

## CITY OF SOCORRO

### ENTREPRENEUR & SMALL BUSINESS REGULATORY ASSISTANCE PILOT PROGRAM

#### SECTION I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define this economic recovery assistance program and to establish standards for implementation. Socorro-based Entrepreneurs and Small businesses that are existing or new businesses may be considered for financial assistance to help pay for regulatory costs in the City of Socorro (the “City”) if they meet the standards established in this policy. To be eligible, businesses or individuals must be current on all City taxes.

Assistance cannot be transferred as a result of a change in the majority ownership of the business without the expressed written consent of the City. It shall be the responsibility of the business to notify the City of any such substantive change. The City will use the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) funds to help cover the cost of this regulatory relief assistance pilot to certain qualified industries as outlined in this policy. This pilot is based on available funding in the initial amount of \$50,000 and is offered on a **one-time basis to qualifying businesses for eligible expenses incurred from January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022.**

The City is under no obligation to approve any requested assistance and the right to receive assistance through this program is neither intended nor implied. The City reserves the right to grant regulatory assistance on a case-by-case basis by the Grants & Special Projects Department / Economic Recovery Office upon review and approval.

#### SECTION II. DEFINITIONS

**Applicant** – A business that submits a formal application requesting assistance under the City of Socorro’s Small Business Regulatory Assistance Pilot.

**County Business Permit** – A business permit issued by the county of El Paso such as an Assumed Name Certificate.

**Entrepreneur Business** – A start-up business that is intending to open a new business within the city limits of Socorro. The entrepreneur business can not have more than 5 employees upon start-up.

**Industry Classification** – The general classification of businesses in the City of Socorro within this policy, is based on the North American Industry Classification System.

**Small Business** – A small business under this policy is a business that has 20 or fewer employees and is located within the city limits of Socorro.

**State Permit** – A business permit issued or regulated by the state of Texas that is required for a business to operate in Texas.

**Qualified Industries** – An entrepreneurial or small business that is home-based does not qualify under this definition. The list of Qualified Industries may be revised from time to time to reflect current market conditions and promote sustainable economic recovery. An industry classification list that further describes each industry is provided in Section III of this policy.

### **SECTION III. QUALIFIED INDUSTRIES CRITERIA**

In order for a business to qualify, it must be an entrepreneur business that has 5 or fewer employees, or a small business that has 20 or fewer employees, and must fall under an eligible industry classification as listed below:

- 11 Agriculture – farmed products for wholesale and retail within the city limits of Socorro
- 23 Construction – Contractors that register their business in Socorro
- 31-33 Manufacturers – any manufactured good or product
- 42 Wholesale Trade
- 44-45 Retail Trade – Any retail business that is within the city limits of Socorro, except for those that are not eligible as mentioned under Businesses Not Eligible
- 48-49 Transportation & Warehousing
- 51 Information Technology
- 52 Finance & Insurance
- 54 Professional, Scientific & Technical Services
- 71 Arts, Entertainment & Recreation
- 72 Accommodation & Food Services
- 81 Other Services

If a business is unsure which classification it falls under, it may contact the Economic Recovery Office for clarification.

#### **Businesses NOT Eligible**

Regardless of the qualified industry, the following types of businesses are not eligible for assistance:

- Adult businesses
- Motel facilities
- Automotive sale, service, or storage
- Junkyard facilities
- Metal recycling facilities
- Pawnshops
- Payday loan and predatory lending businesses

- Discount retailers / “dollar stores”
- Used appliance resellers
- Multi-family “for sale” housing/mixed-use projects
- Home-based businesses
- Used tire sale, service, or storage

#### **SECTION IV. ECONOMIC RECOVERY ASSISTANCE PROCESS**

Entrepreneurs and small businesses may apply for this pilot program to help cover the following types of business permits and licenses:

- Business and Vendor registration and business-related construction (General Building) permits issued by the City of Socorro,
- County business registration fees, and
- State business permits identified by the business owner as a necessary and operational expense may be reimbursed up to 100% or \$2,000 per business. Only expenses incurred between January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022 will be reimbursed. No professional licenses (e.g., plumbers license) are to be reimbursed.

The delivery mechanism of choice for this regulatory assistance will be ARPA funding, however, the City reserves the right to use any other source (City, State, Federal, Foundation, etc.) in the award of regulatory assistance.

#### **Application Form Required**

An **Entrepreneur & Small Business Regulatory Assistance Application Form** must be completed to determine eligibility. The form must be submitted with any business registration and vendor forms applicable for consideration and to process the application.

The City of Socorro staff is charged with reviewing and determining the applicability of this policy. In all cases, all regulatory relief packages will be limited to 100% of the business permit collected. No appeal will be permitted based solely on a determination of eligibility.

**Socorro Business Permit:** Entrepreneurs and small businesses that qualify as set out in the definitions and criteria sections may file an **Entrepreneur & Small Business Regulatory Assistance form** with the Economic Recovery Office for review and approval.

- If the applicant has registered before with the City of Socorro, the applicant should verify with the Planning & Zoning Department (P&Z) that they have all the required business registration documentation updated. Once the applicant has verified with P&Z, they must fill out the **Entrepreneur & Small Business Regulatory Assistance form** for review & approval of the form. Once the form is

approved, the applicant can submit it with its City registration and/or permit forms to have the fees waived.

- If the applicant is new or start-up business, the following list of documents will be required for review with the **Entrepreneur & Small Business Regulatory Assistance form:**

- Articles of Incorporation, By-laws of Corporation, or Assumed Name Certificate to verify existence of business in Texas
- Warranty Deed or Lease agreement – to verify ownership or lessee of property in the city
- W-9 Form
- CIQ Form (Conflict of Interest Questionnaire)

**County Business Permit:** Business registration fees may qualify on a reimbursement basis.

**State Permit:** Business permits may qualify on a reimbursement basis. Only state regulatory permits that are to open or maintain a business may be reimbursed. Permits tied to an individual (e.g., a person applying for a plumber’s license) are not reimbursable. Alcohol serving permits may qualify if the business is located within the Mission Trail or Socorro Historic District.

## **SECTION V. APPLICATION ASSISTANCE**

Interested applicants may contact the Economic Recovery Office at 915 858-2915, ext. 5016, or online via its webpage <http://ci.socorro.tx.us/economic/>