

FAQs for Michigan Agricultural Safety Grant Program

MEDC COVID-19 RESPONSE

Michigan Agricultural Safety Grant Program

In response to the economic impact of the COVID-19 outbreak, the state of Michigan has allocated \$15 million in federal CARES Act funding to implement the Michigan Agricultural Safety Grant Program to support the needs of Michigan's agricultural processors and farms. The program supports the implementation of COVID-19 monitoring and mitigation strategies to protect agricultural employees and the state's overall food production industry.

When will applications be available?

Eligible applicants will be able to apply for funding beginning on July 15, 2020 with application information available at www.michiganbusiness.org/agsafety. Funding will be awarded on a first come, first serve basis to eligible applicants.

How much funding is available through these grants?

To ensure the broadest possible reach for the program:

- \$10 million in grants will be provided to processors statewide, with a minimum grant of \$10,000 and a maximum grant of \$200,000.
- \$5 million in grants will be available to farms statewide, with a minimum grant of \$10,000 and a maximum grant of \$50,000.

What sort of costs are eligible for the Michigan Agricultural Safety Grant?

Grants must be used to support agricultural processors and farms in Michigan in implementing COVID-19 safety measures to protect their employees and the state's food production overall. These COVID-19 mitigation costs include, but are not limited to testing costs, personal protection equipment, facility needs, increased sanitation costs, employee training, and upgraded safety procedures for farm-provided housing.

Will only full-time employees count toward the 10-employee minimum to be eligible for these grants?

No, any verified employee – including full-time, part-time, seasonal, migrant, H-2A temporary worker or contract employee would be eligible to count toward this minimum.

Can businesses apply for both agricultural processing and farm grants?

Applicants must apply as either a processor or a farm – but not both – and funds will provide grants of up to \$1,000 per employee to fund COVID-19 mitigation costs.

What time period do the grants cover?

The program will cover costs incurred from June 1, 2020, through September 15, 2020. Eligible applicants may begin applying on July 15 with application information available at www.michiganbusiness.org/agsafety.

Are costs related to building temporary/alternative/isolation housing for farm workers eligible under these grants?

Yes. Expenses for housing needs specific to COVID-19 incurred between June 1, 2020 and forward through September 15, 2020 would be eligible. This would allow recipients to use the grant funding for housing issues related to COVID-19, either to house sick workers or provide additional space to keep workers socially distanced.



How will the funds be administered?

Applications will be submitted to, and processed by, Michigan-based GreenStone Farm Credit Services, one of America's largest rural lenders. GreenStone will host the application portal, complete an initial screening of all applications and supporting documentation and recommend applications to the MEDC for final approval and disbursement of the grants awarded. GreenStone will also provide a report to the MEDC of all applications that were denied in the review process.

Grants will be awarded on a first come, first serve basis until all funding has been awarded.

What are the eligibility requirements for the funds?

Applicants must be a farm or agricultural processor located in Michigan and meet the following requirements:

- A minimum of 10 employees in Michigan;
- Apply for either a grant as an agricultural processor or a farm – **applicants cannot apply as both**;
- Provide internal payroll documentation supporting the number of employees for which grant funds are being requested. This documentation should include the employee count as of the closest pay period end to the application date. Example: Application date is 8/25/2020, payroll support should be 8/15/2020 if semi-monthly or 8/21/2020 if weekly;

- Certify funds will only be used for eligible expenses;
- Provide proof of good standing with the state of Michigan, as applicable (Certificate of Good Standing);
- Verify that the business is current on all state, local and real estate taxes, or is otherwise contesting them in good faith;
- Certify compliance with, and agrees, to all other required MSF terms and conditions.

Is there reporting required for grant awards?

The authorizing legislation for the program requires reporting on October 15, 2020 to the Legislature and State Budget Office on the Agricultural Safety Grant Program's results, and that report will also be available on michiganbusiness.org/agsafety.

Can farms or ag processors that do not meet the 10-employee minimum requirement for the Agricultural Safety Grants apply for Michigan Small Business Restart Grant Program instead?

Yes, provided they meet all other eligibility requirements.

