 – Does not meet criteria 1 – Serves one area of marginalization 2 – Serves more than one area of marginalization	
D. Leadership of the organization are from a historically marginalized community	0 – Does not meet criteria 1 – Staff are 2 – Board and/or top leaders are	
	<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	

**SECTION 4: TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

**A. Maximum Grant:** \$10,000 per eligible nonprofit organization.

**B. Mandatory Reporting Requirements:** Organizations will be required to document that grant funds reimbursed for previous pandemic-related costs or were spent on the pandemic-related purpose designated in their application.

- a. A six (6) month update provided in writing. A verbal report can be requested; AND
- b. Payroll reports; OR
- c. Purchase of goods, materials, equipment, fuel or services in excess of the same expenses in 2019, or that are clearly COVID-19 specific.
  - Copies of paid invoices and cancelled checks.

Other reporting than listed above may be accepted upon written agreement by the City. Awardees will be provided with contact information of the City staff to ask for alternative reporting. Options include but are not limited to giving a presentation to City Council, or providing a site visit to City staff.

- C. Authorization for Release of Information:** Application documents will require authorization from applicants to allow release of redacted application information to the Winooski COVID-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grant Evaluation Committee.
- D. Return of Grant Funds:** Grant funds should be expended within twelve (12) months of payment issuance. An extension may be requested. Any extension requests must be provided in writing, by email or hard copy letter. Extension requests are subject to approval by the Winooski City Manager. At the end of twelve (12) months, or extension period, any unexpended grant funds must be returned to the City of Winooski. Grant funds must be returned if the City determines that the Grantee has not performed in accordance with the terms of the award or has not met the conditions described in the grant eligibility criteria.

## **SECTION 5: APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

### **A. Application Format**

Applicants must complete and submit a Winooski COVID-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grant Application. Supporting documents may be attached.

### **B. Application Submittal**

The completed application and all required attachments may be submitted through our online portal at <https://www.winooskivt.gov/FormCenter/Administration-6/XYZ>.

### **C. Application Deadline**

Completed applications for the Winooski COVID-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grant Program must be received by October 5th, 2022, by 4:30 pm ET. Should further funds be allocated in the future, additional competitive funding round deadlines will be established.

### **D. Confidentiality**

Each paragraph of the application that contains confidential information under [1 VSA, Chapter 5](#) shall be clearly marked as confidential by the applicant. Such information includes, but is not limited to, real estate negotiations, pending personnel appointments, tax returns, trade secrets, and contract negotiations. Discussion of confidential materials that are exempt from public information under [1 VSA, Chapter 5](#) shall be discussed in executive session to maintain applicant's confidentiality. Confidential information will not be published in publicly accessible locations and only available for review to those responsible for grant award and management if needed.

## **SECTION 6: REVIEW PROCESS**

### **A. Competitive Process**

The funds allocated for the Winooski COVID-19 Recovery Non-Profit Grant Program are limited, thus the application process will be a competitive process. Grant applicants are asked to submit applications by a set date. The Winooski COVID-19 Recovery Non-Profit Grant Program Evaluation Committee will consider the applications and award amounts at their next meeting where they have quorum. The Committee will consider based on score rankings on the evaluation criteria. The applications and amounts they recommend for award will be considered by City Council at the City Council's next regularly scheduled meeting. Awards are anticipated to be made during City Council's October 17, 2022 meeting.

The Winooski COVID-19 Recovery Non-Profit Grant Program Evaluation Committee and City Council meetings are public, meaning any member of the public, include applicants, may attend the meetings. Meeting information can be found here:

<https://www.winooskivt.gov/agendacenter>

<https://www.winooskivt.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5645/Conflict-of-Interest-Policy-2022><https://www.winooskivt.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5645/Conflict-of-Interest-Policy->

[2022](#)

Should further funds be allocated in the future, additional rounds of competitive evaluation will be established.

**B. Safe, Healthy and Connected People Commission as COVID-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grant Program Evaluation Committee to Review Applications and Make Recommendations**

The City of Winooski has established the Safe, Healthy and Connected People Commission as the COVID-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grant Evaluation Committee for the Program. All Program applications shall be reviewed by the COVID-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grant Program Evaluation Committee on a competitive basis.

1. The Committee shall meet at their first regular meeting following the deadline to submit applications to review and act on grant requests. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the members.
2. During its review, the Committee may recommend adjustments to the grant amount being requested by the applicant and it shall clearly communicate the recommended terms to City Council.
3. The Committee will consider availability of funds and evaluation criteria score (Section 3) in making determinations.
4. Information that may identify the applicant will be redacted by City staff to the furthest extent possible prior to sharing the applications with the Evaluation Committee.
5. Committee members shall recuse themselves from deliberations in the case of conflict of interest per the [Winooski City Council Conflict of Interest Policy](#).
6. For each grant application, the Evaluation Committee will make one of the following recommendations to City Council:
  - a. Approve grant
  - b. Approve reduced grant amount
  - c. Deny grant
  - d. Table grant: pending further information from the applicant, or pending further program funds becoming available.
7. Upon completion of its review, the Committee shall vote whether or not to approve the grant request or to table the grant pending further information or availability of funds. If the Committee votes to recommend approval or denial of the grant, the recommendation will be submitted to City Council for its action. If the grant is tabled, no recommendation will be forwarded to City Council.
8. In accordance with [I.V.S.A. § 313](#) review of grant applications containing any confidential financial information by the Committee will be conducted in executive session.

**C. Winooski City Council Decision**

1. A Committee recommendation regarding Winooski COVID-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grant Program applications shall be considered at the next City Council meeting following the receipt of the Evaluation Committee's recommendation, subject to the discretion of Council. Award decisions are expected at their October 17, 2022 meeting.

2. In accordance with [V.S.A. § 313](#), review of any financial details of grant applicants by City Council, if necessary, will be conducted in executive session.
3. The Committee's role is that of an advisory body. Thus it has no authority to give permission on behalf of the City for outside action. Its vote is a recommendation only. The final disposition of any grant application will be decided by City Council.
4. All Winooski COVID-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grant Program award decisions made by City Council shall be final.

#### **D. Feedback for Unsuccessful Applicants**

Applicants whose grant requests are not awarded may find information on why they were not awarded by reviewing the minutes of the Safe, Healthy, Connected People Commission meeting and the City Council meeting where their applications were evaluated. These minutes can be found on this webpage: <https://www.winooskivt.gov/AgendaCenter>. For help finding the minutes, contact Elaine Wang at 802-655-6410 or [ewang@winooskivt.gov](mailto:ewang@winooskivt.gov).

#### **SECTION 6: APPLICATION HELP**

Applicants who have questions about these grant guidelines, or need support with the application process, may contact Elaine Wang at 802-655-6410 or [ewang@winooskivt.gov](mailto:ewang@winooskivt.gov)