

Question 1. What is the “Visit Ontario County COVID Relief Program”?

Answer: In accordance with the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (the CARES Act), Ontario County received a \$1,000,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grant to help the community build back stronger and more resilient from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ontario County Economic County Development Corporation (OCEDC) established the “Visit Ontario County COVID Relief Program” on behalf of Ontario County and is working with the Finger Lakes Visitors Connection (FLVC) to administer these funds to small businesses in the tourism and hospitality industry that have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Program will provide grants to eligible businesses to support customer and staff safety, improve, and expand business operations, and improve business resiliency.

Question 2. What type of support will the “Visit Ontario County COVID Relief Program” provide?

Answer: Assistance will be in the form of a grant of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds made to an eligible business applicant. Program assistance will not be considered where the amount of the required assistance is less than \$10,000, and total program assistance provided to a single business shall not exceed the aggregate amount of \$60,000.

Question 3. Who is eligible for the “Visit Ontario County COVID Relief Program”?

Answer: To be eligible to apply for the “Visit Ontario County COVID Relief Program,” you must be

- a small, for-profit business
- located in Ontario County, NY
- in the tourism and hospitality industry that was impacted by the pandemic.
- Your business must have 25 or fewer employees at the time of application
- Your business is looking to create new jobs, restore jobs or retain jobs that are at risk of being lost.

Question 4. I’ve never applied for a grant like this before. I’m not sure I can do this and don’t have the time – what do I do?

Answer: Our answer is simple thing about investing one hour in the workshop or a future zoom meeting or set up a special consultation. We’ve tried to make this really easy and have some experts lined up to help. We know you’re busy. This hour may be the best ROI you ever spent. See tip at the

Question 5. What is the timeline of the “Visit Ontario County COVID Relief Program”?

Answer: Applications for the “Visit Ontario County COVID Relief Program” will be accepted and awarded on a rolling basis, and are available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Question 6. How do I apply for funding?

Answer: Ontario County has hired a consulting firm – Ostrander Consulting – to get our business through what is somewhat of a complicated process. We know that your specialty is not grant applications, but it is the specialty of this firm.

Contact [Nichola Ostrander](#) or [Donna Scrivens](#) with Ostrander’s Consulting for assistance in applying for the “Visit Ontario County COVID Relief Program” or any of the other above-mentioned programs. Ostrander Consulting can help you gather the appropriate information and complete the necessary paperwork to apply.

Question 7. What other funding opportunities are available for my small business?

Answer: In addition to the “Visit Ontario County COVID Relief Program” outlined above, there are other funding opportunities available through the [U.S. Small Business Administration](#) and [Empire State Development](#). Schedule an appointment with Ostrander’s Consulting to learn about these programs.

Note: eligibility may differ across programs administered by the U.S. Small Business Administration and Empire State Development.

TIP: Invest an hour of your time to learn more. Finger Lakes Visitors Connection is working in conjunction with Ontario County Economic Development Corporation to provide one-hour long workshops on 12/6 and 12/13 in five of our communities in order to maximize the access to information about these grants.

Consider signing up for one of the workshops. For details or further general information call 585-394-3915 – Ontario County’s tourism management agency and we’ll get you the help you need.