

PROGRAM GRANTS – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Updated January 2026

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DEFINITIONS

Common questions about how the Branch defines specific terminology used in the Community Gaming Grants: Program Grant Guidelines.

1. What is meant by “size and scope” of programming and how is it assessed?

- The term “size and scope” refers to the extent of program delivery, as demonstrated by the number of people served and the range of the program activities/services offered.
- Branch staff review the program description to assess the “size and scope” of each program. The program description must provide details about:
 - **What** the program activities/ services are.
 - **Who** participates or benefits from the program (and how many).
 - **When** and how frequently the program operates.
 - **Where** in the community the program is delivered.
 - **How** the program is delivered, and by whom.
 - **Why** the program is needed in the community.
 - **Accessibility and inclusivity** to people in the community.
 - **Community support** the program receives.
- The program description must also provide sector-specific details that Branch staff use to assess the “size and scope” of programming, in the context of each sector.
- Section 4.4 of the Program Grant Guidelines outlines what information must be provided in a program description, including examples of sector-specific details.

2. What is meant by “an immediate, direct service to the community?”

- An “immediate, direct service” refers to programming or services that are directly delivered by an applicant organization (i.e., its staff, contractors, volunteers) to people in the community.
- The applicant organization must directly deliver programming and services so that the Community Gaming Grants Branch can accurately assess the size and scope of program delivery and ensure that grant funding is used for eligible purposes.
- Programs and services that are not delivered directly by an applicant organization to people in the community (e.g., activities that solely support the organization, research services, capacity building, lobbying) or that primarily support other not-for-profit organizations, are considered ineligible because they support the community in “indirect” ways that the Branch cannot assess in a fair and consistent manner.

- Information provided in the program description section of the application should illustrate how the organization is directly delivering ongoing programming to people in the community. Section 4.4 of the Program Grant Guidelines provides details about what information must be included in the program description.

3. What is meant by “financial assistance to individuals”?

- Monetary support provided directly to individuals in the form of cash, gift certificates, gift cards, or other vouchers that function in the same way as cash.
- Purchases and/or payments, including reimbursements, for goods made on behalf of individuals.

4. What is meant by “a provincially authorized post-secondary institution”?

- Provincially authorized post-secondary institutions are places of higher learning that are officially recognized and approved by the Province of British Columbia. They include public post-secondary institutions; private and out-of-province public degree-granting institutions; theological institutions; and Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutes.
- The list of provincially authorized post-secondary institutions in British Columbia is available online at:
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/find-a-program-or-institution/find-an-institution>.
- Equivalent post-secondary institutions must be recognized by the appropriate government authority in the relevant jurisdiction, outside of B.C.

5. What is meant by “unrelated” board members or signing officials?

- Unrelated means that the individuals are not in the same immediate family. Immediate family includes:
 - Spouses, common-law spouses, children, parents, guardians, siblings, grandchildren, or grandparents; and/or
 - Any person who lives with the individual as a member of their family.

6. What does it mean for a service or program to be delivered “on contract”?

- A program is delivered “on contract” or under a funding agreement when that program delivers services that are agreed upon in a contract with another agency (government or otherwise) which was established as a result of either a competitive bidding process or a direct award.
- If an organization is contracted by another agency to provide a program or service, it is not eligible for a Program Grant, as it is being delivered on a fee-

for-service basis. Organizations that deliver services under contract may apply for grants for other programming that is not funded in this manner.

- When an organization employs someone on a contract basis to deliver their program, it may be considered an eligible expense associated with the direct delivery of the program.
 - It is important to provide a clear description of any funding arrangements with other agencies, as it provides Branch staff with the information required to assess program eligibility. If you are not sure how to describe a funding source, please contact the Branch to discuss your specific circumstances.

FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

Common questions relating to the assessment of financial information required in the Program Grant application.

7. What is the “surplus percentage” and how is it calculated?

- The surplus percentage refers to the current cash assets and investments that an organization has on hand at fiscal year end, in relation to their previous fiscal year operating expenses.
- An organization with a surplus percentage greater than 50 per cent is considered temporarily ineligible to receive a Program Grant. In this way, the Branch ensures that grant funding is directed to organizations that demonstrate financial need.
- The formula used to calculate the surplus percentage is provided in Guideline 3.3 of the Program Grant Guidelines.

8. What is “deferred revenue” and how is it calculated?

- Deferred revenue is money that an organization has received for specific goods or services that have not yet been delivered. For calculating the surplus percentage, deferred revenue is considered a current liability.
- If an organization has deferred revenue, it must be identified in the financial statements, along with a list of the source(s) of deferred revenue (e.g., registration fees for the next fiscal year).
- Program Grants are not considered deferred revenue as the Branch considers that the funds are available to be spent by an organization immediately upon receipt and must be spent within 12 months of receipt.

9. What are considered “internally restricted funds”?

- Internally restricted funds are assets that have been set aside by an organization for a specific purpose. For the Community Gaming Grants Branch to consider

funds “internally restricted,” they must be designated for a specific purpose, such as building and land development costs or capital acquisitions. General purpose, “rainy day,” vaguely defined, general building maintenance or contingency funds will be considered unrestricted.

- In order for funds to be considered “internally restricted,” for the purpose of the surplus percentage calculation, they must be identified on the balance sheet, and the pertinent details must be included in the notes to the financial statements, including the date the funds were restricted and the purpose of the restriction. The organization must also submit the minutes of the meeting at which the restriction was approved by the board of directors. Funds cannot be restricted retroactively.
- The Branch considers “internally restricted” funds to be unrestricted after having been reserved for more than five years (seven years for funds that are internally restricted for building and land development costs).

10. What is considered “government” funding?

- Government funding is money that is provided directly to an organization by a federal or provincial government or another federal/ provincial body (e.g., school districts, health authorities, Crown corporations). Government money that is provided through a third party will not be considered government funding for the purpose of assessing program financial eligibility.
- Funding provided by local, municipal, regional or First Nation governments is not considered government funding for the purpose of determining program financial eligibility.
- If you are unsure whether funding from a specific source is considered government funding, please review Appendix III of the Program Grant Guidelines. If you are still unsure, please contact the Branch.

11. What are organization operational costs? How much grant funding can I use to pay for them?

- Organization operational costs are the expenses incurred to keep the organization open and operational, including (but not limited to) wages, rent, utilities, legal services, accounting services, insurance, etc.
- Program Grant funds are intended to cover costs that are essential to the direct delivery of an approved program and may be used toward a percentage of organization operational costs. Up to a maximum of 15 per cent of the total grant may also be used to cover organization operational costs not directly related to programming. This applies to grants received after April 1, 2022. See Guideline 6.1 of the Program Grant Guidelines for additional information about eligible use of grant funds.
- Applicants may also include a pro-rated portion of their organization operational

costs in their program financials for costs directly related to the delivery of the program. See Guideline 4.3 for additional information about including organization operational costs in the program financials.

12. How does the Branch determine the level of approved funding?

- Program Grants are awarded based on the size and scope of program delivery in the previous fiscal year. To assess the size and scope of program delivery, Grant Analysts review and consider the information and documentation submitted with each application (see [FAQ #1](#)).
- For programs operating less than 12 months at the time of application, additional information is required to assess a reasonable projection of the size and scope of program delivery for the first 12 months. See Guidelines Section 4.1 and 4.3 for additional information about requesting funds for new programs.
- It is important to note that an organization is not considered eligible for the maximum level of funding for their delivery level simply based on whether they are recognized as a local, regional, or provincial organization.

13. How can I request and receive increased funding for my program(s)?

- To request increased funding, applicants must submit a Regular Form application. The amount of funding requested for each program should be entered into the program section of the online application and should reflect the increased level of funding that is being requested.
- To support a request for increased funding, the program description should provide a rationale for the requested increase, with details and/or statistics that illustrate the program's growth and increased financial need (e.g., increased program supply costs and/or wages; increased number of program sessions and/or participants; waitlists to participate in program).
- Grant Analysts will review the program description and rationale for increased funding, as well as the program actual revenues and expenses for the previous fiscal year to determine what level of increase, if any, is warranted. Additional funding is subject to the availability of overall Program Grant funding, and the requested amount may not be approved. Further, the amount approved may vary from year to year.

14. How does the Branch determine if an organization delivers programs at a regional or provincial level?

- If an applicant organization wishes to be considered for funding at the regional or provincial level, they must provide the Branch with a business case justifying the reason(s) their programs and services should be considered regional or provincial in nature.

- The Branch considers information including, but not limited to, the geographic reach of the program/ services or the number of communities served; the number of other service providers within the same geographic area as the applicant organization; and, whether other, comparable organizations would recognize the applicant organization as the “regional” or “provincial” lead or service provider.
- Generally, there can only be one regional organization by sub-sector. Regardless of the local, regional, or provincial status of an organization, each application is assessed on its own merit, based on the size and scope of the programming presented.
- See Appendix I of the Program Grant Guidelines for more information.

15. Does my organization have to complete a Direct Deposit (FIN 312) form if we previously received a grant?

- The Community Gaming Grants program is transitioning to a new online application system. The Direct Deposit form is the new method for providing bank account information for the direct deposit of grant funds.
- Bank account information will be transferred from the old Gaming Online System to the new system for recent grant recipients only. Returning applicants that received a grant between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025, and have not updated their Gaming Account, will not need to complete the Direct Deposit form.

Returning applicants that received their grant(s) prior to April 1, 2024, do need to complete the Direct Deposit form.

GENERAL

Common questions related to the overall Program Grants application process.

16. Why can't grant funds be used to develop new programs or new program components?

- Guideline 4.1 states, in part, that a program may be eligible if it has been delivered for a minimum of 12 months at the time of application. Programs delivered for less than 12 months may also be considered. Applicants must meet all other eligibility criteria and must demonstrate capacity to deliver the new program.
- Program Grants are intended to fund programs that are currently operating. The requirement that programming is currently being delivered demonstrates to the Branch that the applicant organization has the capacity to deliver the program on an ongoing basis.
- Slight or modest changes to existing eligible programs, which do not

fundamentally change the program, are not considered “new components.”

17. Why is “food that will be sold to participants at a discount, at cost, or for a profit” considered an ineligible use of Program Grant funds?

- Guideline 4.2 of the Grant Program Guidelines states, in part, that “programs that sell tangible goods or food to participants at a discount, at cost or for a profit” are ineligible.
- The Community Gaming Grants program continues to support the need to enhance food security in our communities. For this reason, the program will continue to support organizations which provide food to individuals and families at no cost (e.g., food banks, soup kitchens).
- If your organization utilizes a hybrid model, where some food is provided at a cost to participants and some is provided for free, you may still be eligible to receive Community Gaming Grant funding. If this situation applies, please contact the Branch for advice regarding your application for funding.

18. What information do I have to provide regarding the number of participants in my program(s)?

- In the program description section of the online application, all applicants should indicate the number of people who benefited from the program in the previous 12 months (from the time of application).
- It is also mandatory for sports organizations and youth organizations (e.g., Scouting groups, Cadets, 4-H) to provide the total number of registered participants in the program in the previous 12 months. Each participant may only be counted once, regardless of how many separate program activities they participate in.
- Sports organizations and youth organizations must also provide a breakdown of the number of participants registered in each program activity that was delivered in the previous 12 months.
- Organizations with new programs that have been operating for less than 12 months should provide the number of participants to date.
- Guideline 4.4 of the Program Grant Guidelines provides additional direction regarding how to report the number of registered participants.

19. What can an organization do if the reasons for a funding decision are unclear or if the organization believes an error has been made with the decision?

- Organizations are welcome to [contact the Branch](#) to discuss the information provided in their notification letter.
- If an organization believes an error, omission and/or misinterpretation was made in the assessment of their application, they may request reconsideration of the

decision. The request for reconsideration must be made by writing (by email) to the Branch within 30 days of the notification of decision.

- Guideline 5.7 of the Program Grant Guidelines provides additional information regarding the reconsideration process.

20. If two, or more, organizations are delivering a program in collaboration, how should they structure their application for a Program Grant?

- Typically, funding for the same or similar programs is only provided to the organization that directly delivers the program and that is responsible for program expenditures. Only the organization with primary responsibility for program delivery and expenditures should apply for grant funding for that program.
- However, there may be circumstances in which multiple organizations have clearly delineated responsibilities for the delivery and expenditures of the same program. In these situations, more than one organization may wish to apply for funding for the same program. If this situation applies, please contact the Branch for advice regarding your application for funding.

21. Our organization delivers programming that fits within multiple sectors. Which sector should we apply in?

- Organizations are encouraged to apply in the sector that they feel most closely aligns with their purpose(s), as stated in the organization's constitution.
- Alternatively, an organization may choose to apply in the sector that aligns most closely with most of its eligible programming.

22. What is the difference between the Regular Form application and the Renewed Funding application?

- The Regular Form application is the standard application for a Program Grant, which is submitted by most organizations, including those seeking an increase in funding or requesting funding for a new program.
- The Renewed Funding application is a simplified, streamlined application for eligible return applicants who are seeking the same level of funding for the same programs as approved in the previous year's application. It requires less information and supporting documentation related to organization structure and financial position, as well as less detail about program delivery.
- Due to the Community Gaming Grants program's transition to a new application system, the Renewed Funding application is not available in 2025.

23. The Program Grant Guidelines state, in part, that "grant recipients are expected to manage conflicts of interest, whether real, potential or perceived, as set out in Section 56 of the *Societies Act*." What does this

mean?

- A conflict of interest is a situation in which a person is, or could appear to be, in a position to benefit personally from actions or decisions made in their official capacity (i.e., as a board member).
- Section 56 of the *Societies Act* provides direction to board members of provincially incorporated societies in B.C. about managing conflicts of interest. The Community Gaming Grants Branch expects all grant recipients, including organizations that are not provincially incorporated, to take the steps outlined in Guideline 8.3 to manage conflicts of interest.

HELP!

Common questions related to getting help to prepare and submit a Community Gaming Grant application.

24. Where can I access additional information and resources to help me complete an application for a Program Grant?

- Information, tutorials and sample documents are available on the [Documents, forms and checklists page](#) of the Community Gaming Grants website. In addition, staff from the Community Gaming Grants Branch are happy to answer questions about the program, both over the phone and via email.
- Branch staff are also available to provide Community Outreach presentations. Please contact the Branch if you wish to arrange a presentation.
- Additionally, organizations can contact their local Community Charitable Gaming Association (CCGA) or the BC Association of Charitable Gaming (BCACG) for assistance with the Program Grant process.

25. I am experiencing technical difficulty when trying to submit my application in the Gaming Online Service, is there help available?

- [Frequently Asked Questions for Gaming Online Service Applications](#) are available online.
- If you have reviewed the Frequently Asked Questions and are still experiencing technical difficulties, please contact the Community Gaming Grants Branch.
- If you are receiving an error message it can be helpful to take a screen shot of the error to provide to the Branch. Please include a description of the steps taken before the error occurred.

26. When will our organization receive notification of our application results?

- Each sector has a specific application intake period and a final notification date (the latest date by which notification will be sent to applicants). This information is available on the [Community Gaming Grants website](#).

- Applications are assessed in the order that they are received.
- In each of the sectors, more than half of the applications received are submitted in the final two weeks of the intake period. As a result, organizations that apply in the final two weeks of the sector intake may not receive notification until the published final notification date. Applicants are encouraged to apply earlier in the sector intake period to increase their chance of receiving notification prior to the final notification date.
- You can check the status of your grant application online on the [Grant Status Lookup website](#) by entering your application number.

27. What is the purpose of the British Columbia Association for Charitable Gaming (BCACG) and Community Charitable Gaming Associations (CCGAs)?

- The British Columbia Association for Charitable Gaming (BCACG) and Community Charitable Gaming Associations (CCGAs) are not-for-profit organizations that provide support services to other not-for-profit organizations, to assist them through the Community Gaming Grant application process. The BCACG liaises with not-for-profit groups and the Province of British Columbia and works closely with the CCGAs in the provision of support services to the not-for-profit sector.
- Both the BCACG and CCGAs offer detailed workshops on how to apply for a Program Grant. Organizations can reach the BCACG and/or their local CCGA through the contact information provided on the BCACG's website (<http://bcacg.com/>).

28. How do we submit a special request (e.g., for extension, exception, permission, etc.) to the Branch?

- All special requests which require a formal decision by the Branch, including requests for an extension on using grant funds, must be made in writing to CommunityGamingGrants@gov.bc.ca.
- Approvals for these types of requests cannot be made over the telephone. A decision regarding your request will be provided in writing.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Web: <https://gov.bc.ca/gaminggrants>

Email: CommunityGamingGrants@gov.bc.ca

Phone: 250-356-1081

Toll-free: 1-800-663-7867