

**Press Release- March 22, 2022: Application Dates and Meeting Announcement for Virginia's 2022 Seafood Processors Pandemic Response and Safety Block Grant Program:**

The Virginia 2022 Seafood Processors Pandemic Response and Safety Block Grant Program will begin accepting applications April 11, 2022 and continue through May 27, 2022. A public meeting will be held Tuesday, March 29<sup>th</sup> (in person and virtual) at 4:00 pm at the Virginia Marine Resources Commission to provide an overview of the application process and documentation. A recording of the presentation will be available after the meeting.

This program is intended to help defray costs incurred by seafood processing facilities and processing vessels preparing for, preventing exposure to, and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. This program is funded by the Pandemic Assistance provided in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021. Expected beneficiaries include seafood processing facilities and vessels, including at-sea processors or dealers. Processor is defined as the owner, operator, dealer, or agent responsible for any activity that changes the physical condition of a fisheries resource suitable for human consumption, retail sale, industrial uses, or long-term storage, including cooking, canning, smoking, salting, drying, shucking, filleting, freezing, or rendering into meal or oil. Any owner, operator, dealer, or agent exclusively gutting, gilling, heading, or icing seafood without performing any of the above activities is not considered a processor.

Disaster relief information is available at <https://mrc.virginia.gov/Notices/2021/VMRC-COVID-19-DISASTER-RELIEF.shtm>.

For additional questions, please contact the VMRC at [covid19relief@mrc.virginia.gov](mailto:covid19relief@mrc.virginia.gov) or by calling 757.247.2200, option 5.