

COVID-19 Update: January 15, 2021

Reminders: All previous bulletins and other resources listed at www.gpcovid.com. Send any questions to bizinfo@greaterpeoriaedc.org.

Illinois Announces Relief from Some COVID Restrictions

On Friday, Governor Pritzker announced the lifting of some restrictions imposed on businesses to mitigate the spread of COVID. Since November 20, all of Illinois has been in “Tier 3 Mitigation,” the strictest set of regulations. With an improvement in positivity rates and an increase in vaccination, a few Illinois regions will be allowed to move to Tier 2 today (January 15). This includes Region 2 which includes Peoria, Tazewell and Woodford counties. Region 3 (Mason, Logan and Fulton) is still in Tier 3 but is predicted to move to Tier 2 by the end of the weekend.

Below is a brief summary of the major changes for businesses in Tier 2:

- **Bars and restaurants:** No change (no indoor dining)
- **Cultural/Entertainment** (museums, theaters, bowling alleys, etc.): May now open with precautions
- **Gaming:** May now operate with precautions
- **Hotels:** No change
- **Gatherings:** Limit of 10 people
- **Fitness:** Indoor classes now allowed, max 10 people
- **Organized recreation:** Limit to lesser of 25 participants or 25% capacity

The governor also announced that limited indoor dining would be allowed in Tier 1 and that Region 2 (Peoria, Tazewell and Woodford counties) are projected to be in Tier 1 by Sunday, January 17. Below is a summary of the major differences between Tier 1 and Tier 2:

- **Bars and restaurants:** indoor dining allowed; limited to 25 persons per room or 25% of occupancy; maximum table size of 4; no indoor service if not serving food
- **Hotels:** Open under [Phase 4 guidelines](#)
- **Fitness:** Open under [Phase 4 guidelines](#)
- **Gatherings:** 25 people or 25% of overall capacity
- **Organized recreation:** Allowed under [Phase 4 guidelines](#)

In order to move from Tier 3 to Tier 2, a region must have a test positivity 7-day rolling average rate below 12% for three consecutive days plus meet hospital capacity goals. To move from Tier 2 to Tier 1, a region must maintain a test positivity rate of less than 8% for three consecutive days (plus hospital capacity metrics). To move back into [Phase 4](#), the test positivity rate must be below 6.5% for three consecutive days. More information regulations by Tier can be found [here](#). You can monitor regional health metrics [here](#).

Paycheck Protection Program

The U.S. Small Business Administration opened the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan portal to PPP-eligible lenders with \$1 billion or less in assets for First and Second Draw applications on Friday, January 15, 2021. The portal **will fully open on Tuesday, January 19, 2021** to all participating PPP lenders to submit First and Second Draw loan applications to SBA. More information [here](#). Please visit www.gpcovid.com for a summary of the new PPP program.

Applications Due Soon: City of Peoria Business Recovery Grant Round 2 Open

The City of Peoria “Business Recovery Grant (BRG) Program” provides reimbursement grants for businesses negatively impacted by COVID. Business may apply for grants in three strategic areas: sustainability, capacity building, and transformation. Grants up to \$15,000 for businesses and hotels up to \$25,000 are available for “Qualified Business” for ‘Eligible Expenses’. The BRG program has been developed to specifically provide financial support for small businesses based on Business Sustainability, Business Capacity Building and Business Transformation efforts during the pandemic. Businesses with losses related to COVID-19 who incurred expenses related to any of the efforts listed above should make an application for reimbursement of the related expenses. You can review program materials [here](#) and apply for the grant [here](#). Applications are due January 18, 2021 at 5 pm.

LISC Rural Relief Small Business Grants Open from January 26 through February 2

The [Local Initiatives Support Corporation](#) (LISC) is offering [Rural Relief Small Business Grants](#) for up to \$20,000. Grants support small businesses and enterprises affected by COVID-19 across the country, especially those in underserved communities, including entrepreneurs of color, women- and veteran-owned businesses that often lack access to flexible, affordable capital. Applications are being accepted in “rounds” and you must submit a new application for each round in order to be considered for funding in that round. The next application round runs January 26 through February 2. Click [here](#) to learn more and apply.

Shuttered Venue Operators Grant

The Shuttered Venue Operators (SVO) Grant program was established by The Economic Aid to Hard-Hit Small Businesses, Nonprofits, and Venues Act, signed into law on December 27, 2020. The program includes \$15 billion in grants to shuttered venues, to be administered by the Small Business Administration’s Office of Disaster Assistance. Eligible applicants may qualify for SVO Grants equal to 45% of their gross earned revenue, with the maximum amount available for a single grant award of \$10 million. \$2 billion is reserved for eligible applications with up to 50 full-time employees. Eligible business include: Live venue operators or promoters; theatrical producers; live performing arts organization operators; relevant museum operators, zoos and aquariums who meet specific criteria; motion picture theater operators; and talent representatives. SBA is still finalizing application details and deadlines. Learn more [here](#).