

# LEAP

(Legal Equity Advancement Program)



## Our Mission

To help Black-owned and Black-operated businesses overcome certain barriers to entry that are caused, in part, by institutional racism by providing sophisticated legal services.

### Background

In launching the Legal Equity Advancement Program (LEAP) in 2020 in Southcentral Pennsylvania, we acknowledged that most new businesses, including most Black-owned and Black-controlled businesses, lack the resources necessary to access the sophisticated legal services needed to successfully launch, position, and grow a business in today's interconnected world. Given the events of 2020, we saw the program as an opportunity to utilize our particular skills in a meaningful way to support the Black community in our areas.

McNees is pleased to announce that LEAP will continue and that the program is growing. We are expanding LEAP to Columbus, Ohio, with a grant for one year's worth of legal services to help the recipient meet their business needs and exceed their business goals.

### Program

- In 2020, McNees awarded five Black-owned or Black-controlled businesses a grant of up to \$50,000 for legal services during their first year of engagement with McNees. Now we are extending the program to up to two recipients in Columbus with a year's worth of legal services.
- Nearly all practice areas at McNees are available to assist the awardees. The 2020 LEAP clients utilized legal services for matters involving general business, tax, employment, real estate, intellectual property and contract review, among several others.

- In addition, McNees offers the LEAP clients educational opportunities for certain areas of the law and, when it can be done safely, networking opportunities.

### Eligibility & Application Process

- Applicants for LEAP in Ohio must be located in Ohio.
- The business must be more than 50% Black-owned or Black-controlled.
- The business must have limited financial resources.
- The initial eligibility application will be available starting October 18, 2021, at <https://www.mcneeslaw.com/leap-application-2021> and must be submitted by October 29, 2021.
- Eligible applicants will be notified by McNees and will proceed through a comprehensive, supplemental application process, which will include a more detailed written application and an interview (via video conference or in person).

## How to Apply

Interested business owners must complete the initial eligibility application in the link below by **5:00 p.m. ET,**

**October 29, 2021.** Applications will be accepted starting **October 18, 2021.**

<https://www.mcneeslaw.com/leap-application-2021>

Alternatively, please submit hard copy applications to:

ATTN: Nicole Fiamingo  
McNees Wallace & Nurick LLC  
100 Pine Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Applications submitted by US Mail must be postmarked by: **October 29, 2021.**