

Date: July 23, 2021

To: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager



From: John Keisler, Director of Economic Development



For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Business License Tax and Fee Grant Update**

On November 17, 2020, the City Council [approved](#) the Business License Tax and Fee Grant (BLTF Grant). The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the City Council with an overview of the City's new BLTF Grant.

Background

The BLTF Grant will provide financial relief to full-service, independently owned restaurants by paying certain business license taxes and fees charged by the City between the period of January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020. Approximately \$1.3 million is available for the BLTF Grant. The program will cover the following City taxes and fees for eligible businesses:

1. Business License Taxes
2. Parking and Business Improvement Area Assessments
3. Health Permit Fees
4. Fire Permit Fees
5. Penalty or late payment fees incurred in the eligible period for the above taxes or fees

The maximum grant available per eligible business will depend on the total taxes and fees each business was charged between January 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020.

Application and Award Process

The BLTF Grant application is tentatively scheduled to open at 12:00 noon on Monday, July 26, 2021, and close at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, August 30, 2021. The application intake and selection process will include the following steps:

1. Applicant visits the City's [Grant webpage](#)
2. Applicant reviews BLTF Grant program eligibility requirements
3. If eligible, the applicant completes the BLTF Grant Prequalification Form
4. City staff screens application for eligibility to receive BLTF Grant funding
5. Applicants who are eligible for a BLTF Grant will be required to submit the following documents:
 - a. Valid government photo ID or photo ID that can prove identity
 - b. W-9 Form Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification

6. City staff contacts approved applicants to review and sign a Grant Agreement and other pertinent documents
7. Once a Grant Agreement has been executed by the grant recipient and the City, staff will coordinate a grant award. The method used to issue a grant will be informed by the following three scenarios:
 - a. **Scenario 1:** If the eligible taxes and fees covered by the grant are all outstanding, each of the grant recipient's accounts will be credited the balance that is due for each account.
 - b. **Scenario 2:** If the eligible taxes and fees covered by the grant have been partially paid, the grant recipient's accounts with outstanding balances will be credited the outstanding amount. A check will be issued to reimburse the grant recipient for taxes and fees that have already been paid.
 - c. **Scenario 3:** If the eligible taxes and fees covered by the grant have been paid in full, the grant recipient will be issued a check that will reimburse them for the full amount that has been paid.

Eligibility Requirements

The BLTF Grant will provide grants to full-service, independent restaurants that meet all of the following criteria:

- Must have experienced financial hardship resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and State and local Health Orders;
- Must have had a City of Long Beach business license in the calendar year 2020;
- Must operate a full-service, independent restaurant as defined in [Appendix A. Grant Application Questions 1-4](#); and,
- Must not be in bankruptcy or permanently closed at the time of application.

Disclaimer

Submission of an application does not guarantee approval or funding for a BLTF Grant.

Equity Lens

There are several important strategies the Economic Development Department (ED) has implemented to promote equity and inclusion for the outreach, support, and reporting of BLTF Grant Program results. The following section highlights supportive services for applicants to ensure the resources for the BLTF Grant Program are reaching those business owners in need who have experienced the greatest economic impacts of the recession caused by COVID-19.

Application Assistance

Individuals who require assistance completing the online BLTF Grant Program application may call the City's BizCare Hotline, visit one of the BizCare Pop-Ups, or request that a BizCare Outreach staff member visit their place of business. BizCare Pop-Ups are outfitted with computers, internet, printers, and scanners. BizCare Pop-Ups and Outreach staff will be trained to help people complete BLTF Grant Program applications. Services will be available in multiple

languages, including English, Spanish, Khmer, and Tagalog. The following section summarizes BizCare support programs available to BLTF Grant Program applicants.

BizCare Hotline

Individuals can speak with a BizCare Hotline representative by calling (562) 570-4BIZ (4249). The BizCare Hotline operates Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

BizCare Email

Individuals can communicate with a BizCare Hotline representative by emailing 4biz@longbeach.gov.

BizCare Pop-Ups

BizCare Pop-Ups are located at various locations throughout the City and operate on the following schedule:

- Mondays, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Admiral Kidd Park (2125 Santa Fe Avenue)
- Tuesdays, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Michelle Obama Neighborhood Library (5870 Atlantic Avenue)
- Wednesdays, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Michelle Obama Neighborhood Library
- Wednesdays, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., The Corner Pop-Up (2640 Anaheim Street)
- Thursdays, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Mark Twain Neighborhood Library (1401 E. Anaheim Street)

BizCare Outreach

The BizCare Outreach team will be available for completing targeted outreach to diverse business owners to promote the program. Emphasis will be placed on areas of Long Beach that received a limited number of applications for grant programs that were previously implemented by the City.

Tracking and Reporting Equitable Results

In addition to providing targeted outreach, in-person support services, and partnerships with community-based organizations, staff will collect data that details the geographic areas where grants are and are not reaching and the demographic makeup of business owners that are applying for the assistance through the program. This data will inform business outreach strategies focused on ensuring that grants are equitably distributed geographically and by race/ethnicity and gender. Staff will translate all marketing materials into multiple languages.

Next Steps

The BLTF Grant Program is another critical economic support program identified by the Long Beach Recovery Act community outreach process, which involved feedback from over 30 community-based organizations. Staff will continue to provide regular updates to the City Council as this program is implemented and new resources are identified in future grants.

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Thank you for your support of this important program. For any questions regarding these matters, please contact me at john.keisler@longbeach.gov or (562) 570-5282.

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