



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BACP ENTREPRENEUR CERTIFICATE PROGRAM LAUNCHES USER-FRIENDLY PORTAL

The newly redesigned portal allows current and future business owners to track program progress, ultimately leading to eligibility to apply for a loan with partner bank, CIBC Bank USA

CHICAGO –The Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) has redesigned the free BACP Entrepreneur Certificate Program to make completing the program easier, quicker, and more efficient. Part of the redesign includes launching a new program portal giving the participant full access to progress and completion details. After completing six webinars within six months in designated webinar categories, graduates are eligible to apply for the [CIBC Bank USA Entrepreneur Loan Program](#), BACP’s partner bank. The long-standing program was created to support startup or early-stage small businesses that have completed a CIBC Bank USA-approved entrepreneur training program with important working capital. To learn more, visit Chicago.gov/BACPCertificate.

“The BACP Entrepreneur Certificate Program has been an avenue for access to capital since its inception and this user-friendly web portal will make completing the program easier,” said **BACP Commissioner Kenneth J. Meyer**. “With the entrepreneur mindset driving the program redesign, BACP is looking forward to seeing more webinar attendees sign-up and complete the program.”

Since the program launched, more than 1,000 Chicago entrepreneurs and business owners have successfully completed the program. The process to complete the program:

- 1) Register: Enroll in the program by signing up at Chicago.gov/BACPCertificate. The portal makes it convenient to track progress by automatically providing credit within 24 hours of attending webinars.
- 2) Attend: View and register for upcoming webinars by visiting Chicago.gov/BACPWebinars. Attend six webinars from the below categories within six months:
 - 1) City Inspections (hosted monthly)
 - 2) Business Operations and Licensing
 - 3) Finance
 - 4) Legal
 - 5) Marketing
 - 6) Technology
- 3) Graduate: Graduate from the program after attending six webinars. Within a week of attending the final webinar, your certificate will be made available on the Portal.

Upon completion of the program, graduates are eligible to apply for CIBC Bank USA’s Entrepreneur Loan Program, terms and conditions apply. All loans are subject to credit approval. A personal guarantee is required for all Entrepreneur Program business loans and lines of credit. The Program is limited to businesses that have met certain qualifying criteria. To learn more, visit us.cibc.com.

To provide an overview of the program and loan eligibility, on Friday, January 19, 2024, at 9:30 a.m., BACP will host a webinar co-presented by CIBC Bank USA titled, “Ways to Finance Your Business.” To register for the webinar, visit [Chicago.gov/BACPWebinars](https://chicago.gov/BACPWebinars).

“At CIBC, we are driven by a shared mission with BACP, empowering business owners to achieve their ambitions,” said **Miguel Gomez, sales manager for CIBC’s US Community Development Team**. “Our partnership with the BACP provides crucial financial resources to entrepreneurs in need, and strengthens our commitment to supporting business owners.”

For current and future small business owners looking for support, BACP offers essential resources for all small business owners as they navigate their entrepreneurial journeys. For more information on BACP’s programs and services, visit [Chicago.gov/BACP](https://chicago.gov/BACP).

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