

Short-Term Loans

What is the COVID-19 Financial Relief Initiative for short-term loans?

The Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC) is able to make one-time short-term loans available to churches, camps, and conferences who are experiencing financial hardship as a result of COVID-19, thanks to collaborative efforts with the Covenant Executive Board, Covenant Ministries of Benevolence, Covenant Offices leaders, and generous donors.

Who is eligible?

ECC member churches, camps, and conferences who experience distress as a result of COVID-19, such as an immediate or looming cash shortage that may risk the entity losing its facility in absence of loan assistance.

How much can we request?

Up to three months of essential property and building payments, such as mortgage interest, rent, utilities, insurance, other applicable loan interest, or government payments (tax, license fees, etc.).

What expenses are not eligible for loan relief?

Operations, staff compensation or benefits, general ministry expenses, or mortgage principal

Will the loan be forgiven?

Loans are available at 0 percent interest, with no payments due until 12 months after the date of origination. There are no plans currently to forgive the loans.

Who determines who will receive loans?

A loan review team comprised of representatives from National Covenant Properties, ECC Finance, Start and Strengthen Churches, Love Mercy Do Justice, as well as experts in banking, financial, and nonprofit arenas

How will applications be evaluated?

Applications will be assessed according to whether the church, camp, or conference is “distressed,” which means it has less than two months of cash available as determined by the Cash Flow Work Sheet on the online application.

Who can fill out the application?

The pastor, board chair, treasurer, executive director, or superintendent may fill out the application. It must be signed by the board chair or treasurer.

My church needs to approve all loans. How can we gain approval when we cannot gather to vote?

Check your constitution and bylaws for provisions for governing in exceptional circumstances. You may also wish to consult with legal counsel.

How do we apply?

Visit this link: <https://eccstartandstrengthenchurches.formstack.com/forms/fri>

Applicants can expect to hear a response within 5-7 business days from submitting their application.

Start and Strengthen Churches is managing the short-term loan process. You may contact SSCAAdminCore@covchurch.org or call 773.907.3346 with all inquiries and questions.

Missional Relief Grants

What is a missional relief grant?

The Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC) is able to make one-time missional relief grants to churches throughout our 11 conferences who are actively responding to the needs of their community during the COVID-19 crisis, thanks to collaborative efforts with the Covenant Executive Board, Covenant Ministries of Benevolence, Covenant Offices leaders, and generous donors.

Who is eligible?

Missional relief grants are available for churches who are responding to the needs of their community during the COVID-19 crisis. These grants will be used to help strengthen communities that are deeply impacted by pandemic. Whether churches are launching a new effort or strengthening an existing emergency response, these grants will help answer the call to make a difference in a community that is experiencing devastation as a result of COVID-19.

What projects or expenses are not eligible for grant relief?

Monies will not be distributed for capacity-building (training) or capital expenditures, such as overhead, payroll, capital improvements, etc.

Who determines who will be awarded grants?

The director of LMDJ ministry initiatives together with review panel comprised of handful of leaders from throughout the Covenant community.

How do we apply?

Read the Missional Relief Grant Values and Matthew/Micah Framework on the application page. Assess your proposed ministry initiative for appropriate fit and then apply online at <https://eccstartandstrengthenchurches.formstack.com/forms/fri>

What happens after we apply?

Missional relief grant applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until funds are depleted. Applications will be reviewed once per week, and recipients will be notified of decisions by email. Approved proposals will receive a distribution of funds via electronic funds transfer deposited directly into the organization's bank account.

You can expect to hear a response within 7-10 business days from submitting your application.

What documents are necessary?

A detailed and itemized project budget is required for all missional relief grant applications.

The Start and Strengthen Churches and Love Mercy and Do Justice mission priorities are managing the missional relief grant process. You may contact LMDJ@covchurch.org or 773.596.2489 with all inquiries or questions.

Ministers' Crisis Fund

What is the Ministers' Crisis Fund?

The Ministers' Crisis Fund exists to assist our ministerial community in times of acute need. The fund is made possible by gifts from generous donors, as well as through pastoral dues, and is administered by Develop Leaders staff.

Who is eligible?

Anyone holding a current active or retired ECC credential, including those Ordained to Word and Sacrament (OWSa), Ordained to Word and Service (OWSe), commissioned staff ministers (CSM), consecrated missionaries (CM), and anyone holding a ministry license (ML), global service license (GSL), or bivocational ministry license (BVL).

What can the funds be used for?

- Housing expenses, such as rent, mortgage payment, or utilities
- Auto repairs (if necessary to get to work or transport children to care)
- Daily living expenses such as the purchase food (short-term)
- Medical expenses not covered by insurance: prescriptions, mental health counseling, doctor/clinic visits
- Assistance with funeral expenses

What can the funds not be used for?

- Ongoing secondary source of income for daily living

- Nonessential expenses (entertainment, furnishings, vacations, etc.)
- To pay down credit cards or student loans
- To pay for ongoing education or sabbatical expenses
- To pay for long-term disability expenses

Who determines whether funds are granted?

Develop Leaders staff

How much can I ask for?

Funds are limited, but please ask for what you need. We will help as much as we are able.

How are the funds distributed?

- Payments will be issued directly to creditors.
- Reimbursements will be made to pastors against paid receipts.
- Instances that require cash purchases are paid directly to the pastor.

How do I apply?

Fill out the application here. <https://www.123formbuilder.com/form-5394777/>

What documents are necessary?

Paid receipts or unpaid invoices

What happens after I apply?

You will be contacted by Develop Leaders staff.

Develop Leaders is managing the Ministers' Crisis Fund process. Please contact Theresa.Marks@covchurch.org with all inquiries or questions.

General

Can we apply for both a short-term loan and a missional relief grant?

Yes. You can use the same application for both, and check the appropriate boxes. <https://eccstartandstrengthenchurches.formstack.com/forms/fri>

Can Canadian churches apply?

Yes. The ECC is committed to standing together with the churches and camps of the Evangelical Covenant Church of Canada. As a first step to apply, please contact the ECC at office@covchurch.ca.

How can my church join this relief effort?

While many churches are experiencing challenges at this time, some congregations may be seeking ways to join in the relief effort. You can support the COVID-19 Financial Relief Initiative at **link** (we are working on creating this link now). Any funds donated will directly support relief efforts.