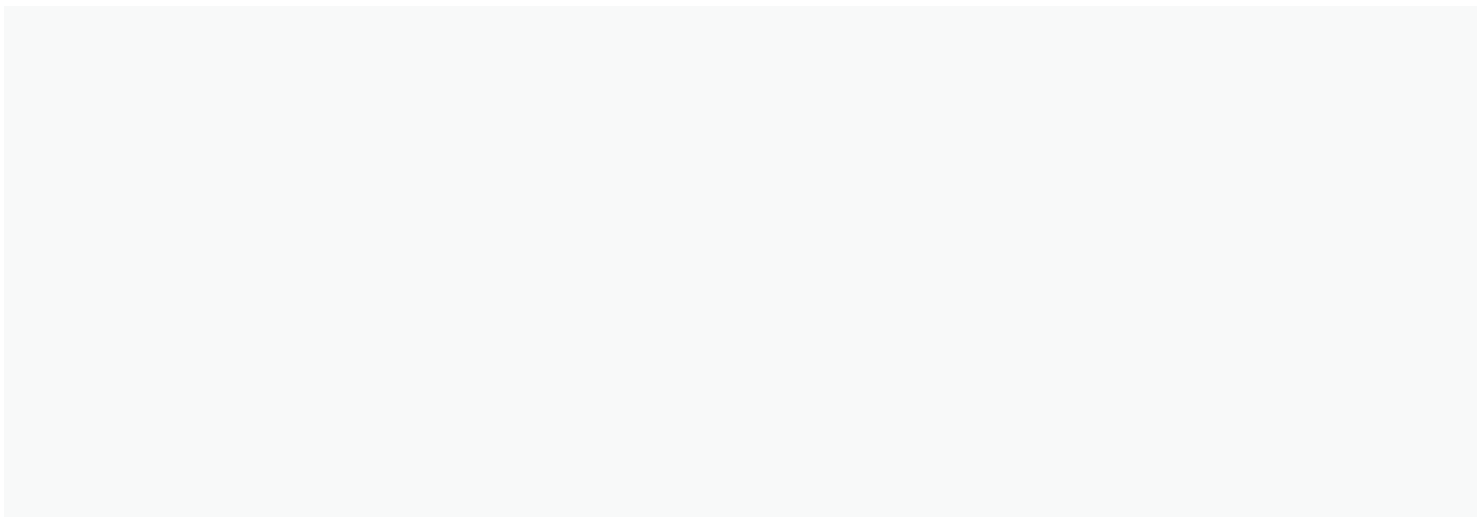


"In a global pandemic, policy makers are actively making the world a worse place for sex workers and their families," Jacq the Stripper, a New York City-based performer, wrote on Twitter. Crystal Cox/Business Insider

strict guidelines bar sex workers.



Businesses across the country are dealing with financial hardship due to coronavirus-related closures, so the US government is accepting applications under its Small Business Administration's [Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program](#).

But the application has strict guidelines that bar sex workers like [strippers](#) and [dominatrixes](#) from even being considered for government financial

In order to apply for aid, applicants must be able to check off a box in the

"In a global pandemic, policy makers are actively making the world a worse place for sex workers and their families," [Jacq the Stripper](#), a New York City-based performer, wrote on Twitter.

Others have said that their businesses, which often operate through in-person contact at strip clubs, parties, and other locations, have been hit hard financially.

Lady A, a New York City-based dominatrix, [told BuzzFeed News](#) she's losing \$500 every week because of the coronavirus.

"We would usually do say three clients per day in that space," Lady A said

Economic policies have long stigmatized sex work

Policies that bar sex workers from receiving financial aid are nothing new, according to [Kate D'Adamo](#), a sex worker rights advocate and partner at Reframe Health and Justice consulting.

"This is part of a very long legacy of excluding and exceptionalizing the sex trade, denying full participation of folks who are engaged in the sex trade within traditional services and traditional employment," D'Adamo told Insider, adding that the Small Business Association guidelines "just kind of feel like an extension of that pattern."

Although D'Adamo hasn't seen this exemption in previous Small Business Association applications, she said other state and federal policies have been written to financially burden sex workers. In Atlanta, Georgia, strippers have to [renew weekly licenses](#) to work in strip clubs because they're

The strict guidelines discriminate sex workers and could make the industry

Without financial stability, sex workers are more likely to experience exploitation, domestic violence, suicidal ideation, substance abuse, and lack of access to mental health resources, she said.

"All of those [factors] definitely have a component of 'Are you able to access your resources?' Are you now existing in incredible poverty? I think that it's really important that we recognize this moment and the way that sex workers are being excluded are absolutely creating the conditions of trafficking, exploitation, and violence," D'Adamo said.

Community relief funds are being used to help sex workers when the government won't

Still, these funds aren't enough to support all sex workers who are currently

D'Adamo said the way the guidelines are written, they could affect any sex industry workers, including strippers, street sex workers, webcam performers, and in some cases even sex educators, if the government deems their work of "prurient sexual nature."

Those who don't have access to technology to take their work online could be disproportionately affected though.

"People who are doing street-based sex work may not be able to stop doing sex work to survive," Chuck Cloniger, the clinical director at the St. James Infirmary, which provides clinical and social services to sex workers in San Francisco, [told BuzzFeed News](#).

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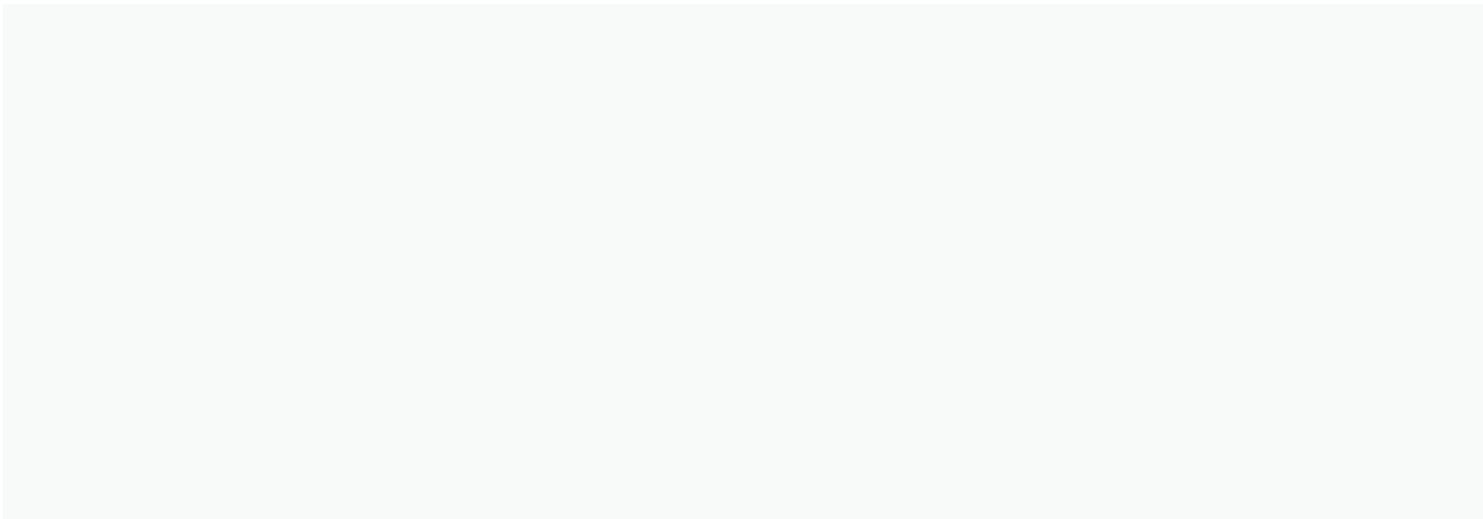
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