



DANIEL HORRIGAN, MAYOR



## Akron Safe Pledge

City of Akron – Akron City Council

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# BACKGROUND

The City of Akron prides itself on being a welcoming community, and now we need to continue to be a safe one as well. The Akron Safe Pledge Program helps visitors know their destination is taking precautions to keep everyone healthy and safe during the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. When your business pledges to participate in the Akron Safe Pledge Program, you join others in the Akron dining community committed to helping us stand out as a safe choice for visitors of all kinds.

Participating businesses will be required to attend a COVID-19 Safe Workplace training hosted by the Summit County Health Department and to complete a COVID-19 Workplace Safety Checklist to protect employees and customers. Businesses that complete all the pledge requirements will be provided with an award of \$2,500 to help cover the costs of maintaining a safe and protected dining experience.

This program is funded with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding; funding associated with this program will be dispersed on a first-come-first-served basis until the funds are exhausted.

The pledge program outlines specific recommendations below, in accordance with all local, county and state health guidelines, for businesses to help slow the spread of the Coronavirus:

1. Participate in the Summit County Health Departments COVID-19 Workplace Safety Training Program.
2. Audit your businesses current procedures using Summit County Health Department's COVID-19 Workplace Safety Checklist.
3. Increase facility cleaning and disinfection to limit exposure to COVID-19.
4. Reduce occupancy in common spaces to ensure compliance with CDC social distancing guidelines.
5. Encourage customer hand washing/sanitizing and social distancing.
6. Enhance employee protocols including increased regular hand washing, sanitization efforts, and social distancing.
7. Require or encourage the use of face coverings by staff and customers as directed by governmental orders.
8. Abide by applicable orders and directives issued by local, county, and state government public health officials.

## Core Activities of the Akron Safe Pledge Program



## Eligible Businesses

**The only business types eligible to fully participate in the Akron Safe Pledge Program include restaurants and bars.**

All restaurants, bars, and other eating establishments must also meet the following criteria:

- Business location is physically located within Akron, OH city limits.
- Business employs between 3 and 40 people, including the owner and any full-time employees, part-time employees, or individuals working under a 1099 or similar contractual agreement.

In addition to these requirements, a business will not be deemed eligible if:

- The business is associated with the gambling, cannabis, or adult entertainment industries.
- The business is a franchise.

## Use of Award Funding & Restrictions

Awarded restaurants and food establishments will only use grant funds for approved allowable costs to meet COVID-19 Safe Pledge Guidelines and workplace improvements directly related to mitigating the spread of COVID-19. This includes:

1. Investments to meet COVID-19 safety guidelines, such as but not limited to:
  - Purchases of personal protective equipment including Plexiglas shield(s) and facemasks for employees or customers
  - Cleaning products and hand sanitizer
  - Floor decals
2. Purchase or rental of outdoor tables, tents, umbrellas, fencing or other equipment for outdoor dining areas
3. Remote access equipment and connectivity, such as computers, software, printers, and/or online meeting platforms for employers to enhance social distancing
4. Other workplace improvements directly related to mitigating the spread of COVID-19 or to support the implementation of the criteria listed on the COVID-19 Safety Checklist

## Application Process & Requirements

Interested businesses should begin by first submitting an eligibility application to City Council electronically through the online Submittable portal located on the Akron City Council's webpage ([www.akroncitycouncil.org/akron-safe-pledge](http://www.akroncitycouncil.org/akron-safe-pledge)). If this is the applicant's first time using Submittable, they will be asked to create an account. Once an account is created, a business owner can submit an application, monitor the status of their application, and log back in to submit additional documentation as they complete the program's activities.

### Documentation Required for Initial Eligibility Application includes:

- Signed and dated W-9: The business name, business address, and Taxpayer Identification Number on the W-9 must match the application
- Copy of the businesses' 2020 Federal Income Tax Return

- Documentation to validate an applicant's Tax Identification Number (TIN):
  - For most businesses a copy of a federal tax return will suffice
  - If the business is a sole proprietor, then provide a copy of your 1040 Schedule C

All applications will first be reviewed for completeness and accuracy, as all information provided must be validated prior to moving applicants to the next stage of the program.

If an applicant passes the initial application review, they will receive a notice of approval via the email they provided in their application. This approval email will also include instructions on how to register for one of the Summit County Public Health Safe Pledge Trainings. Only the business owner is required to attend.

After the business owner completes the SCPH Safe Pledge Training, the COVID-19 Workplace Safety Checklist and sign a Beneficiary Agreement, the business owner should log back into their Submittable Portal Application to upload all requisite documentation within 30 days.

#### **Additional Documentation Required to be Uploaded Prior to Stipend being Processed includes:**

- A copy of the business owner's Certificate of Completion provided by Summit County Health Department
- A signed copy of the business's completed COVID-19 Workplace Safety Checklist
- A signed Akron Safe Pledge Beneficiary Agreement

After all application material has been submitted, City Council staff will review each application for completion and validate the information provided to ensure an applicant is eligible for a stipend. If additional information is needed or there are questions related to the information included in an application, City Council staff will reach out via email using the email address listed under *Primary Contact* in the application.

If the City does not hear back within 7 business days following a request for additional information, the city retains the right to reject the application from qualifying for the stipend.

#### **Distribution of Funds**

Once an application is approved and a signed beneficiary agreement has been received the City will begin to process an organization's stipend. All stipends will be awarded in the form of a check and mailed to the address in the application following final approval.

#### **Program Contact**

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