

STABLE FAQs

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Standing Together with Aurora Businesses Local Emergency Fund

The Standing Together with Aurora Businesses Local Emergency Fund (STABLE Fund) provides funding assistance to micro and small businesses located in Aurora in the form of “forgivable” loans to be used for business expenses associated with the expansion or retention of Low and Moderate Income (LMI) employees. Funds are made available through the City of Aurora’s Community Development Block Grant Program and administered through Invest Aurora.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the total amount of funding available? In total, it is anticipated that \$1.4M will be available for distribution in 2020. The release of STABLE funds will be phased with \$700,000 available on June 1, 2020 and the additional \$700,000 available shortly thereafter.

What is the source of funding for STABLE Fund Program? The STABLE Program is funded through the City’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, with the City and Invest Aurora serving as investors in the recipient’s business. As such, prospective applicants should give careful review to the Program’s federal record-keeping and reporting requirements. Such record-keeping/reporting documents will relate to documentation related to business operations, loan expenses, and as applicable, job creation/retention reports.

Must my business have experienced a loss of income due to COVID-19 in order to participate in the STABLE Program? COVID-19 business recovery is not a requirement, but applicants will need to demonstrate a need for funding and meet the requirements outlined in the application.

Is this a grant or a loan? This is a one-year forgivable loan which requires recipients to meet their HUD/CDBG eligibility factors (as stipulated on the application). Each month of the loan term will result in a 1/12th reduction of the principal until the end of the one year compliance period, where the loan will be forgiven in full, provided that the recipient has met all program requirements and is in operation. In the event a recipient has not satisfied the requirements, repayment will be expected from the recipient.

If I have received funding through local/state/federal programs such as the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) or United Way am I still eligible for STABLE Funds? Yes, you may still seek STABLE funds. However, funds requested under the STABLE program must be requested for activities that were not requested under other funding programs.

How do I apply for the STABLE funds? Applicants are requested to complete an online application at www.investaurora.org/StableFund/ or www.aurora-il.org. In the event that an applicant does not have online access, applicants may contact Invest Aurora for a paper application at Stable@investaurora.org, or pick up a paper application at the City of Aurora’s Development Services Center, 77 S. Broadway Aurora, IL. 60506.

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What is the application deadline? Applications are due by 5:00 pm on May 15, 2020. Applications can be mailed to Invest Aurora but must be postmarked on or before the May 16th deadline. No exceptions.

Who Is Eligible? (Please review the STABLE Fund application to view a map of Aurora's designated NSRA, detailed area median income thresholds, and a complete list of ineligible business classifications.)

Local Eligibility Requirements

- Must be located within the city limits of Aurora. Businesses located in unincorporated Aurora are not eligible.
- Must meet one of the following business definitions:
 - Microenterprise: a for-profit commercial enterprise that has 5 or fewer employees, 1 or more of whom owns the enterprise; OR
 - Small Business: a for-profit commercial enterprise that has 6 to 50 employees.
- Must have been in business at least 6 months as of the date of application. A case by-case review will take place for businesses that have been in operation for less than 6 months and were directly impacted by COVID-19.
- Must be in Good Standing with the City of Aurora with no outstanding fee's or violations.

Federal/HUD/CDBG Eligibility Requirements - applicants must also meet at least one of the following requirements):

1. Business is physically located within the Neighborhood Redevelopment Strategy Area (NRSA).
2. Business owners whose total annual household income, inclusive of all household residents, is 80% or less than the area median Income.
3. Business must create or retain at least one job position that is either filled by or made available to an LMI person.

What is the maximum amount of funding I can apply for? Loan amounts will be awarded based upon demonstrated financial need. Microenterprise owners may apply for up to \$15,000. Small business owners may apply for up to \$25,000. Actual loan amount will be dependent on information provided in the application.

What is the maximum threshold for Low to Moderate Income (LMI)? HUD defines LMI business owners and employees as those whose annual family income (inclusive of all household members) is 80% or less of the area median income as shown below. The income limits are updated annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Do I have to be an independent business operator to apply? No. The program is also open to national chains with local franchise ownership, however, business owners with multiple sites located within the City of Aurora's boundaries are restricted to applying for funding for only one (1) location.

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What activities are eligible for STABLE assistance? The following costs are eligible for reimbursement:

- Up to 30 days of operating capital for expenses such as, but not limited to, rent, payroll, inventory, utilities, etc.
- Additional expenses to be considered on a case by case basis.

Why do I have to share financial records? Invest Aurora is also collecting a description of your business's monthly operating expenses in order to understand its ongoing operating needs and how the STABLE funds will support it. Invest Aurora is collecting household income information to ensure our financial support is meeting the Program's CDBG objective of low and moderate income benefit.

When will I be notified if I was selected? Following the May 15, 2020 application deadline, Invest Aurora will qualify applicants and notify all awarded applicants via email (or regular mail if applicant does not have email) on or around June 1, 2020. A portion of the funds will be provided upon finalization of loan documentation with the remainder to be provided on a reimbursement basis. Applicants that are not selected or are disqualified due to ineligibility will also be notified at this time.

Can I apply using an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN) in lieu of a Social Security Number (SSN)? Yes.

Can I claim employee expenses for 1099 employees? No, 1099 employees are not eligible for payroll reimbursement.

Can a 1099 employee be used to attain low to moderate income eligibility? No, 1099 employees cannot be used to attain low to moderate income eligibility.

I do not currently have a DUNS #, can I still submit an application? Yes, you can apply without a DUNS #, HOWEVER if selected a DUNS # will be required before ANY funds are distributed.

How do I know if I am located in an unincorporated area of Aurora? Enter your address into the City of Aurora's "My Place" app to review your zoning status. A zoning status of "Outside" indicates that you are located in an unincorporated area of Aurora.

What criteria will be utilized to select awardees? A lottery system will be utilized to determine the process of reviewing applications. After the lottery is completed, underwriting will take place to award eligible businesses until the funding has been exhausted.

Who do I contact with questions regarding the application process? Please submit any questions or concerns you have to Stable@investaurora.org or call 630-256-3163 and a program administrator will respond to your inquiry. For assistance in Spanish, please contact the Aurora Area Hispanic Chamber of Commerce at 331-442-1617.