

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Deadline for SBA Working Capital Loans in St. Croix Set for January 16, 2024

Final call for loan applications amidst drought-induced economic strain

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The U.S. Small Business Administration has issued a reminder to small businesses, agricultural cooperatives, aquaculture businesses, and most private nonprofit organizations in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, that the deadline to apply for federal economic injury disaster loans is January 16, 2024.

These loans are intended to assist those who have incurred losses due to drought conditions that began on March 21, 2023.

The SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program is open to farm-related and nonfarm-related entities that have experienced financial losses directly due to the disaster. However, agricultural producers, farmers, and ranchers, except aquaculture enterprises, are not eligible for these disaster loans. Nurseries are also eligible to apply for loans to cover losses caused by the drought.

The maximum loan amount is set at \$2 million. The interest rates are 4% for small businesses and 2.375% for private nonprofit organizations. Loan terms can extend up to 30 years. Eligibility for these loans is determined by the SBA based on the size of the applicant, type of activity, and financial resources.

Loan amounts and terms are customized to each applicant's financial situation. The purpose of these working capital loans is to help pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable, and other bills that the disaster has made challenging to pay. These loans are not designed to compensate for lost sales or profits.

Interested applicants can apply online and find additional information about disaster assistance at [SBA.gov/disaster](https://www.sba.gov/disaster). For further inquiries, the SBA's Customer Service Center can be contacted at (800) 659-2955 or via email at disastercustomerservice@sba.gov. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability can access telecommunications relay services by dialing 7-1-1.

The SBA emphasizes the importance of submitting completed loan applications by the deadline of January 16, 2024.