MAYOR'S OFFICE OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

# Workforce Advancement Incentive Handbook

1 Public Square, Suite 100 | Nashville, TN | 37201

MAYOR'S OFFICE OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**The Workforce Advancement Incentive supports small businesses in building a skilled and competitive workforce through investments in employee training. Funding is available for credential-focused training programs that enhance industry-specific skills and result in recognized professional qualifications. The grant helps employers develop talent, increase retention, and support long-term business growth.**

For questions regarding this grant, please reach out to:


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nashville.gov/smallbusiness

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# Eligibility Criteria



In order to qualify for this incentive, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Have between 5 and 100 employees
- Be a qualified small business with a physical location within the Metro Nashville boundaries
- Training must be a formal internal program or a program provided by an accredited institution
- Training must result in a recognized credential that advances the employee's skills within their industry

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. Grant Details

**a. What is the goal of the Workforce Advancement Grant?**
The program supports small business through workforce upskilling and provides those employes
with opportunities to enhance their skills within their industry**.**

**b. Who oversees and administers the grant?**
The grant is overseen by the Nashville Industrial Development Board (IDB) in conjunction with the Mayor's Office of Economic and Community Development. The IDB must vote to approve the grant. Once approved, the Mayor's Office of Economic and Community Development will oversee the administrative process including contracting, reimbursement, and reporting.

**c. How much funding does the grant provide?**
The amount of the grant to each qualified small business shall not exceed $1,000 per full-time employee being trained for up to ten employees, with a maximum grant award of $10,000 per business.

**d. How is the grant awarded?**
The grant is awarded as a reimbursement. Recipients must submit documented expenditures for qualified expenses to receive reimbursement. Grants are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to fund availability as approved by the Metropolitan Council.

**e. Can I apply for the grant multiple times for different operations?**

While an applicant is eligible to apply for the grant multiple times for different operations, the applicant cannot apply in consecutive years.

# 2. Eligibility

### a. What is considered a "Qualified Small Business"?

A "Qualified Small Business" must meet all of the following criteria:

- Operates as a for-profit entity in the service or manufacturing industry (excluding prohibited businesses).
- Employs a minimum of 5 full-time employees and fewer than 100 employees globally at the time of application.

### b. What businesses are prohibited from receiving grant funds?

Prohibited businesses include nightclubs; hotels/motels; tattoo parlors; body piercing shops; cash advance, check cashing, and/or title loan businesses; pawnshops; adult entertainment businesses; automobile sales, automobile service, automobile repair, and/or automobile parking businesses; landfills; wrecker services; shops primarily selling products containing or used for consuming nicotine, CBD, THC or other similar substances, and businesses operating from residential property.

# 3. Use of Funds

### a. How can grant funds be used?

Grant funds shall be used by each small business for the sole purpose of providing training to employees through a formal internal training program or a program provided by an accredited institution. Eligible training must result in a diploma, certificate, license, or other recognized credential that advances the employee's skills within their industry.

**b. When must the grant funds be spent?**
All approved expenses must be incurred within the designated grant period outlined in the grant agreement. The grant period will typically begin on the date the grant agreement is executed and end on June 30th of the fiscal year when the agreement takes place. Metro Government operates on a July 1 – June 30 fiscal year. The recipient will have 15 days from the end of the grant period to submit expenses for reimbursement.

**c. What are eligible training cost?**
Eligible costs reimbursable by the grant include tuition or training at an accredited institution, as well as the costs associated with contracted trainers or instructors, training programs, equipment rental, classroom rental, textbooks, manuals, and other necessary training supplies.

# 4. Application Process and Requirements

**a. What supporting documents must be submitted with the application?**
Applicants must provide:

- A copy of the business license.
- Certificate of Existence or Good Standing.
- Details of a formal internal training program or a program provided by an accredited institution

**b. How do I obtain a Certificate of Good Standing?**
Certificates of Existence/Good Standing are issued by the Tennessee Secretary of State. The $20 fee can be paid online at the Tennessee Secretary of State's website.

**c. How do I apply for the grant?**

- Submit a completed electronic copy of the grant application in PDF format to the ECD staff listed below.
- Include attachments of all required supporting documents.

- Use the following subject line in your email: "Workforce Advancement Grant Application (Applicant Name); (Month/Year)"

ECD Staff Contacts:

- Jamari Brown, Executive Director: Jamari.Brown@Nashville.gov
- Justin Attkisson, Manager: Justin.Attkisson@nashville.gov

**d. Is there a deadline to apply?**
Applications are accepted year-round and reviewed as they are submitted. Grants are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to fund availability.

**e. How long does it take to process the application?**
Processing times may vary depending on the completeness of the application and supporting documents.

## 5. Reimbursement Process and Additional Reporting

**a. When can I begin submitting grant reimbursements?**
The grant agreement requires the grantee to document the cost of formal internal training program or invest into a program provided by an accredited institution. Once completed the grantee can begin submitting reimbursement requests for the approved cost.

**b. How do I submit for reimbursements?**
Once the grant agreement is active, the grantee will receive a **Grant Reimbursement Form** that is to be completed and submitted along with itemized receipts and proofs of payment for eligible expenses incurred. The grantee may submit reimbursement requests quarterly throughout their contract period or may choose to submit all expenses at one time. Regardless, the deadline for submitting reimbursement requests for the grant will be 15 days after the end of the contract (July 15).

**c. What is the process for reimbursement?**

The grantee will submit their Grant Reimbursement Form and attachments to the Mayor's Office of ECD (MOECD). MOECD staff will review the request, approve the reimbursement, and send a payment request memo to Metro Finance Department. Finance will process and remit payment to the grantee through their regular vendor payment process. The review process can take up to 10 business days and the reimbursement process will be an additional 10 business days.

**d. What additional reporting is required?**

Within 45 days of the end of the contract (by August 15), the grantee must submit an Annual Expenditure Report. This short report will summarize what type of costs the grant funds were used for, what the overall project achieved, and include pictures of the finished project.

# Approval Timeline

This timeline outlines the approval process for grant applications, along with estimated durations related to each step. Please note that these are approximations, and the timeline for each application may differ depending on required documentation and complexity of project.



**Application Review**
MOECD will review the submitted application, business license, financial statement, and Certificate of Existence or Good Standing.

**Up to 10 Business Days**



**Follow Up and Approval**
Once reviewed, applicants will be contacted by MOECD staff to discuss the training program and answer questions regarding the grant. Following the discussion, applicants will be notified whether or not they have been approved.

**Up to 5 Business Days**



**Contract Preparation**
If approved, MOECD will send application details to Metro Legal for preparation of the contract.

**Up to 10 Business Days**



**Contract Execution**
The grant agreement is signed by the grantee and authorized representatives of MOECD, Metro Finance, Metro Legal, and the Metro Clerk. Once fully executed, the grant is effective for the period stated within the agreement.

**Up to 10 Business Days**

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**Submission of Documents for Payment**
Following the contract execution, the grantee will need to submit A W-9 tax form, Short Vendor Application, and an ACH form for electronic payment to Metro Finance before receiving grant payments.

# Reimbursement Timeline

This timeline outlines the reimbursement process for funds, along with estimated durations related to each step. Please note that these are approximations, and the timeline for each request may differ.



**Submit Reimbursement Form, Invoices, and Proofs of Payment**

MOECD will evaluate all submitted expenses to ensure they qualify for reimbursement in accordance with the grant agreement.

**Up to 5 Business Days**



**Follow Up and Approval**

Grantees will be informed about all items that have either been approved or denied, and they will have the chance to validate or provide additional documentation. Once no further follow-up items are required, the grantee will receive a notification detailing the total reimbursement amount that will be disbursed.

**Up to 5 Business Days**



**Submission to Finance**

MOECD submits a payment request to the Finance Department. Following their own evaluation of the request, the Finance Department returns it to the Mayor's Office for approval concerning the disbursement of funds.

**Up to 10 Business Days**



**Request Processed for Payment**

Once the Finance Department obtains all necessary approvals from the Mayor's Office, the payment request will be scheduled. Depending on the volume of other pending payments, this process may take between 5 and 15 days.

**Up to 15 Business Days**

# Terms and Conditions

These terms and conditions apply to the Workforce Advancement Incentive and are listed here for your review. A signed acknowledgement of these terms and conditions must be submitted as part of the application

A. All applications and supporting documents submitted are subject to TN Code § 10-7-503 regarding the Tennessee Public Records Act.

B. The following businesses are ineligible for the Workforce Advancement Incentive:

- Nightclubs; hotels/motels; tattoo parlors; body piercing shops; cash advance, check cashing, and/or title loan businesses; pawnshops; adult entertainment businesses; automobile sales, automobile service, automobile repair, and/or automobile parking businesses; landfills; wrecker services; shops primarily selling products containing or used for consuming nicotine, CBD, THC< or other similar substances, and businesses operating from residential property.

C. Eligible costs reimbursable by the grant include tuition or training at an accredited institution, as well as the costs associated with contracted trainers or instructors, training programs, equipment rental, classroom rental, textbooks, manuals, and other necessary training supplies.

D. The max funding that can be reimbursed for each award is $10,000, not to exceed $1,000 per employee.

E. Grant funds must be used for the sole purpose of providing training to employees through a formal internal training program or a program provided by an accredited institution. Training under this grant must result in a diploma, certificate, license, or other recognized credential that advances the employee's skills within the industry.

F. All invoices submitted for reimbursement must also show receipt of payment. Check, card, or electronic payments are allowed. No cash payments will be accepted.

G. A qualified business to receive this award must operate as a for-profit entity in the service or manufacturing industry and must employ a minimum of 5 full-time employees and fewer than 100 employees globally at the time of application.

H. Employees eligible to receive training under this grant must be W2 employees, which includes owners/operators. Contractors employed under a 1099 are not eligible.

# Reimbursement Form

**Mayor's Office of Economic and Community Development**

Property Investment Grant Reimbursement Form

| Grantee Information (as stated in your agreement) | |
|---|---|
| **Name** | |
| **Address** | |
| **Federal ID Number** | |

*Itemized expense records and corresponding proofs of payment should be attached and submitted along with this form via email to the MOECD staff listed below. Attachment files should be renamed to show date of expense, vendor, and total amount (example: mm.dd.yy.vendor.$$.$$).*

| Date of Expense | Vendor | Description of Items Purchased | Amount | Reimbursable Amount |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | 0.00 |
| | | | | 0.00 |
| | | | | 0.00 |
| | | | | 0.00 |
| | | | | 0.00 |
| | | | | 0.00 |
| | | | | 0.00 |
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| | | | | 0.00 |
| | | | | 0.00 |
| | | | | 0.00 |
| | | | | 0.00 |
| | | | | 0.00 |
| | | | | 0.00 |
| | | **Grand Totals** | $0.00 | 0.00 |

| Main Contact Information | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Name** | **Email** | **Phone Number** |
| | | |

I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the above is correct and the amount requested for reimbursement is in accordance with the contract conditions and has not been previously reimbursed.

Signature Date

Office Contact Information

Jamari Brown, Sr. Director
Jamari.Brown@Nashville.gov
615.862.4701

Lilibeth Leon, Manager
Lilibeth.Leon@Nashville.gov
615.862.0381

SAMPLE

# Annual Expenditure Report

Property Investment Grant
**Annual Expenditure Report**

*This report must be completed by a Certified Public Accountant or the Chief Financial Officer of the grantee organization, as required by the grant agreement.*

| Grantee Contact Information | |
|---|---|
| Name | |
| Address | |
| Number | |
| Email | |
| Grant Period | |
| Total Award | |
| Report Due Date | |

| Report Completed By | |
|---|---|
| Name | |
| Title | |
| Organization | |
| Email | |
| Number | |

***Section A: Total Project Investment***

*Use Column C to report the actual project costs incurred during the grant period, by category. The amounts shown in Column B reflect the planned investment from the original grant application.*

| A. Investment Category | B. Planned Investment | C. Actual Investment | D. Variance |
|---|---|---|---|
| Labor | | | $0 |
| Materials | | | $0 |
| Equipment | | | $0 |
| Professional Services | | | $0 |
| Other | | | $0 |
| Total Investment | $0.00 | $0.00 | $0 |

***Section B: Use of Grant Funds***

*Use Column B to report how much of your project costs were funded by the grant for each category listed.*

| A. Investment Category | B. Amount Invested From Grant Award | C. Percentage of Award |
|---|---|---|
| Labor | | |
| Materials | | |
| Equipment | | |
| Professional Services | | |
| Other | | |
| Total Award | $0.00 | |

*I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that the information provided herein is true and correct.*

Signature of Report Preparer — Date Signed

SAMPLE