

# HomeBase Program - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

## 1. What is HomeBase?

HomeBase is a Neighborhood Allies program offers flexible funding to small businesses, particularly minority- and women-owned businesses, to help them reach new levels of growth. This includes resources for areas like grant writing, e-commerce development, certifications, and financial preparedness.

## 2. Who is eligible for HomeBase?

HomeBase primarily supports small businesses that are minority- or women-owned. Businesses should have less than 5 employees and be located within Allegheny County. Businesses must be in operation for at least one year and have made less than \$1M in revenue the previous year. The program focuses on those ready to take their next growth step with targeted support and guidance.

## 3. How can the funding from HomeBase be used?

Funding from HomeBase is designed to be flexible, allowing businesses to use it where they need it most. Some examples include:

- Grant writing support to access additional funding
- Website hosting for expanding online sales or e-commerce
- Specialized consulting for entering new markets

## 4. How can this program help my business grow?

HomeBase provides financial support to help eliminate barriers to growth for small businesses. By covering essential expenses, such as grant writing or online e-commerce setup, the program helps your business become more competitive and better positioned for future opportunities.

## 5. What is the application process for HomeBase?

To apply, you'll need to complete the online application and email the required supplemental documents. After submission, your application will be reviewed within 2 weeks of being received and you will be notified if you've received the grant.

**6. How long does support last in the HomeBase program?**

Support through Home Base is a one-time contribution, with funding provided directly to the vendor for specific goods or services that will benefit your business.

**7. Can I participate if I've already received assistance through other Neighborhood Allies programs?**

Yes, if you've previously participated in programs like Get Online Grow Online (GOGO) or others, you are still eligible for HomeBase. In fact, we want to prioritize those that have participated in our programming previously. This program is designed to complement prior support, helping you progress even further in your business journey.

**8. How is the funding distributed in the HomeBase program?**

The funding is distributed in the form of a check, paid directly to the provider of goods or services that will support your business's needs. This ensures the funds are applied directly to your growth objectives.

**9. How long does it take to process the payment if I am selected for funding?**

Please expect the check to be sent out no sooner than 3 weeks from the time your acceptance and payee information are received.

**10. How many times can my business apply for HomeBase?**

You can apply for HomeBase once per year, up to two times in total. If you have been approved for funding in the past, you will need to demonstrate progress or new needs before applying again.

**11. What is the maximum funding amount that a business can receive?**

Applicants can receive up to \$5,000 in funding.

**12. Can the funding be used for only specific purchases?**

The funding is intended to be used for specific business needs such as equipment or consulting services. Operating expenses, such as rent or salaries, are not eligible. Working capital and financial obligations, such as repayments on debt, are also not allowable uses.

**13. Do I need to submit a progress report after receiving funding?**

Yes, after receiving funding, you will be required to submit a brief interim report outlining how the funds were used. You will receive an additional report several months later requesting you to explain the impact on your business. You will receive this in an email from us when it's time to report out.

**14. What happens if my application is denied?**

If your application is not approved, you will be notified with an explanation. You can apply again in the future, making adjustments based on the feedback provided.

**15. What if I don't agree with the decision that is made or an issue arises within the process?**

Everyone can complete and submit a Dispute Submission Form within 14 days of the issue. A formal Follow Up Resolution Letter will then be sent back within 30 days with a final decision.

**16. Is there a specific timeline for submitting applications?**

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, but funding cycles may have specific deadlines. Please check the program website or contact us for any upcoming deadlines.

**17. Can the funding be used for personal expenses?**

No, the funding is strictly for business-related expenses directly tied to your business growth.

**18. Is there a limit to how much of the funding can be used for each type of expense?**

The funding can be allocated across various types of expenses, but it must be used in accordance with the approved application. Please refer to your application for more specific allocation details.

**19. Who can I contact if I have more questions about HomeBase?**

For more information, feel free to contact our team at: [Ashley@neighborhoodallies.org](mailto:Ashley@neighborhoodallies.org). We're here to help answer your questions and guide you through the process.

**20. Does my business have to be located in a certain area to be eligible?**

We are currently able to serve businesses in Allegheny County but focus on those located within the following neighborhoods: Wilkinsburg, Homewood, Larimer, East Liberty

**21. If I own more than one business, can I apply for multiple of my businesses?**

We will only fund ONE business per owner, so be sure to apply through the business that this program will be the best fit for.