

Remote Worker Grant Program

Annual Report
January 1, 2019 to September 15, 2019

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About the Remote Worker Grant Program

The Remote Worker Grant Program is managed by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development's Department of Economic Development. This grant program provides funds to offset the cost of relocating to Vermont which helps Vermonters by increasing the population of taxpayers in the state as well as increasing the number of children enrolled in Vermont schools. It also helps to build the employment base as Vermont faces a workforce shortage and employers are struggling to find workers.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Vermont Legislature in 2018 passed legislation as part of [Act 197, Sec. 1](#) creating the Remote Worker Grant Program, which was signed into law by Governor Phil Scott. The Agency of Commerce & Community Development (ACCD) was tasked with the implementation of the program. The purpose of the program is to address the need for more workers in Vermont as well as promote remote workers and remote work arrangements.

Media awareness of the program began with the passage of Act 197 in spring of 2018 and has remained high. Thousands of people called and emailed ACCD for information, [ThinkVermont.com](#) website traffic skyrocketed, and thousands of FAQs and applications were downloaded. Many state, county, and municipal officials from other states inquired about the program as a means to attract residents. Nine months into the fully-operational program, interest remains strong.

Between the passage of Act 197 and December 31, 2018, program development by ACCD staff included defining eligibility criteria, creating web content, creating an application with instructions and *Frequently Asked Questions*, and establishing an application workflow. ACCD staff implemented procedures for awarding grants that included: accepting and reviewing applications; standards for notifying applicants of status updates; receiving Form W-9s and applicant surveys; issuing awards; file maintenance and record retention. A Granting Plan, as required by Vermont Bulletin 5, was submitted to the Agency of Administration and received approval June 18, 2019. As of September 15, 2019, ACCD awarded \$320,834 in grants to 84 new Vermont remote workers.

OUTCOMES AS OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2019

Totals

Between January 1 and September 15, 2019, ACCD awarded \$320,834 to 84 new Vermont remote workers. Grants ranged from \$400 to \$5,000; the average grant awarded was \$3,819. As of September 15, 2019, the grant application was downloaded 4,201 times.

The average grant
award was
\$3,819



4,201

Application Downloads



84

Grants Awarded



\$320,834

Total Funds Awarded

Grantees brought with them an additional 134 family members (including 44 children), for a total of 218 new Vermonters.

218

New Vermonters from
grantees and additional
family members.



84

Grantees



90

Additional Family Adults



44

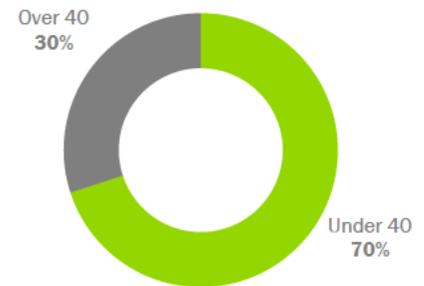
Additional Family Children

Demographics

AGE

Of the remote worker grantees, 70% are under the age of 40. The average age for grantees at the time of their award was 39 years.

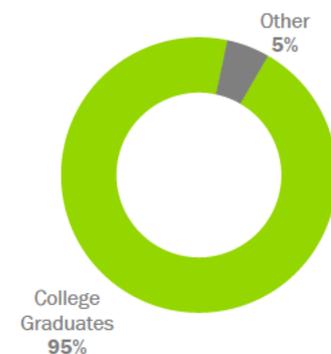
AWARDEE AGE DISTRIBUTION



EDUCATION

Ninety-five percent of the grantees are college graduates. 37% have completed graduate school.

AWARDEE LEVELS OF EDUCATION



OCCUPATIONS

The top fields of employment represented by grantees were information technology (31%), management (13%), writing and editing (8%), finance and sales (both tied at 6%), and marketing (5%). Other fields represented included insurance, education, project management, and law. Vermont co-working space memberships were purchased by fourteen grantees and six additional grantees indicated they are considering doing so.

TOP FIELDS OF EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTED BY AWARDEES



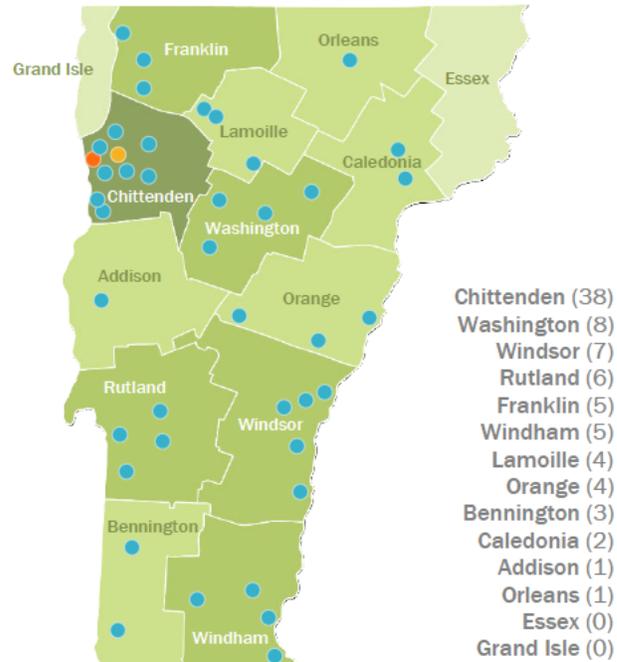
Geographic Distribution of Grantees

Grantees relocated to Vermont from 30 different states, settling in 42 different towns across 12 Vermont counties.

WHERE GRANTEEES SETTLED

- 1-4
- 5-9
- 10+ By Community
- 1-4
- 5-9
- 10+ By County

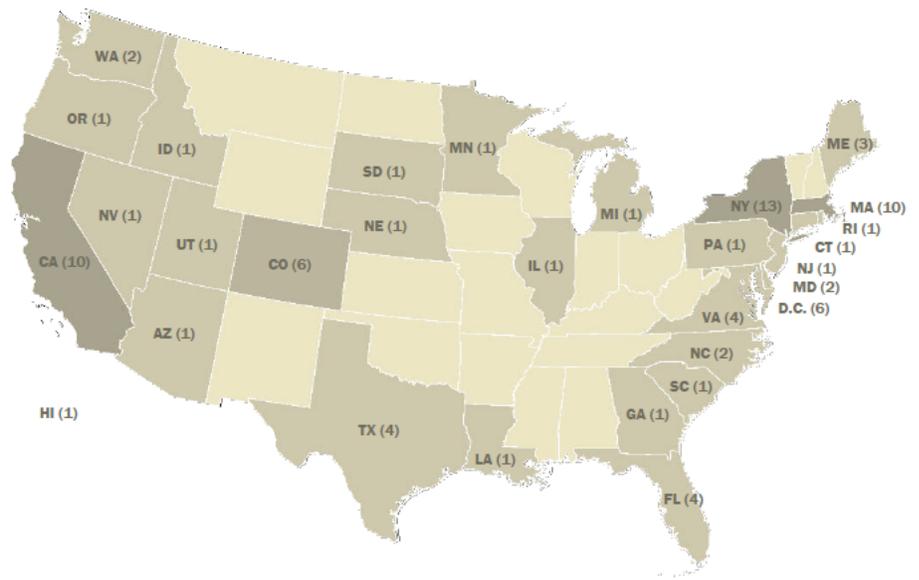
Awardees settled in
42
different Vermont
cities/towns.



WHERE GRANTEEES RELOCATED FROM

- 1-4
- 5-9
- 10+

Awardees moved from
30
different states.



Prior Vermont Experience

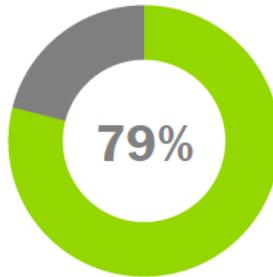
The majority of grantees (96%) had previously experienced Vermont. When asked if they had prior Vermont experience, grantees reported:

96%

of grantees have
previously experienced
Vermont.

4%

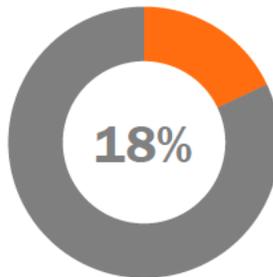
of grantees have
no prior Vermont
experience.



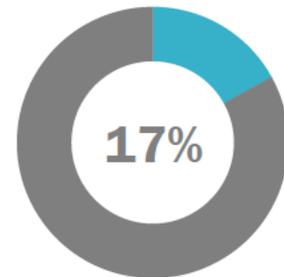
Vacationing in Vermont



Visited Family in Vermont



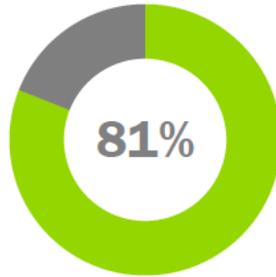
Working in Vermont



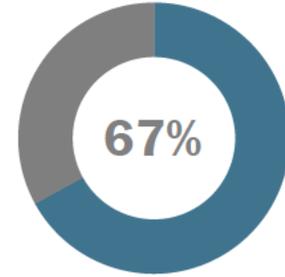
Attending School in Vermont

Other Motivations

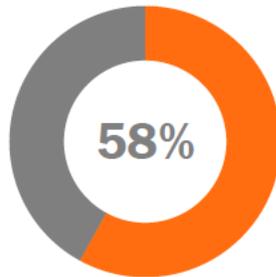
When grantees were asked which of the below factors attracted them to move to Vermont, this is what they shared:



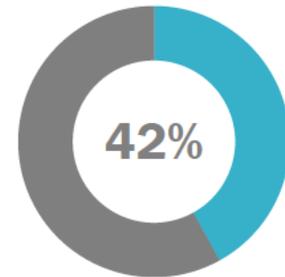
Access to Outdoor Recreation and Nature



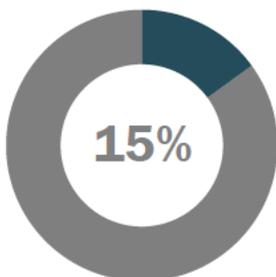
Safe Place to Live and Raise a Family



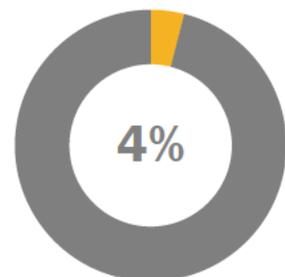
Remote Worker Grant Program



Friends and Family Live Here



Quality Education



Available Job Opportunities

While others noted they were motivated by affordability, previous Vermont residency or school enrollment, environment, quality of life, political climate, leaving urban life, climate-resilient geographical location, and a robust culture of natural/local food production.

DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES

The program application process starts with a visit to ThinkVermont.com or Vermont Department of Economic Development's website (acd.vermont.gov/economic-development/remoteworkergrantprogram) for the downloadable [FAQs](#) and [application](#). The application has two parts: one for the remote worker and one for the employer. The applicant is responsible for submitting both parts. Completed applications with supporting documentation are submitted via email and a confirmation of receipt is sent.

Applications are reviewed for program eligibility and evidence of eligible grant expenditures. Staff utilize a checklist to review each application for the following criteria:

- Program Eligibility
- Proof of Vermont residency
- Expense eligibility (relocation, computer software/hardware, broadband access/upgrade, co-working space membership)
- Employer verification
- Supporting documentation

Upon review of an application, the applicant will receive an email notifying them if further information is needed or approval. If further information is needed, they will receive a list of the specific items needed to support the application.

When an application is determined to be complete and eligible, the application and supporting documentation receives a final review by a second staff member and the applicant receives a notification to submit a W-9 and complete a short demographic survey. Once the survey and W-9 are received the applicant is notified they have been awarded a grant and the exact amount of the grant. A risk-assessment is completed, and the grant agreement is then generated and sent to the grantee outlining the program and the expense types granted. The grantee must sign the grant agreement and return it for final signature execution by the Commissioner at which point grant funds are disbursed.

Over
981

Articles have been
written about
the Program.

90%

of remote workers
heard about the
program through
the media.

PROMOTION AND MARKETING

News of the program spread quickly as soon as the initial bill left committee. **Fast Company** was the first national media outlet to cover it, and from there it went viral. The word quickly spread about the “move to Vermont, get \$10,000” promotion.

ACCD leadership has participated in many national media interviews (and some international). DCI, the public relations firm contracted by ACCD, has calculated that the dollar value of program media coverage to date (along with its companion program **Stay to Stay Weekends**) is equivalent to over \$7 million. Over 981 articles have been written about the program. This media coverage has generated more than two billion impressions. With such extensive media coverage, promotion by ACCD was limited to website and program development as well as correcting misinformation.

SUCCESS STORIES

Miguel Turner

Miguel Turner, a 37-year old cyber security expert, and his growing family relocated to the state from Miami. He and his wife with their two children had been living in a suburban home with less than an acre of land. With another child on the way and family ties to the Pawlet area, they relocated to Vermont and purchased a \$450,000 post-and-beam style home on nine acres in Cambridge with views of Mount Mansfield.

Turner, said he, too, feels the taxes he's paying and the restaurants, wineries and other businesses his family plans to patronize as they explore their new home will more than make their clan a net contributor to the state's economy. *"I'd like to think that I'm the type of person they were looking for,"* he said.



Colin Palkovitz

"I really value working remotely, it just innately enables me to be wherever I want to be, and to have my family be with me in a setting where we choose a location and a culture," said Colin Palkovitz, a remote worker who traveled across the country with his wife and their two kids in search of a new place to call home. They dreamed of owning land and that dream became reality when they purchased a 64-acre property in Pawlet, formerly a meditation retreat, with ponds and creeks.



"It's very peaceful and secluded and you can feel that," he said describing his property that includes an abundance of land with ponds and creeks that have changed the pace of living for his family. *"The kids spend afternoons in the pond, playing in the creek catching frogs and snakes – they're raising chickens and bunnies. It's been exactly what we were looking for."*

Teddy Martin

Teddy Martin and his wife relocated to Brattleboro from New York City. *"We didn't feel like we wanted to be in New York anymore,"* said the 30-year old software engineer. They first considered New Orleans, where Martin grew up. Teddy's sister was already living in Vermont and news of the grant program was hard to ignore. *"People kept telling me about it,"* he said. So far the couple are enjoying the change of scenery. *"We generally feel healthier."* *"We have more space, there is no question,"* he said of their rented apartment.



AMENDMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Remote Worker program was originally appropriated \$500,000 as follows:

Fiscal Year 2019 (to begin January 1, 2019) \$125,000

Fiscal Year 2020 (to begin July 1, 2019) \$250,000

Fiscal Year 2021 (to begin July 1, 2020) \$125,000

The entire FY2019 appropriation (\$125,000) had been awarded two months before the end of the fiscal year while ACCD continued to receive grant applications. During the 2019 session, the Legislature approved a change to the program funding allowing the remaining \$375,000 in program funds to be awarded starting July 1, 2019 removing the FY2020 cap. It is anticipated the program will have awarded all \$500,000 by the end of calendar year 2019.

During the 2019 session the Legislature also removed the restriction that remote worker's employers must be domiciled outside of Vermont. This allows remote workers who are employed by Vermont companies to be eligible for the program.

Recommendations

The Legislature specifically requested recommendations for “qualifying remote worker expenses or qualifying workers that should be eligible under the program, and any recommendations for the maximum amount of the grant.”

- Eligible workers for the current program must be full-time employees of a company and receive a W-2 from that company. ACCD received many inquiries from individuals who were self-employed wondering if they were eligible. **An incentive for the self-employed and entrepreneurs could address that demographic.**
- During the 2019 session the Legislature appropriated \$1.195M for a new relocation incentive for workers who move to Vermont on or after January 1, 2020 to work full-time for employers based in Vermont (New Worker Incentive Program, **Act 80, Sec. 12**). Once the funding for the Remote Worker Grant Program is fully disbursed, rather than re-allocating funds to this program, **it would be simpler to include remote workers in the New Worker Incentive Program.**
- ACCD will be asking the Legislature in 2020 to **add language providing for the Agency to work with the Department of Taxes to verify the filing status of grantees.**

APPENDIX: ACT 197, SEC. 1 OF 2018

No. 197. An act relating to promoting remote work.

(S.94)

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

* * * Promoting Remote Workers and Remote Work Arrangements * * *

Sec. 1. NEW REMOTE WORKER GRANT PROGRAM

(a) As used in this section:

(1) “New remote worker” means an individual who:

- (A) is a full-time employee of a business with its domicile or primary place of business outside Vermont;
- (B) becomes a full-time resident of this State on or after January 1, 2019; and
- (C) performs the majority of his or her employment duties remotely from a home office or a co-working space located in this State.

(2) “Qualifying remote worker expenses” means actual costs a new remote worker incurs for one or more of the following that are necessary to perform his or her employment duties:

- (A) relocation to this State;
- (B) computer software and hardware;
- (C) broadband access or upgrade; and
- (D) membership in a co-working or similar space.

(b) (1) The Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall design and implement the New Remote Worker Grant Program, which shall include a simple certification process to certify new remote workers and certify qualifying expenses for a grant under this section.

(2) A new remote worker may be eligible for a grant under the Program for qualifying remote worker expenses in the amount of not more than \$5,000.00 per year, not to exceed a total of \$10,000.00 per individual new remote worker over the life of the Program.

(3) The Agency shall award grants under the Program on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to available funding, as follows:

- (A) not more than \$125,000.00 in calendar year 2019;
- (B) not more than \$250,000.00 in calendar year 2020;
- (C) not more than \$125,000.00 in calendar year 2021; and
- (D) not more than \$100,000.00 per year in each subsequent calendar year, to the extent funding remains available.

- (c) The Agency shall:
 - (1) adopt procedures for implementing the Program;
 - (2) promote awareness of the Program, including through coordination with relevant trade groups and by integration into the Agency's economic development marketing campaigns; and
 - (3) adopt measurable goals, performance measures, and an audit strategy to assess the utilization and performance of the Program.
- (d) On or before October 1, 2019, the Agency shall submit a report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs concerning the implementation of this section, including:
 - (1) a description of the procedures adopted pursuant to subdivision
 - (c) (1) of this section;
 - (2) the promotion and marketing of the Program pursuant to subdivision
 - (c) (2) of this section; and
 - (3) any additional recommendations for qualifying remote worker expenses or qualifying workers that should be eligible under the Program, and any recommendations for the maximum amount of the grant.

APPENDIX: ACT 80, SEC. 12 OF 2019

Sec. 12. NEW WORKER RELOCATION INCENTIVE PROGRAM

- (a) The Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall design and implement a New Worker Relocation Incentive Program to award incentive grants to new workers as provided in this section and subject to the policies and procedures the Agency adopts to implement the Program.
- (b) Incentives for new workers. A new worker may be eligible for a grant under the Program for qualifying expenses, subject to the following:
 - (1) A base grant for a new worker shall not exceed \$5,000.00.
 - (2) The Agency may award an enhanced grant, which shall not exceed \$7,500.00, for a new worker who relocates to a labor market area in this State in which:
 - (A) the average annual unemployment rate in the labor market area exceeds the average annual unemployment rate in the State; or
 - (B) the average annual wage in the State exceeds the annual average wage in the labor market area.
- (c) The Agency shall:
 - (1) adopt procedures for implementing the Program, which shall include a simple certification process to certify new workers and qualifying expenses;
 - (2) promote awareness of the Program, including through coordination with relevant trade groups and by integration into the Agency's economic development marketing campaigns;
 - (3) award grants on a first-come, first-served basis beginning January 1, 2020, subject to available funding; and
 - (4) adopt measurable goals, performance measures, and an audit strategy to assess the utilization and performance of the Program
- (d) On or before October 1, 2020, the Agency shall submit a report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs concerning the implementation of this section, including:
 - (1) a description of the policies and procedures adopted to implement the Program; and
 - (2) the promotion and marketing of the Program.
- (e) As used in this section:
 - (1) "New worker" means an individual who on or after January 1, 2020:

- (A) becomes a full-time resident of this State;
 - (B) becomes a full-time employee of a business domiciled or authorized to do business in this State;
 - (C) (i) is employed in an occupation identified by the Department of Labor in its 2016–2026 Long Term Occupational Projections as one of the top occupations at each level of educational attainment typical for entry; or
(ii) who the Agency determines should otherwise receive an incentive grant under the Program because the worker possesses exceptional education, skills, or training or due to other extraordinary circumstances; and
 - (D) whose gross wage for the position equals or exceeds:
 - (i) 160 percent of the State minimum wage; or
 - (ii) if the employer is located in a labor market area in which the average annual unemployment rate is higher than the average annual unemployment rate for the State, 140 percent of the State minimum wage.
- (2) “Qualifying expenses” means the actual costs that a new worker incurs for one or more of the following:
- (A) relocation expenses, which may include closing costs for a primary residence; rental security deposit; first month’s rent payment; and other expenses established in Agency guidelines; and
 - (B) expenses necessary for a new worker to perform his or her employment duties, including connectivity costs, specialized tools and equipment, and other expenses established in Agency guidelines.

STATE OF VERMONT REMOTE WORKER GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION



INSTRUCTIONS

Program Definition

The criteria outlined below will be used to determine eligibility for the Remote Worker Grant Program. Applicants must meet all criteria to be eligible.

- A. New remote worker must be an individual who is a full-time employee as defined by the employer, and who receives a W-2 from their employer.
- B. New remote worker must relocate to Vermont and become a full-time resident of Vermont on or after January 1, 2019.
- C. New remote worker must perform the majority of their employment duties remotely from a home office or co-working space in Vermont.
- D. New remote worker must have incurred qualifying remote worker expenses. "Qualifying Remote Worker Expenses" is defined as actual costs a new remote worker incurred for relocation to Vermont and/or one or more of the following that are necessary to perform their employment duties that are not already reimbursed by the employer: computer software or hardware, broadband access or upgrade, membership in a co-working or similar space.
- E. New remote workers may be eligible to receive a reimbursement grant upon receipt by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development of the Remote Worker Grant Program application with documentation supporting the qualifying expenses and proof of residency. Applications must be received complete and error free to be eligible.

How to Apply

- Step 1. The Remote Worker Grant Program Application has two parts. Complete Part A: EMPLOYEE, including all requested information in the Applicant Information, Eligibility, Proof of Residency, and Qualifying Remote Worker Expenses sections of the application.
- Step 2. Provide the entire application (Parts A and B) to your Employer and ask your Employer to complete Part B: EMPLOYER and return the completed application to you (the Employee).
- Step 3. Submit your complete application via email to [REDACTED]. A completed application, submitted as one single PDF file, must include:
 - Part A: EMPLOYEE, including signature
 - Part B: EMPLOYER, including signature
 - Documentation required for Proof of Residency (see Section 3)
 - Documentation of Qualifying Remote Worker Expenses (see Section 4)

Remote Worker Grants will be awarded on a first come, first served basis upon receipt of complete and error free applications. Subject to funding availability, applicants may receive up to \$5,000 per year for up to 2 years. There is a limit of one Remote Worker Grant per household per year.

Any Questions?

Please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) posted on thinkvermont.com/remote-worker-grant-program/ as a place to start. If you have additional questions, please email [REDACTED]

LIVE

GROW

WORK

PLAY

2019 v1.2

THINKVERMONT.COM





INSTRUCTIONS

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STATE OF VERMONT
REMOTE WORKER GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION



PART A: EMPLOYEE (To Be Completed by Remote Worker Applicant)

Section 1: Applicant Information

First name	Last name	Phone number
Email address		
Mailing address, line 1		
Mailing address, line 2		
City	State	Zip code
Physical or home address <input type="radio"/> Check if same as mailing address		
City	State	Zip code

Section 2: Eligibility

Answer the following questions for the above-named person to determine eligibility in the Remote Worker Grant Program.

For more information, see *Frequently Asked Questions* at thinkvermont.com/remote-worker-grant-program/

Did you relocate to Vermont and become a full-time resident of Vermont on or after January 1, 2019?	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
	Date of relocation	
Are you a full-time employee that receives a W-2 for wages?	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
Name of employer	Job title	
Do you perform most of your employment duties remotely from a home office or co-working space in Vermont?	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
Did you incur qualifying remote worker expenses? <i>Refer to Section 4</i>	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No

Section 3: Proof of Vermont Residency

Complete both Column One and Column Two

Column One

Enter the last four digits of your valid Vermont Drivers License or Vermont Real ID

Column Two

PLUS include one piece of documentation from the list at right that is in your name and includes your physical Vermont address. *Street name and town must be listed.*

- Housing lease or contract
- Utility bill with service address listed
- Property tax bill
- Homeowner / renter insurance

**STATE OF VERMONT
REMOTE WORKER GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION**



PART A: EMPLOYEE (To Be Completed by Remote Worker Applicant)

Section 4: Qualifying Remote Worker Expenses

“Qualifying Remote Worker Expenses” is defined as actual costs a new remote worker incurred for relocation to Vermont and/or one or more of the following that are necessary to perform their employment duties that are not already reimbursed by the employer: computer software or hardware, broadband access or upgrade, membership in a co-working or similar space.

Enter the Qualifying Remote Worker Expenses in the table below that you would like to claim in this application. Specify one expense per line. Additional sheets of paper may be added as necessary. Provide documentation and receipts for all expenses. Applications received without documentation of expenses will be considered incomplete. Amounts for employer reimbursed expenses in column B must match the employer declared Qualifying Remote Worker Expenses in Part B, Section 7.

Applicants may submit only one application per year. For expense amounts in excess of the \$5,000 maximum per year, applicants may reapply one year from their initial application date. Funding will be awarded on a first come, first served basis, subject to funding availability.

Expense type	Amount (Column A)	Employer reimbursed (Column B)	Net amount reimbursable (Column A minus B)	Documentation or receipts provided?	
Relocation to Vermont					
	\$	\$	\$	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
	\$	\$	\$	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
	\$	\$	\$	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
	\$	\$	\$	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
Sub-total	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00		
Computer software or hardware					
	\$	\$	\$	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
	\$	\$	\$	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
Sub-total	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00		
Broadband access or upgrade					
	\$	\$	\$	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
Sub-total	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00		
Membership in co-working space					
	\$	\$	\$	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
Sub-total	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00		
Sum of all sub-totals	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00		

I understand I am only eligible to receive one grant per year and have included all Qualifying Remote Worker Expenses in this application. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Vermont that the information provided in the Part A: Employee Section is true and correct.

Employee name	Title	Date
Employee signature		

Any person who knowingly presents a false claim for payment to the State is at risk of criminal prosecution including up to five years imprisonment and a fine of up to \$10,000, and may also be liable under the Vermont False Claims Act for up to three times the amount falsely claimed plus a penalty of \$5,500 to \$11,000. (Note: Amounts that do not match the amount claimed by the employer in Part B, Section 7, will be limited to the amount provided by the employer.)



STATE OF VERMONT REMOTE WORKER GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION



PART B: EMPLOYER (Must Be Completed Entirely by Employer of Remote Worker)

The below-named employee is an applicant to the Vermont Remote Worker Grant Program, which provides reimbursement funding for "Qualifying Remote Worker Expenses." Qualifying Remote Worker Expenses is defined as actual costs a new remote worker incurred for one or more of the following that are necessary to perform their employment duties that are not already reimbursed by the employer: relocation to Vermont, computer software or hardware, broadband access or upgrade, membership in a co-working or similar space.

Section 5: Employee Information

First name	Last name	Job title
Is the employee scheduled to receive a W-2 for wages earned?		<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Is the employee full-time as defined by the employer?		<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Does the applicant complete more than 50% of their work remotely?		<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

Section 6: Employer Information

Company name		
Employer representative first name	Employer representative last name	Title
Mailing address, line 1		
Mailing address, line 2		
City	State	Zip code
Location of employer's domicile or primary place of business		

Section 7: Qualifying Remote Worker Expenses

Enter the Qualifying Remote Worker Expenses in the table below that you have or will reimburse to the employee. If you will NOT be providing expenses for reimbursement, enter zero. *(Note: Amounts that do not match the amount claimed by the employee in Part A, Section 4, Column B will be limited to the amount provided by the employer in the table below.)*

Expense type	Reimbursed by Employer
Relocation to Vermont	\$
Computer software or hardware	\$
Broadband access or upgrade	\$
Membership in co-working space	\$
Total	\$ 0.00

STATE OF VERMONT REMOTE WORKER GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION



PART B: EMPLOYER (Must Be Completed Entirely by Employer of Remote Worker)

If you are providing employment within the State of Vermont, you are subject to Vermont labor laws. It is the employer's responsibility to comply with Vermont's labor laws. An employer's liability for Unemployment Insurance coverage is governed by 21 V.S.A. chapter 17 and is dependent on the amount of remuneration and type of employment, as defined in that chapter. An employer must also comply with Vermont's Workers' Compensation law, 21 V.S.A. chapter 9. Coverage must be provided for any employee working in Vermont through a private insurer authorized to provide workers' compensation insurance in Vermont. Failure to comply with these legal obligations may result in the assessment of penalties and interest. For more information, please contact the Vermont Department of Labor at (802) 828-4344 (Unemployment Insurance Division), (802) 828-2286 (Workers' Compensation Division), or online at <http://www.labor.vermont.gov>.

Employers of remote workers will have a Vermont tax withholding and filing requirement. An employer is considered to have nexus with Vermont for income tax purposes if it has one or more employees working in Vermont, including employees who work or telecommute from their homes in Vermont.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Vermont that the information provided in the Part B: Employer Section is true and correct.

Employer representative name	Title	Date
Email address	Phone number	
Employer signature		

Any person who knowingly presents a false claim for payment to the State is at risk of criminal prosecution including up to five years imprisonment and a fine of up to \$10,000, and may also be liable under the Vermont False Claims Act for up to three times the amount falsely claimed plus a penalty of \$5,500 to \$11,000.

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1. What is a remote worker?

A remote worker is someone who performs the majority of their employment duties from a home office or coworking space.

2. Who is eligible to apply?

An eligible remote worker is someone who:

- Is a full-time employee of a company; **and**
- Has moved to Vermont on or after January 1, 2019; **and**
- Performs the majority of their employment duties remotely from a home office or coworking space in Vermont; **and**
- Has incurred qualified remote worker expenses.

3. What if I move to Vermont and work for a Vermont company, but not as a remote worker?

You are not considered a remote worker if you do not perform the majority of your employment duties remotely from a home office or coworking space.

However, you may be eligible for a new program effective January 1, 2020: the New Worker Incentive Program. This program will provide reimbursement for eligible expenses for workers who move to Vermont on or after January 1, 2020 to work full-time for an employer located in Vermont. Visit the [ThinkVermont Relocate](https://www.thinkvermont.com/relocate/) page for more information (<https://www.thinkvermont.com/relocate/>).

4. What if I do not receive a Form W-2, can I still apply?

No. The program is for those employees who receive a W-2 from their employer.

5. Can an applicant receive a grant before moving to Vermont?

No. Eligible applicants must have moved to Vermont on or after January 1, 2019 and provide documentation of qualified expenses incurred.

6. How does an applicant prove residency in Vermont?

To become eligible, applicants must provide the last four digits of their valid Vermont-issued drivers license or non-driver identification card, plus one of the following:

- Housing lease or contract
- Utility bill with service address listed
- Property tax bill
- Homeowner/renter insurance

7. How does the application process work?

The application process opened on January 1, 2019. The application has two parts: one for the Remote Worker (Part A) and one for the Employer (Part B). Applicants must submit the entire completed application (A+B) to become eligible for a grant. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide the Employer section of the application to their employer and to submit the completed Employer section (B) with the Remote Worker section (A) as one complete application (A+B). You must also submit supporting documentation for verification of expenses claimed in the application and proof of residency to be eligible for a grant.

Once a complete, error-free application is received, the applicant will be asked to fill out a brief demographic survey and a W-9 (“Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification” form). Once the results of that survey and the complete and error-free W-9 are received, the applicant will receive notification of the status of their grant award, subject to funding availability, or instructions on future funding opportunities. When the applicant is notified that they will receive a grant award, they must sign and return a grant document. When the signed grant document form is returned, the award will be sent to the address provided on the application.

8. How much money can an applicant receive?

Applicants are eligible to receive reimbursement for the full amount of their qualifying expenses, up to the maximum amount of \$5,000 per year for up to two years and subject to funds availability. There is a limit of one Remote Worker Grant per household per year. A new application must be submitted each year.

9. If someone submits an application for a grant, will that automatically qualify them for a grant the following year?

No. Remote workers must submit a new application for each year. Grants are first come, first served and subject to funds availability.

10. How is “first come, first served” applied?

There is a limited amount of funding for the Remote Worker Grant Program. Applicants that submit a complete, error-free application, the subsequent survey, and W-9 on or after January 1, 2019 are eligible to receive grants. Applicants whose applications are received and confirmed complete and eligible first will receive grants until all the funding allocated has been awarded.

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11. What happens when the funding is gone?

Once all of the program funding has been awarded, no further grants will be awarded.

12. What are “qualified remote worker expenses”?

Qualified remote worker expenses are: relocation expenses, computer software or hardware, broadband access or upgrade, membership in a coworking or similar space. See questions 14–17 for more detailed descriptions of each type.

13. What supporting documentation do I need to submit as proof of qualified remote worker expenses?

Applicants must provide proof of expense and payment in their own name. Expenses not yet paid are not eligible for reimbursement.

14. What qualifies as “relocation expenses”?

“Relocation expenses” include the cost of hiring a moving company or renting moving equipment (including rental vehicle insurance fees), lease deposits, and the cost of moving supplies.

15. What qualifies as “computer software or hardware”?

“Computer software or hardware” refers to software or equipment directly related to the performance of employment duties. It can include software subscriptions or one-time downloads or packages. Equipment can include computers, printers, scanners, external drives, or other IT equipment directly related to performing employment duties.

16. What qualifies as “broadband access or upgrade”?

“Broadband access or upgrade” refers to the cost of connecting to the internet so that an employee can perform their work remotely. It can refer to a monthly subscription for internet access via a cable, DSL, or satellite connection. It can also include the cost of internet connectivity related equipment including routers and signal boosters. It does not include the cost of cable television or telephone service, which are often bundled in the monthly cost of internet access. It does not include the cost of cable television or telephone service related devices that also connect to the internet such as cable boxes or mobile phones.

17. What is a coworking space?

A coworking space is a shared location outside of the home ideal for remote workers and small business owners, that provides a flexible size, environment, and contract terms.

18. If my employer reimburses a portion of the costs for any eligible remote worker expenses, can I submit an application for the remaining eligible expenses?

Yes. An applicant can apply for any portion of qualified remote worker expenses that are not paid or reimbursed by their employer.

19. Can more than one person per household apply separately for the grant?

No. There can be only one grant awarded per household per year.

20. Are college students eligible for this program?

No. The Program is for people employed full-time who meet all the eligibility criteria. See question 2.

21. Does this program provide job placement or housing location services?

No. Applicants are responsible for obtaining their own employment and housing.

If you are looking for a job, a good place to start is the ThinkVermont Find a Job page (<https://www.thinkvermont.com/find-job/>). This will direct you to some resources to help you start your search. If you are looking for specific guidance, you can contact the Vermont Department of Labor for assistance (<https://www.vermontjoblink.com/ada/r/>).

Here are some tools to help with relocating to Vermont:

- For data on demographics, median home prices, and services and amenities, use the ThinkVermont Community Atlas (<https://www.vermontcommunityatlas.com/>).
- For an overview of Vermont’s regions, visit the Communities page on Think Vermont (<https://www.thinkvermont.com/communities/>).
- For housing, try the real estate app and the realtor listings at the bottom of the ThinkVermont Relocate page (<https://www.thinkvermont.com/relocate/>).
- For basic information about Vermont’s schools, visit the Schools page on Think Vermont (<https://www.thinkvermont.com/schools-childcare-prek-k12-education/>).

22. If I have more questions, where can I find additional information?

All the details of the remote worker grant program can be found at <https://www.thinkvermont.com/remote-worker-grant-program/> or you can send an email to [REDACTED]