Introduction

This document provides information about how to apply for the Vermont Forest Economy Stabilization Grant (FESG). This application is for forest products businesses that meet the eligibility criteria.

Summary of Steps

1. Register your business
2. Register as an applicant
3. Applicant information
4. Provide contact information
5. Determine your eligibility
6. Provide information about other benefits you may have received
7. Upload relevant documents
8. Review your application
9. Certify your application

GET READY

Before you begin, you will need the following documents or information to complete your application.

A. Your Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) or SS# for sole proprietors.

B. Your Vermont Employer ID Number if you have one (used for Vermont Department of Labor filings). Providing this 7-digit number is not required but helps populate some of the application required fields. You can add your company manually if you don’t have an ID Number.

C. Tax information from your W9 form.

D. The NAICS code for your company or organization found on your Federal tax return. If you don’t have one, identify one that matches your primary forest and wood products business activity.

E. The amount of previous compensation you have received to cover business interruptions due to COVID-19, if you have received any.

F. Your Income Statements also called Profit and Loss for 2020 and 2019 by month (in PDF format).

G. Federal and State Tax Returns for 2019, or the most recent year filed (in PDF format).
If you have questions about filling out the application, email us at Forests.CovidResponse@vermont.gov.

**STEP 1: REGISTER YOUR BUSINESS**

**Confirm your Business is Eligible**
Review the FESG eligibility requirements and confirm your forests products business is eligible.

*TIP:* A ‘*’ next to a field designates that the field is required.

**Register your Business**
To access the application, you must register your business.

It is important to enter in ALL required information **CORRECTLY** upon applying. Any improperly submitted applications will be categorized as **INCOMPLETE**. If edits are required (incomplete documents, incorrect business ID information) you will receive an email with instructions for you to make those required edits, and you will need to resubmit your application. Since this is a first come, first serve grant, this will delay the review of your application.

*TIP:* The business name on your application must match the business name on your federal tax filings.
Enter your Vermont Employer ID Number if you have one (used for Vermont Department of Labor filings). Providing this 7-digit number is not required but helps populate some of the application required fields. If you don’t have one, you can add your company.

If you receive a red error message box:

Click “Add Company” and complete the pop-up form to register your company. This error message may also appear if the EIN has already been used.
Step 2: Register as an Applicant

Enter information about the person completing this form.

**User Name:** Your User Name must be in an email format (for example: abc@xyz.com). The system will automatically add '.vtgrants' to the end of it.

**Password:** Your Password must be greater than 10 characters and contain a letter, a number, and at least one special character.

If you do not enter your User Name and Password in the correct format, the following error will appear:

**TIP:** Write down your User Name and Password. Your User Name will be the email you entered with
`vtgrants’ added to the end, e.g., smith@gmail.com.vtgrants

**Step 3: Applicant Information**

**Create a New Application**

When you have registered, you will see the dashboard. Click the “+ New Application” button.

After clicking “+ New Application”, you will see the grant selection page. Scroll down and select “Forest Economy Stabilization Grant.”

**Navigation**

Use the eight navigation steps to keep track of where you are in the application process. (Right image)

Use the navigation at the bottom right hand side of the screen to move about your application. Do not use your browser’s back button. (Bottom image)
Provide information about your business from your W9 form.

**TIPS:**

- As you are completing the application, hover your mouse over the to learn more about the information field.
- It’s important to make sure you enter your full legal business name as indicated on your W9, e.g., LLC or Inc.

**NACIS Code**

Fill in your business’s NAICS code found on your federal tax return. If your NAICS code is not identified as a forest or wood products business, you will be asked to explain why and what your primary business activity is.

All applicants will be asked to select their primary forest business type from the following drop-down list:
1. manager (consulting forestry services),
2. harvesting (logging contractor or maple sap producer),
3. trucking,
4. processing (sawmill, fuelwood producer, veneer mill, pellet mill),
5. manufacturing,
6. Distribution (lumber distributors and wholesalers or log and pulp concentration yards), or
7. crafter.

**Tax Information**

Continue with the application by providing information about your business based on your W9 form. If you have questions about the fields in this section, please refer to the sample Form W9 and instructions link in the application.
If you don’t have a Federal Identification Number (EIN), e.g., sole proprietor, you will need to provide your Social Security Number.

The question ‘Please select which of the following is most applicable to your business:’ is most likely, ‘Other’.

**STEP 4: PROVIDE CONTACT INFORMATION**

You can add additional people to be contacts for the application by clicking the “Add Contact” button. Please note that only the primary contact can edit and receive communications about the application. The other contacts may access the application but will not receive any emails about it. If you are a third party supporting several applications, you can register under one account and manage several application by adding “+ New Applications” and accessing them from the dashboard.

**STEP 5: DETERMINE YOUR ELIGIBILITY**

You will now be asked a series of questions to further determine if your business is eligible. Read the questions thoroughly and click either “Yes” of “No.” If your answer to the question makes your business ineligible, you will see the following notification. Remember to click on the information icon for details.

Unfortunately, based on your answers to the eligibility questions, your business does not currently qualify for a Forest Economy Stabilization Grant. To search for other grant resources, visit accd.vermont.gov or agriculture.vermont.gov/forestopportunities.
• **Question 1**: Is your business primarily engaged in managing, harvesting, trucking, processing, manufacturing, crafting, or distributing forest or wood products?
  o Primarily engaged in means more than 50% of the annual gross revenue in 2019 for the entity applying is derived from a forest product businesses.

• **Question 2**: Is any portion of the forest or wood products derived from Vermont forests?
  o This means that you must manage, harvest, haul, process, manufacture, distribute, or craft forest and wood products (or forests) derived from Vermont forests, but there is not a percentage test applied to the volume of work in, or product from Vermont.

• **Question 3**: Is your business domiciled or has its primary place of business in Vermont?
  o This means that the businesses principle place of business is in Vermont - the address on your last Form W9 filed with the IRS must be Vermont.

• **Question 4**: Was your business open and active before February 1st, 2020?

• **Question 5**: What is your 2019 topline revenue on your income statement?
  o You can find you topline revenue in the following:
    - Partnerships: Form 1065 – Line1c
    - Sole proprietorships: Form 1040, Schedule C – Line 2
    - C-corporations: Form 1020 – Line 1c
    - S-Corporations: Form 1020-S – Line 1c
    - Nonprofits: Form 990, Line 9 or Form 990 EZ, line 2
    - Estate and Trusts (filing Federal Form 1041): Schedule C, line 2
    - Sole proprietors with rental income: Form 1040, Schedule E
    - Profit or Loss from Farming: Form 1040, Schedule F

• **Question 6**: Is not a business or organization, nor a subsidiary of a business or organization, nor owned by a business or organization, that reported more than $20,000,000 in total revenue in 2019?
  o If your business is NOT one of the situations described and reported less than $20,000,000 in total revenue in 2019, select "yes”.

• **Question 7**: Do you certify that your business is open now, or if your business is currently required to be closed, that you intend to reopen your business when the guidelines of EO 01-20 allow you to reopen?
  o The Governor’s Emergency Order of March 2020 creating the state of emergency can be found [here](#).

• **Question 8**: Has your business experienced $5,000 or more in total revenue loss in the months of March, April, May, June, and July of 2020 when compared to the total revenue in the same months of 2019?
  o This means that your business experienced a cumulative revenue loss of $5,000 or more during the months of March, April, May, June, and July of 2020 compared to 2019.
In addition to your 2019 financial statements and 2020 year to date financial statements, you will need to enter your business’s revenue for these months for each year, 2019 and 2020, in the application — see below.

- If you choose not to report revenue for one month, e.g., July, you will need to put $0 in both 2019 and 2020.
- Since your expenses may not be finalized for the month of July for several weeks, you can estimate expenses, but revenue will need to finalized, and you may be required to submit final expenses for July at a later date.

**Question 9:** Does your business have any unpaid taxes with the Vermont Department of Taxes that are not currently in a payment plan?

**Question 10:** Please enter the maximum number of employees you had at any point during the time of January 1st, 2020 to the day of application?

- You can enter 0 or more employees.

**Question 11:** Is your business currently in Chapter 7 bankruptcy?

**STEP 6: PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT OTHER BENEFITS YOU MAY HAVE RECEIVED**

When you click “Yes” for any benefits you may have received, you will be asked to provide the amount of those benefits.
STEP 7: UPLOAD RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Make sure your documents are in PDF file format.

When all documents have been uploaded, click “Next.” If you have made a mistake and need to delete a document, use the trashcan icon to delete and then upload a new document.

TIPS:
- If you are creating your income statements with QuickBooks, create a ‘custom’ report that revenue loss
and profit by month. [Learn more.]

- If your income statements, or Federal and State tax returns, are in the same PDF and you are unable to split them, upload the document twice.
- If you need to scan your documents, there are several free scanning apps that can be downloaded on your smartphone or tablet (Genius Scan, Adobe Scan).

**STEP 8: REVIEW YOUR APPLICATION**

Before completing your application, review all of the information provided to make sure all your information is correct. Remember to use the “Back” and “Next” buttons in the bottom right-hand to navigate through the application.

**STEP 9: CERTIFY YOUR APPLICATION**

Read the statements and attest to them by clicking each of the boxes. Sign by typing your name. The current date will be filled into the form with your signature. When complete, click “Submit.”

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**Certification**

1. I have the authority to request payment from the State of Vermont on behalf of this business submitting this application.
2. I request reimbursement of the grant amount determined by the Agency of Natural Resources and the Vermont Economic Development Authority up to the amount of demonstrated total lost revenue between the months of April, May, June, July, and August 2020.
3. I understand that the State of Vermont will rely on the representation as material representation when making this grant award.
4. I agree to submit any and all information shared with state government and the state’s contracted entities to process this grant and manage grant programs.
5. As required by Vermont law, the proposed uses of the funds provided will be used only to cover the costs that:
   - A. are necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to COVID-19 public health emergency.
   - B. were necessary expenditures incurred prior to March 1, 2020.
   - C. are reasonable expenditures incurred in this grant period that begin on March 1, 2020 and end on December 30, 2020.
   - D. are not covered by other Federal grants or Federal or State medical assistance programs.
6. I agree that the business submitting this application must notify the grantor portion of the grant in Agency of Natural Resources if:
   - A. any grant funds received are based on incorrect information or on the application or to the Agency of Natural Resources or the Vermont Economic Development Authority related to this application, or
   - B. if any grant funds that are covered by other federal grants or federal or state medical assistance programs are requested to be used to defray the costs of the current business, I have reviewed the applicable outlines of benefits.
   - C. if the business receiving the funds received under this grant application is not a New Hampshire business, or
   - D. if the business receiving the funds received under this grant application is not a New Hampshire business that has received or will receive financial assistance from the State or Federal government.

Read these statements and attest to them by checking each of the boxes. Sign by typing your name. When complete, click “Submit.”
After submitting, record your **application number**, then click “Finish”.

After you click “**Finish**”, you may review your application by clicking “**View**.”

Your application will be added to the queue and reviewed by FPR in the order it was received. You will receive a confirmation email after you submit your application; check your spam filter if you do not receive it within a few minutes. An FPR staff member will reach out to you at the contact information you provided only if there are questions about your application. You will be notified of the decision via email to the primary contact as soon as practicable.

**If you have questions about filling out the application, email us at**

   **Forests.CovidResponse@vermont.gov**