



**COOK COUNTY**  
**BUREAU OF**  
**ECONOMIC**  
**DEVELOPMENT**



Cook County  
**Cannabis**  
**Development Grant**

# Cook County Cannabis Development Grant

Spring 2024

# Welcome from Commissioner Bill Lowry



**Cook County Board Commissioner, 3<sup>rd</sup> District**

**Chairman, Cook County Cannabis Commission**

## **Board Leadership**

Finance Committee (Vice-Chair)

Litigation Committee (Vice-Chair)

Rules and Administration Committee (Chair)

<https://www.commissionerlowry.com/about-commissioner-lowry/>

# Background

In 2022 **The Cook County Equity Task Force** recommended that Cook County establish a grant program to support cannabis related businesses that hold Social Equity Licenses, as defined under the Illinois Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act, to recognize the record of incarceration and exclusion communities of color have faced due to the War on Drugs.

Subsequently, the County committed to utilizing funds from **Cook County's Fund for Equity and Inclusion** (Equity Fund) to support the establishment of the Cannabis Development Grant program. Funds are included in the 2024 County budget.

# Program Overview

The **Cook County Cannabis Development Grant** offers **up to \$3.6 million** in grants to social equity-licensed cannabis businesses to support startup and operational business costs in Cook County.

To be eligible, businesses must have been awarded **licenses under the State of Illinois Adult-Use Cannabis Social Equity Program** and be committed to locate their cannabis-based business in Cook County.

## Four (4) types of grants, based on license type:

1. **Craft grower** licensees are eligible to receive **\$150,000** grants.
2. **Dispensary** licensees are eligible to receive **\$75,000** grants.
3. **Infuser** licensees are eligible to receive **\$100,000** grants.
4. **Transporter** licensees are eligible to receive **\$75,000** grants.

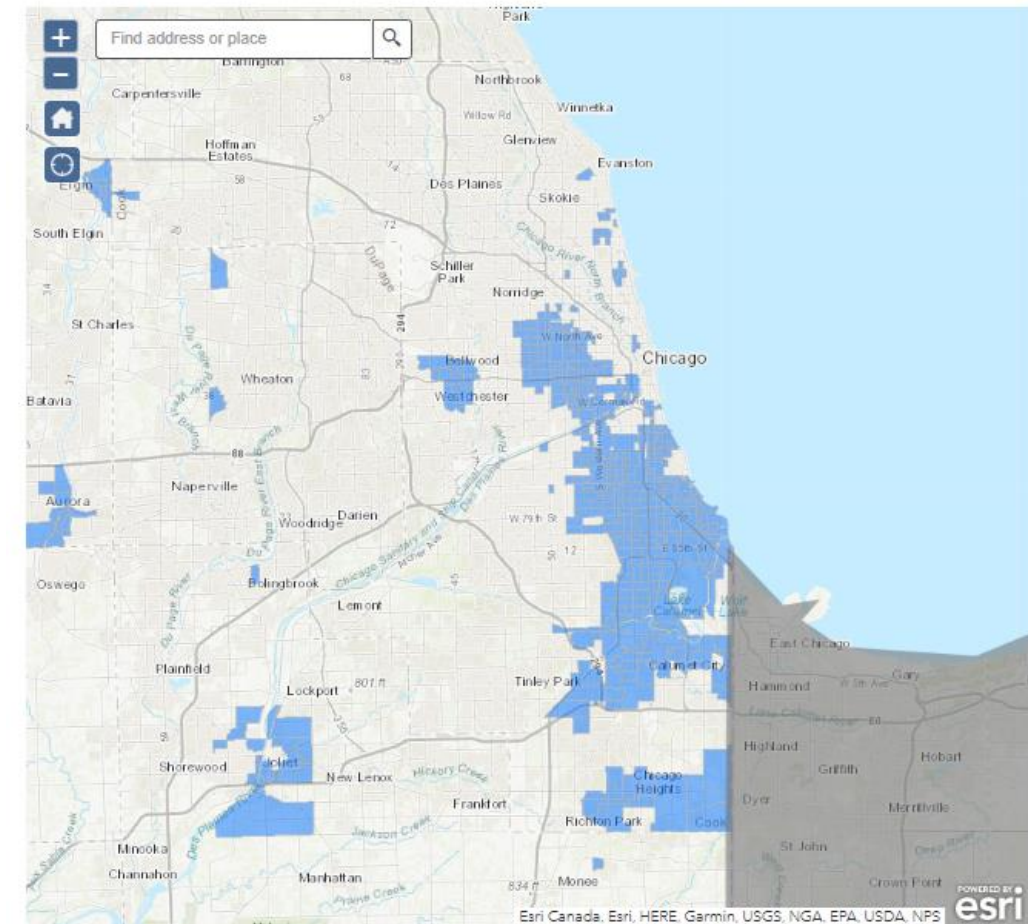
# Program Priorities

If the Program receives more eligible applications than it can fund, priority consideration will be given to:

- Businesses issued cannabis licenses in **2020** or **2021**
- Businesses that currently **operate in a Disproportionately Impacted Area (DIA)** or have committed to do so
- Businesses that are **majority-owned (51%+) by individuals who currently reside in DIAs**

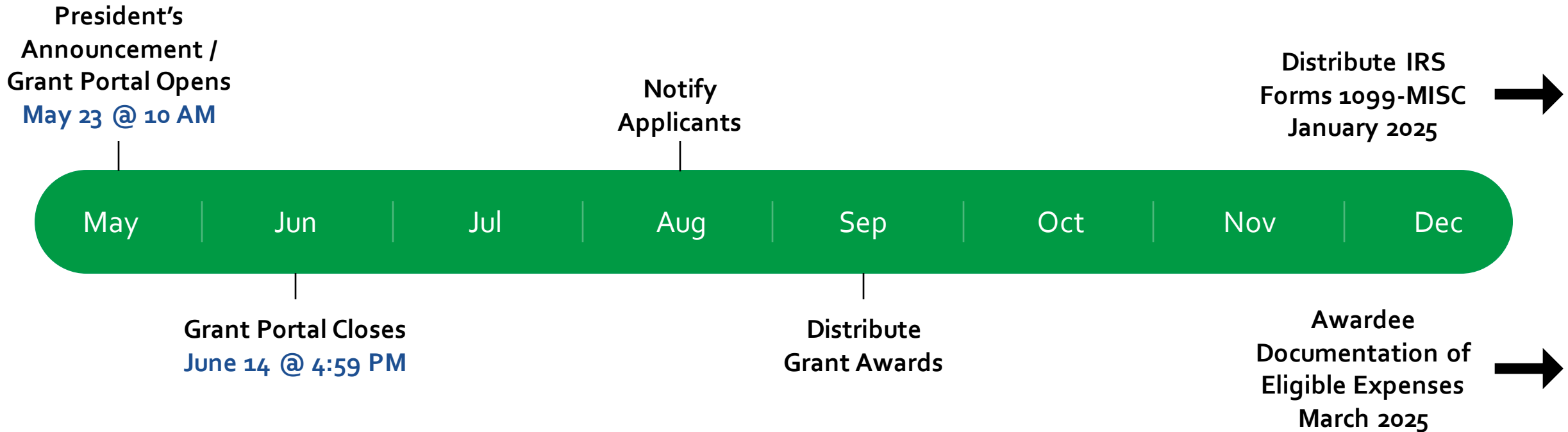
## Disproportionate Impacted Area Map

This is a map of Disproportionately Impacted Areas (DIAs) eligible for participation in the Illinois Adult-Use Social Equity Program.



# Program Timeline

Grant portal opens **May 23** and will remain open for 3 weeks.  
Distribution of grant awards is targeted for **September**.



# Required Documents

Required Documents	Purpose
<p><b>1. Valid Photo Identification for the Owner-Applicant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Driver's license</li> <li>• Permanent resident card</li> <li>• REAL ID</li> <li>• State ID</li> <li>• U.S. Passport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies the person submitting application</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Proof of Good Standing with the State of Illinois</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verifies the business is in good standing</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Filed 2022 or 2023 Federal Tax Return</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For corporations – IRS Form 1120 &amp; Schedule K-1s</li> <li>• For partnerships – IRS Form 1065 &amp; Schedule K-1s</li> <li>• For single-member LLCs – IRS Form 1040 and Schedule C or Form 1120</li> <li>• For LLCs filing as a corporation – IRS Form 1120 &amp; Schedule K-1s</li> <li>• For LLC filing as a partnership – IRS Form 1065 &amp; Schedule K-1s</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verifies the legal entity type and filing status</li> <li>• Confirms the business is in operation as of 2022-2023</li> <li>• Confirms ownership %s of all business owners</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Business Bank Account Statement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verifies the business has a bank account for depositing grant funds</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Valid Cannabis License</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirms that the business is licensed to operate a cannabis-based business in IL</li> </ul>

Guidance is coming about alternative documents for businesses that have not yet filed federal taxes

The CCC Development Grant's [Getting Started Guide \(GSG\)](#) provides more details about all required document uploads.

# Required Documents (cont'd.)



Required Documents	Purpose
<p><b>6. Consent for Disclosure Form</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows the State licensing agency to confirm information you provide in your application</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Valid Photo Identification for Each Business Owner</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Driver's license</li> <li>Permanent resident card</li> <li>REAL ID</li> <li>State ID</li> <li>U.S. Passport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies the individuals who own the business</li> </ul>
<p><b>8. Proof of Residential Address for Each Business Owner</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bank statement</li> <li>Credit card statement</li> <li>Mortgage statement</li> <li>Residential lease (current/unexpired)</li> <li>Utility bill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirms whether each owner currently lives in a Disproportionately Impacted Area (DIA)</li> </ul>
<p><b>9. Application for Extension of License Expiration Date</b> (if applicable)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verifies that an extension has been requested from the state licensing agency</li> <li>Relevant for Craft Growers &amp; Dispensaries <u>only</u></li> </ul>
<p><b>10. Evidence of Business Location</b> (if applicable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lease/deed for the business location;</li> <li>Letter of Intent (LOI) for the proposed business location</li> <li>Purchase agreement for business location</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirms the business operating address, if known</li> <li>Verifies whether the facility is located in a Disproportionately Impacted Area (DIA)</li> </ul>

## Additional Information for the Application

- Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- Business mailing address
- Owners' names, residential addresses & ownership %s
- How many applications your business plans to submit for a CCC Development Grant (no more than 1 for each license type)



# Terms & Conditions

1. **I am an owner of the business** referenced in this application.
2. **I am not an employee of Cook County, Illinois, nor is any member of my immediate family or household an employee of Cook County, Illinois.** I acknowledge that Cook County, Illinois government employees and members of their immediate family or household are not eligible for the CCC Development Grant. "Immediate family or household member" means the spouse, child, parent, brother, sister, grandparent, or grandchild, whether of whole blood or half blood or by adoption, or a person who shares a common dwelling.
3. **I am licensed under the State of Illinois Adult-Use Cannabis Social Equity Program to own and operate a cannabis-based business.** If I am applying for a grant for my dispensary business, my dispensary license is valid for operating a facility in **BLS Region 5: Chicago-Naperville-Elgin.**
4. For businesses that are open and operating: my business is located in and operates in Cook County, Illinois. For businesses that are not yet open and operating: my business will be located in and operate in Cook County, Illinois. **If my business locates outside of Cook County, I acknowledge that I must return the entire amount of the grant award to Cook County.**
5. **My business does not have an IRS tax lien or other liens or judgment(s) against it, and the business owners or partners are not currently undergoing bankruptcy proceedings.**

# Terms & Conditions (cont'd.)

6. I will use this grant, if selected, to cover only eligible business-related expenses for the business referenced in this application, and **within six (6) months after the grant award date, will provide BED with acceptable documentation**, to be determined by BED, that confirms the date, amount and nature of the eligible expenses. **If I cannot verify that grant funds were used for eligible business expenses, I acknowledge that I must return the entire amount of the grant award to Cook County.**
7. I acknowledge that the CCC Development Grant is governed under Illinois law and that **if I am awarded a grant, I will comply with all applicable state and local orders, laws, regulations, rules, policies and certifications governing any activities undertaken using grant funds** received through a CCC Development Grant, including but not limited to any compliance with prevailing wage laws.
8. **I will respond fully and accurately to the post-award impact survey administered by BED** within 12 months of the grant award date.
9. **All information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, true and accurate**, and I understand that a materially false statement willfully or fraudulently made in connection with this application may result in rendering the business that holds the cannabis license ineligible with respect to a CCC Development Grant, and, in addition, may subject the person making the false statement to criminal charges.

# Starting an Application

The **CCC Development Grant** web page provides resources to help you prepare to apply.



[Getting Started Guide \(GSG\)](#) provides details about all required document uploads.

[Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) about:

- Program Eligibility
- Program Priorities
- Application Process
- Post-Application Period
- Use of Grant Funds

# Help Desk Support

The **Help Desk** is available for businesses to ask questions about the grant application and program. Staff will respond via **email** and during **virtual Q&A sessions**.

## Help Desk: Email Support

The **Help Desk** will use an **email address** ([cannabis.oed@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:cannabis.oed@cookcountyil.gov)) monitored by staff to field a variety of questions, including:

- General questions about the grant program (e.g., eligibility, selection, application dates, etc.)
- Questions about the application requirements, including document uploads
- Inquiries about the status of a grant application
- Troubleshooting technology issues with the grant application portal (i.e., Smartsheet)

## Help Desk: Q&A Sessions

The **Help Desk** will also offer **two virtual Q&A Sessions** to provide support to grant applicants during the application window:

**Tuesday, 6/4, 4:00 – 5:00pm**

**Wednesday, 6/12, 11:00am – noon: [Register here](#)**

# Helpful Hints

Tips for submitting a **complete and correct application** include:

- Read all of the program **materials**:
  - ✓ [Getting Started Guide](#)
  - ✓ [FAQs](#)
- Gather all documents **before starting** your application
- **Set aside time** to complete the application in **one sitting** (you can't save it and return later)
- Complete the application on a **computer**, not on a smartphone
- **Ask for help** if you need it:
  - [cannabis.oed@cookcountyiil.gov](mailto:cannabis.oed@cookcountyiil.gov)
- Register & attend a **Q&A session**
  - ✓ ~~Tuesday, 6/4, @ 4:00pm~~
  - ✓ [Wednesday, 6/12, @ 11:00am](#)



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# Questions?

Program Details:

[cookcountyil.gov/service/cannabis-development-grant](https://cookcountyil.gov/service/cannabis-development-grant)

Help Desk: [cannabis.oed@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:cannabis.oed@cookcountyil.gov)