

# **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Fort Bend County Small Business Employment Incentive Grant Program (FY2021)**

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) will provide additional funding for Fort Bend County for COVID-19 recovery. ARPA dollars can be used for job creation and incentivizing employment. To that end, a grant program, “Get Hired”, incentivizes employment in small businesses. The program encourages adults to apply to companies, get hired, and stay hired, rewarding both initial engagement and employee retention. Additionally, the program rewards existing employees who refer applicants who are offered a position and who are retained.

This program is a result of input from local small businesses and area business organizations and is being developed and considered for implementation by Fort Bend County. The following draft outline and eligibility plan for implementation, administration and meeting the spending deadline of December 30, 2021 for the funds is for the court’s consideration and review.

## **Let’s Get Hired Incentive Tiers**

Three tiers are proposed in this program for consideration. Employers will determine based on hourly wages and/or salaries which tier they will engage for individual positions. This gives employers flexibility and allows for higher incentives for positions of management or higher hourly wage earners.

### **\$500 Get Hired Tier**

#### *Incentive Package*

- Let’s Get Hired Incentive: \$200
- 30 Calendar Day Incentive: \$100
- 60 Calendar Day Incentive: \$200

#### *Employee Requirements for Incentive*

- Applicant must show up to an interview and receive and accept a bona fide offer of employment from interviewer.
- Applicant must complete any orientation and/or training and work two weeks at the assigned hours as defined by employer to earn the Let’s Get Hired Incentive. (\$200)
- After 30 Calendar Days of successful employment as determined by employer (employee is still employed and in good standing), applicant receives 30 Calendar Day Incentive. (\$100)
- After 60 Calendar Days of successful employment as determined by employer (employee is still employed and in good standing), applicant receives 60

Calendar Day Incentive. (\$200)

### **\$750 Get Hired Tier**

#### *Incentive Package*

- Let's Get Hired Incentive: \$300
- 30 Calendar Day Incentive: \$200
- 60 Calendar Day Incentive: \$250

#### *Employee Requirements for Incentive*

- Applicant must show up to an interview and receive and accept a bona fide offer of employment from interviewer.
- Applicant must complete any orientation and/or training and work two weeks at the assigned hours as defined by employer to earn the Let's Get Hired Incentive. (\$300)
- After 30 Calendar Days of successful employment as determined by employer (employee is still employed and in good standing), applicant receives 30 Calendar Day Incentive. (\$200)
- After 60 Calendar Days of successful employment as determined by employer (employee is still employed and in good standing), applicant receives 60 Calendar Day Incentive. (\$250)

### **\$1,000 Get Hired Tier**

#### *Incentive Package*

- Let's Get Hired Incentive: \$300
- 30 Calendar Day Incentive: \$300
- 60 Calendar Day Incentive: \$400

#### *Employee Requirements for Incentive*

- Applicant must show up to an interview and receive and accept a bona fide offer of employment from interviewer.
- Applicant must complete any orientation and/or training and work two weeks at the assigned hours as defined by employer to earn the Let's Get Hired Incentive. (\$300)
- After 30 Calendar Days of successful employment as determined by employer (employee is still employed and in good standing), applicant receives 30 Calendar Day Incentive. (\$300)
- After 60 Calendar Days of successful employment as determined by employer (employee is still employed and in good standing), applicant receives 60 Calendar Day Incentive. (\$400)

In all tiers, if the applicant is not hired, no bonus is paid, and if the applicant quits or is terminated no further incentive payments will be made.

## **Employee Referral Incentive Program**

Existing employees may earn an incentive for referring applicants to their companies for employment.

### **Employee Referral Program \$400**

#### *Employee Referral Incentive*

- \$400 paid at completion of 90 Calendar Days

#### *Requirements For Incentive*

- Employee is currently employed and in good standing.
- Owners and managers are not eligible for the referral incentive.
- If the current employee is terminated or voluntarily quits before 90 Calendar Days, no incentive will be paid.

## **Eligibility & Grant Criteria**

**Businesses and Non-Profit Organizations are eligible for this program.**

The business or organization is considered active when they have met at two of the following criteria:

- Completed required registrations if applicable, with the local, state and/or federal government (e.g., DBA registration, obtains a business license, Articles of Incorporation)
- AND at least one of the following:
  - Has documented a transaction from the sale of a product or professional or personal service.
  - Has contracted for or compensated an employee(s) or independent contractor(s) to perform essential functions.
  - Has acquired debt or equity capital to pursue business operations (e.g., to purchase inventory, etc.)
  - Has incurred business expenses in the operation of a business.

### **Grant Eligibility**

- Business/organization must have been active, as defined above, by March 1, 2021.
- Business/organization must have annual revenue in 2019 or 2020 of no less than \$25,000 and no more than \$5,000,000.
- If business/organization opened in 2021, they may still be eligible to receive a grant so long as expected revenues are no more than \$5,000,000.
- Business/organization must have at least one (1) employee (or owner/employee) and no more than fifty (50) employees.

## Other Considerations/Guidelines

1. The expectation is that the business/organization would remain operational in Fort Bend County through December 31, 2024.
2. Participants receiving grants will work with program administrators to provide necessary documentation of incentives paid out of grant money.
3. Using the guidelines above for the selected tier, participants receiving grants will develop documentation and supporting materials to track and support employee payments (i.e. payroll register or equivalent).
4. Participants receiving grants may develop individual guidelines that best serve their business needs so long as they incorporate the criteria outlined above for each grant tier. To ensure program compliance, the incentive and requirements above must be adhered to, however, businesses may create ADDITIONAL criteria if needed to better meet the needs of their businesses.
5. Participants in this program are advised to seek legal counsel and ensure that they abide by all applicable employment laws and fair employment practices.