

Government of the District of Columbia



Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions
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MEMORANDUM

TO: ANC 1A
FR: Denise Wiktor, General Counsel
DT: 05/29/2025
RE: BloomBars World Pride grant application.

The OANC has received a copy of a grant request from BloomBars for a World Pride event. I have reviewed the application sent to the OANC and have found that the request is **partially permissible** expenditure in the amount of **\$1290.00**. In reviewing this application, I had two questions—is there a cover charge and since the events appear to be taking place at the BloomBars location who is receiving the venue rental. BloomBars confirmed to the OANC that there will not be a cover charge for the event. They also informed the OANC that the rental payments would be for the space they occupy and therefore would exceed the overhead limits as outlined below.

Everything above \$1100 in the grant application would be considered overhead. Fifteen percent of \$1290.00 is \$193.00 and keeping within restrictions within the D.C. Code.

It was also confirmed that BloomBars is a 501(c)(3) organization on the IRS website and the OANC has placed a copy of the exemption letter with the grant application.

There are five prongs a grant must meet to be a permissible expense¹ and a 6th requirement of the D.C. Official Code that limits the amount of a grant that can be spent on overhead². They are:

1. **Public Purpose:** ANC grants must be for “public purposes within the Commission area.”³ A public purpose is one “that includes a significant benefit for the community and is not done for the primary purpose of benefitting a private entity. These events will be open to all in the ANC and have the public purpose of bringing residents together in social and educational settings.

¹ See, *Letter to Schanette Grant on Seasoned Settlers and Grants Generally*, April 14, 2022, found at <https://oag.dc.gov/sites/default/files/2022-04/Letter-to-OANC-Re-Seasoned-Settlers-Grant-and-Grants-Generally-.pdf>

² D.C. Official Code 1-309.13(m)(2)(D) “No Commission shall provide a grant for which the grantee estimates that the overhead costs would exceed 15% of the entire grant amount.”

³ D.C. Official Code § 1-309.13(l)(1).

2. **Local Benefit:** A grant must “benefit persons who work or reside in the Commission area.”⁴ This does not mean the grant may only benefit Commission residents; it simply means the grant’s benefits should be focused on those residents.⁵ The BloomBars events are located within ANC 1A and it is believed, based upon the planned outreach that attendance will draw largely from the local neighborhoods.
3. **Proposed Project.** A grant must be for a proposed project.⁶ This is a discrete series of three events with a beginning and end in the future.
4. **Organization.** A grant must be to an “organization,” not an individual or a government entity,⁷ although the organization need not be incorporated.⁸ BloomBar is an organization within the meaning of the code.
5. **Non-Duplication.** A grant cannot duplicate any services offered by the D.C. government.⁹ The D.C. government is not organizing any events like these around World Pride.
6. **Overhead.** Overhead cannot exceed 15% of the grant amount. If the ANC limits the grant to **\$1290.00** the overhead expenditure will be 14.73%. which is below the 15% threshold.

Conclusion

For the reasons stated above this grant is a **partially permissible** expenditure of ANC funds.

⁴ D.C. Official Code § 1-309.13(m)(1).

⁵ See *Letter to Deborah K. Nichols*, Nov. 9, 2006, at 2 n.2 found at [Letter-to-Deborah-Nichols-Re-Whether-an-ANC-may-approve-a-grant-to-commission-plans-and-drawings-.pdf](#) (ANC 4C grant was permissible where the “[b]enefit to other ANCs would be incidental to the benefit conferred on ANC 4C residents,” because a grant’s benefits need not “be exclusive to the ANC that gives the grant funds”); see *Letter to Comm’r Fletcher*, Mar. 15, 2022, at 2, available at <https://oag.dc.gov/sites/default/files/2022-03/ANC-7E-Letter-to-Commissioner-Fletcher-RePublic-Purposes-Within-the-Commission-Area-.pdf> making the same point with respect to the public-purpose requirement).

⁶ D.C. Official Code § 1-309.13(m)(2)(A).

⁷ D.C. Official Code § 1-309.13(m)(1); see also *Letter to Deborah K. Nichols*, Jan. 14, 2010, at 4, available at <https://oag.dc.gov/sites/default/files/2018-02/ANC-January-14-2010-Guidelines-for-Use-of-ANC-Funds.pdf>

⁸ See *Letter to Deborah K. Nichols*, Aug., 4, 2000 at 3, available at <https://oag.dc.gov/sites/default/files/201802/ANC-August-4-2000-Grants-by-ANCs-Public-Purpose-and-Corporate-Status-of-Recipients.pdf> (“The plain meaning of the term ‘organization’ includes unincorporated associations”).

⁹ D.C. Official Code § 1-309.13(m)(1).