

HUBZone Program Compliance Flexibilities During the **CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC (COVID-19)**

The Small Business Administration (SBA) is here to support and offer resources and guidance during this challenging time. In response to COVID-19, the HUBZone program is offering the following flexibilities to HUBZone businesses effective immediately:

Recertification requirements

SBA will temporarily suspend requirements for annual recertification.

- All firms, including those that were due to recertify in 2020 under the triennial recertification schedule (e.g., firms that last recertified in 2017), will not be decertified for failure to recertify.
- Firms that voluntarily choose to recertify on their anniversary date will be provided with instruction about how to do this.
- Please note: A firm that submits an offer for a HUBZone contract for a solicitation issued after December 26, 2019, must be prepared to demonstrate its eligibility as of the date of its initial certification, or if applicable, its most recent recertification.

Student residence hall closures

SBA will temporarily recognize the HUBZone resident status of any student employee required to move from student housing in a HUBZone to a non-HUBZone location. (This applies only to students who were already on payroll and had residency established prior to the university closing.)

- HUBZone firms may continue to count student employees as HUBZone residents by providing documentation showing:
 - The university/college closed the student residence; and
 - The employee has been maintained on the payroll.

Compliance under mandatory telework

SBA will allow firms who place employees on mandatory telework to maintain compliance with the principal office requirement, for certification and recertification purposes, if the firm met the principal office requirement prior to the telework measures being put in place.

- Firms will be required to provide a signed statement that:
 1. They put their employees on telework in response to social distancing restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic;
 2. The teleworking measure is temporary in nature and the employees will return to their normal work location once the teleworking measures have been lifted; and
 3. The firm will make its best effort to provide meaningful work to employees on telework.

Sick leave and non-paid status for “Legacy” HUBZone employees

SBA recognizes that many firms have had to place employees on extended (unpaid) sick leave status or are contemplating layoffs.

- The revised HUBZone regulations, which became effective December 26, 2019, allow firms to count “legacy” HUBZone resident employees as permanent HUBZone resident employees if they can demonstrate that the employee was a HUBZone resident for 180 days prior to and for 180 days following the firm’s HUBZone certification or recertification.
- SBA will allow HUBZone companies to place an employee in a **temporary** non-paid status during the COVID-19 pandemic and still meet the “continued and uninterrupted employment” requirement, if the firm certifies that it intends to rehire those individuals or put those individuals back on their payroll after the pandemic.

Expedited certification process

The HUBZone program may expedite the application of any firm that submits a complete package for certification and indicates that they intend to respond to a specified solicitation that relates to COVID-19.

SBA Assistance

- Information related to financial support programs: www.sba.gov/coronavirus.
- For questions related to contracts with a federal agency, reach out to: contracting@sba.gov.
- For general business support, visit one of SBA’s resource partners (SCORE, SBDCs, WBC, VBOC, and PTAC): www.sba.gov/local-assistance.

For support with your HUBZone application

- **Visit** the HUBZone website: sba.gov/coronavirus
- **View** location eligibility: maps.certify.sba.gov/hubzone/map
- **Email** our Help Desk with specific questions: hubzone@sba.gov
- **Call** our staff via our weekly conference call—every Thursday at 2 p.m. ET: 202-765-1264; Access code: 63068189#

****Please note:** After COVID-19 restrictions are removed or diminished, the HUBZone program may conduct program reviews to ensure that firms have returned to following standard compliance practices.*



U.S. Small Business
Administration