



Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Sustainable Materials Recovery Program

Grant Details: Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) Program Funding

Grant Applications Due **June 1, 2026**, at 11:59 PM ET

Changes from the previous grant cycle are conveyed in both yellow highlights and bold text.

Overview

In a Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) program, residents pay a per unit fee for the trash they generate. There is no direct fee for recycling. This creates a financial incentive to reduce, reuse, and recycle more, and to dispose less trash. MassDEP offers start-up funds for new PAYT programs and specific program updates.

Eligible Applicants

- This grant is available to municipal applicants for their new drop-off PAYT program or new curbside PAYT program.
- Applicants **must** have worked with their [Municipal Assistance Coordinator \(MAC\)](#) on a PAYT Program [Technical Assistance Grant](#), including submission of a draft PAYT Implementation Plan.
- Applicants **must** have adopted a municipal bylaw/ordinance and/or Board of Health [hauler regulation](#) that requires private haulers to provide integrated solid waste and recycling services to residential customers for one bundled price (i.e., all customers receive recycling collection *with* trash collection). The purpose of this requirement is to level the playing field and minimize the number of households opting out of the municipal PAYT program. Note: A hauler ordinance or regulation is not required for municipalities implementing a “one bag/barrel free” program because residents are less likely to opt out of this type of program.
- A municipality proposing a multi-family PAYT program will be required to approve an ordinance or bylaw requiring multi-family property owner and resident participation.
- Implementation of new PAYT programs will be prioritized over municipalities applying for assistance with a program update, as described in the sections below.

Program Structure

Grant awards will be calculated based on the number of households (HHs) served by the PAYT program. For application purposes, the municipality may estimate the number of households to be served by the municipal program; actual award disbursement will be based on actual households participating in the program (set-out or customer counts may be required in some circumstances). The maximum award value is \$300,000. Awards are contingent on submission of an approved Implementation Plan. Please see the Tables below and on following page for details:

Type of Municipal Trash Program	PAYT Program Element	Special Considerations	Award Amount (per HH served)
New Drop-off PAYT Program	Bag/sticker/ticket/punch card	The total grant award will be based on the number of households obtaining <u>access</u> to the drop-off location (e.g., through a transfer station sticker).	\$10
New Curbside PAYT Program	With one resident-provided bag/barrel, max 35-gallon capacity		\$10
New Curbside PAYT Program	With one 64-gallon automated trash cart, collected every other week		\$10

Type of Municipal Trash Program	PAYT Program Element	Special Considerations	Award Amount (per HH served)
New Curbside PAYT Program	With PAYT unit fee for all bags/barrels	Municipalities that utilize larger carts for trash collection and require <u>all trash</u> in the cart to be placed in official PAYT trash bags, qualify for \$20/household.	\$20
New Curbside PAYT Program	With one standard 35-gallon automated trash cart (provided by the municipality)	Municipalities that implement a “variable rate” cart program, in which residents are charged for trash collection based on the cart size they choose (i.e., 35-gal, 64-gal, or 95-gal), the \$30/household award will apply ONLY to those households using a cart size of 35 gallons or less.	\$30
Updates to Existing PAYT Program	Convert from one bag/barrel free to no bags/barrel free		\$5
Updates to Existing PAYT Program	Transition from a sticker or punch-card program to a bag program		\$5
Updates to Existing PAYT Program	With one 64-gallon automated trash cart, collected every other week		\$5
Updates to Existing PAYT Program	Provide each HH with an automated trash cart of 35 gallons or less		\$30

Use of Grant Funds

Grant funds may be used in accordance with the Grant Scope of Work (see Attachment) to fund the costs of bags, 35-gallon or smaller trash cart, outreach and educational materials, enforcement, a program coordinator, **organics (i.e., source-separated food waste) carts or containers**, and other MassDEP approved program costs.

- Funding may not be used to pay for the disposal of solid waste or recyclables processing.
- Requests for reimbursement must be accompanied by receipts and/or invoices for each expense to be reimbursed.
- Funds utilized towards the purchase of 35-gallon trash carts through the municipality’s hauler must specify within the municipality’s contract with hauler that the municipality takes ownership of the carts at the end of the contract.
- Black or grey colored trash carts are strongly recommended.
- If not purchasing off statewide contract, the following minimum requirements must be met for the trash carts: contain 30 percent recycled content, are no more than 35 gallons in size, and have a warranty of 5 years or more.
- The municipality will operate the PAYT program for a minimum of two years for bag and tag programs, and a minimum of five years for 35-gallon cart programs. At MassDEP’s discretion, the minimum program duration may be longer, depending on the size of the award.
- MassDEP reserves the right to cap the total PAYT program grant amounts awarded to a municipality at \$300,000 over a ten-year period.
- **Municipalities that apply for and are awarded in both the Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) Program and Food Waste Curbside Collection Carts grant categories may be limited to a combined maximum award of \$450,000.**

Relevant State Contracts

- Bags may be purchased off of statewide contract [FAC86: Solid Waste and Recycling Services](#), under Category 1A.

- 35-gallon trash carts as well as other wheeled collection carts, may be purchased off statewide contract [FAC113designatedDEP: Recycling Containers, Compost Bins, and Rain Barrels](#), under Categories 3 and 4.

Evaluation Criteria

In addition to the [minimum eligibility criteria](#) and the evaluation criteria applicable to all SMRP grant programs, the following factors will be viewed favorably in the evaluation process:

- Readiness to implement the project, **including participation in the PAYT Program Planning Workgroup and/or Technical Assistance grant.**
- Demonstrated understanding of the steps remaining to implement the proposed program.
- New PAYT programs versus program updates or changes.
- Ability and willingness to use RDP funds to offset program costs.
- Located in an environmental justice population.

Questions

Beginning April 1, 2026, MassDEP will accept grant questions via [online form](#). The deadline for submitting questions is **Friday, May 1, 2026, at 5:00 PM ET**. Official responses to these questions will be shared and posted to the [SMRP Grant Website](#) no later than Friday, May 8, 2026.

Attachment 1

Award Checklist

Checklist for Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) Program Funds Grant Award

This document contains important grant deadlines and requirements.

Instructions for the Municipal Recycling Contact:

- Complete this checklist and return it to Ron.H.Cochran@mass.gov no later than **January 15, 2027**. Once MassDEP has received your checklist, we'll send you a Grant Scope of Work. Make sure to include your Draft Implementation Plan (see Step 2 below).
- Return the signed Grant Scope of Work via email to MassDEP by **February 15, 2027**.
- Do not expend funds for which you wish to ask for reimbursement until AFTER a Grant Scope of Work has been fully executed by both MassDEP and the municipality.
- Funds must be spent and invoices received by MassDEP no later than **June 30, 2027**.

STEP ONE: Program Approval and Start Date

Check the boxes and circle the applicable municipal decision-making body below, to indicate that the necessary approval has been secured for this grant.

- The municipality's (circle one: Board of Selectmen, City Council, Board of Health, Town Meeting) has voted to fund and implement a PAYT program for solid waste.
- The municipality understands that its MassDEP grant is conditioned upon operating the PAYT Program for a minimum of 2 years for a PAYT bag, tag, sticker, or barrel program, or a minimum of 5 years for a cart program. At MassDEP's discretion, the minimum program duration may be longer, depending on the type and size of the award.
- The municipality understands that the actual grant amount will be determined by the number of households served by the municipal solid waste program, the type of program (e.g., curbside or drop-off), and the program design (e.g., no bags free, first bag free, etc.).
- Program Start Date: _____

STEP TWO: Program Implementation Plan

Check the boxes below to signify that you've developed an Implementation Plan. Note: A template will be provided by MassDEP or your Municipal Assistance Coordinator (MAC). The Draft Implementation Plan should be submitted with this Checklist to Ron.H.Cochran@mass.gov no later than **January 15, 2027**.

- Our municipality has developed an Implementation Plan that has been reviewed and approved by MassDEP. The Implementation Plan will become an appendix to our Grant Scope of Work.
- Municipality's approved Implementation Plan documents the following:
 1. Start date of the program, , which must be within 12 months of the date of the award letter unless expressly extended, in writing, by MassDEP.
 2. Explanation of the program financial structure and an operating budget. This must:
 - Substantially cover fixed solid waste collection costs through the tax base or another funding source such as an annual flat fee, and
 - Cover variable costs using the revenue from the retail price of the bag.
 3. Explanation of bag or cart distribution plan, public education and enforcement plan.
 4. Explanation of program design, including the following:
 - Type of trash and recycling collection provided (curbside or drop-off),
 - Bag sizes and the price per bag to be charged to residents,
 - Explanation of trash volume included in basic level service(i.e. one bag, barrel or wheeled cart per week of a certain size or the number of free bags to be distributed),

- Recycling collection frequency (weekly, bi-weekly),
- Size/type of recycling containers provided to all households served, and
- Number of households served by the municipal solid waste program.

5. The proposed use(s) of grant funds.
6. Status of adoption of Comprehensive Hauler Regulations (see Step Three below). If Regulations adopted, a copy should be attached. This requirement does not apply to PAYT programs that allow residents to dispose of one bag, barrel or cart (≤ 35 gal) of trash each week, at no direct cost.

STEP THREE: Hauler Recycling Regulations or Ordinance

Municipality must have implemented ONE of the following:

- A. Our municipality has adopted a regulation that requires private trash haulers to provide parallel access for solid waste and recycling services to residential customers (i.e., all customers receive recycling collection with trash collection for one price). A copy of this municipal regulation is included in the Implementation Plan, and/or attached to this Checklist.
- B. Our municipality is implementing a curbside PAYT Program that allows residents to dispose of the equivalent of one bag, barrel, or cart (≤ 35 gal) of trash each week, at no direct cost. While recommended, a hauler recycling ordinance or regulation is not required because residents are less likely to opt out of a curbside “one bag free” program.

STEP FOUR: Signature of Authorized Official

I have reviewed and am familiar with the information contained in this checklist. The information contained in this checklist is to the best of my knowledge, true, accurate and complete. I am fully authorized to make this attestation on behalf of the Grantee municipality.

Print Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Attachment 2

Grant Scope of Work

(Template)

**GRANT SCOPE OF WORK BETWEEN THE
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (“MassDEP”)
AND THE [GRANTEE NAME] (“Grantee”)**

Pursuant to the Green Communities Act, relevant provisions of which are codified at M.G.L. c. 25A, Section 11F(d) and the regulations promulgated thereunder at 310 CMR 19.300 and in support of the Massachusetts Solid Waste Master Plan developed pursuant to M.G.L. c. 16, Section 21, MassDEP has awarded the [Grantee Name] (“Grantee”) a Sustainable Materials Recovery Program Grant (“Grant”) for Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) program funds valued at up to [Maximum Award Amount] (“Grant”). Grantee shall comply with the specific terms and conditions described below in the performance of the Grant and in the attached Project Scope of Work. MassDEP and Grantee shall collectively be referred to as the Parties.

DURATION OF THE GRANT: This Grant shall expire on [June 30, 2028]. Invoicing and reporting deadlines are described below.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF GRANTEE:

1. **Authority:** The signatory of this Scope of Work is authorized by the governing body of Grantee to enter into this Grant Scope of Work on behalf of Grantee and accept and utilize this Grant.
2. **Commonwealth Terms and Conditions:** Grantee shall comply with the Commonwealth Terms and Conditions and other requirements set forth in Grantee’s executed Master Agreement.
3. **Failure to Comply:** If, in the judgment of MassDEP, Grantee fails to comply with any of its responsibilities as identified in the Grant Scope of Work, then, at the election of MassDEP, (a) Grantee may be deemed ineligible to participate for what time remains of the Grant period; and/or (b) title to all Grant materials purchased with these Grant funds immediately and without any further steps shall be transferred to MassDEP; and/or (c) MassDEP may find Grantee not eligible to seek another Sustainable Materials Recovery Program Grant for up to three years; and/or (d) Grantee shall repay the Grant funds to MassDEP within 90 days. MassDEP may provide written notice to Grantee of any such failure to comply. Such notice may provide a time period and manner for Grantee to cease or remedy the failure. Such notice from MassDEP of any such failure by Grantee is not a precondition to MassDEP’s right to select options (a), (b), (c) and/or (d) above. Grantee shall follow the instructions of MassDEP regarding possession of the Grant materials (e.g., collection container). The Parties hereby agree to execute any and all documents necessary to accomplish said transfer. Furthermore, Grantee shall transfer or arrange to transfer actual possession of said materials to an authorized representative of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or its designee.
4. **Recycling in Practice:** Grantee has established paper, bottle, and can recycling in all municipal buildings, offices and meeting spaces, including schools. Grantee shall continue such paper, bottle and can recycling during the term of the Grant.
5. **Sustainable Purchasing / Environmentally Preferable Products (EPP) Procurement Policy:** Grantee has adopted a Sustainable Purchasing or EPP Procurement Policy. The Policy is either bylaw or ordinance enacted by the decision-making entity of the municipality and includes a commitment to purchasing products and services offered through the Operational Services Department (OSD)’s Environmentally Preferable Products and Services Program; reducing waste by prioritizing reuse and donation of goods and equipment, and purchasing products that are durable, reusable and refillable; and adherence to Federal Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines, or other established criteria, for minimal accepted recycled content levels when purchasing office supplies.

6. Use of Grant Funds: Grant funds are to be used for PAYT Program upgrades or implementation of new programs. Funds will be reimbursed in the amount of [Per Household Dollar Amount] per participating household, up to [Maximum Award Amount]. Start-up funds for the Program may be used to fund the cost of <35-gallon trash carts, PAYT bags, outreach and educational materials, enforcement, a program coordinator, organics (i.e., source-separated food waste) carts or containers, and other expenses as approved by MassDEP and documented in the Grantee's MassDEP Approved Implementation Plan, attached. Funds may not be used to purchase carts larger than 35 gallons for the collection of trash.

- [For Cart Programs Only: If the grant is used for purchasing <35-gallon trash carts, the carts should be made with 30% post-consumer recycled content and have a minimum warranty of five years. It is recommended that the carts be either black or gray to adhere to industry standards. The carts may be purchased from [Massachusetts State Contract FAC113 for Recycling Containers and Compost Bins.](#)]

7. Grant Conditions: As documented in the Grantee's MassDEP approved Program Implementation Plan, attached to this Scope of Work, the Grantee agrees to the following requirements:

- The Program has been approved and budgeted for by the appropriate legislative body (e.g., Board of Health, Board of Selectmen, Town Meeting, or City Council).
- The Program's fee structure ensures: (1) fixed solid waste collection costs are substantially covered through the tax base or another funding source such as a mandatory flat fee levied on all participating households, and (2) variable program costs, not already covered as part of the fixed costs, shall be funded by revenue generated from the sale of the Program bags. A Program that places all solid waste costs (collection, hauling, tipping) on the bag or barrel fee is not acceptable.
- The Program must not collect the equivalent of more than one 35-gallon bag, barrel, or cart of trash per week, at no cost to residents, also known as "basic service level". At a minimum, the program participant pays the bag fee for the second and all additional bags or barrels each week.
- The municipality will operate the PAYT program for a minimum of two years for a PAYT bag, tag, sticker, or barrel program or a minimum of five years for a cart program; at MassDEP's discretion, the minimum program duration may be longer, depending on the type and size of the award.
- **For Curbside Programs Only: The Grantee provides weekly collection of recyclables or provides a second or larger recycling container if collection is bi-weekly. Recycling capacity requirement may be met by providing residents with a recycling container sticker/decal to affix to a container of the residents' choice.**
- **For Drop-off Programs and Programs that do not provide the basic service level: The Grantee requires through bylaw, ordinance, and/or regulation that private trash haulers providing subscription service to households otherwise eligible for the municipal trash and recycling program MUST provide trash and recycling services to these households as one bundled service. Residents subscribing to private waste collection shall not have the option of paying for trash collection service only at a lower price.]**

8. Invoicing: All Grant funds are disbursed on a reimbursement basis. MassDEP will allow grantees to submit up to two invoices; ideally, one invoice representing costs incurred for each fiscal year. Invoices must be submitted no later than [June 30, 2027 and June 30, 2028], to MassDEP for expenditures made in the prior fiscal year. The Grantee shall submit requests for reimbursement for approved expenditures, accompanied by the supporting documentation when appropriate, (i.e., proof of purchase in the form of an invoice which lists the vendor name and address, items or services purchased, and the total cost), OR a copy of the fully executed contract between the Grantee and its trash hauler in which the hauler is responsible for the procurement of carts for curbside collection of trash as part of a PAYT Program. The contract must also stipulate that the carts become the property of the municipality at the end of the collection contract.

9. **Property Rights:** Upon delivery from the vendor and prior to distribution, the Grantee shall retain exclusive ownership of the carts, subject to the provisions of this Grant Scope of Work. Grantee shall be solely responsible for protecting the carts from damage, theft, or loss during the time in which said carts are in the possession, custody, or control of the Grantee. If the Grantee does not take possession of the carts, the Grantee shall require the hauler to protect the carts from damage, theft, or loss during the time in which said carts are in the possession, custody, or control of the hauler.
10. **Reporting:** At the one- and two-year anniversaries of the start date of the Program, Grantee will submit a year-end report, in a format required by MassDEP, outlining program results detailing trash and recycling tonnages before and after the Program was implemented, the savings realized from these impacts, any challenges encountered, and lessons learned. In addition, Grantee shall file an annual Recycling and Solid Waste survey by February 15, via ReTRAC, for the duration of this Grant. Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize future grant awards.
11. **Publicity and Outreach:** All outreach materials and publicity tools (i.e., press releases, media advisories, education materials) issued by Grantee in conjunction with, or as a result of, this Grant shall include the following language: "This project is funded in part by a grant from the MassDEP". MassDEP shall retain the right to utilize and disseminate all printed outreach materials and publicity tools and artwork produced by Grantee or Grantee's contractor as a result of this Grant. Grantee shall provide MassDEP with copies of all outreach materials and publicity tools developed (in an editable electronic format). Grantee should be prepared to provide a public presentation on the results or findings of the Grant at MassDEP's request.
12. **Environmental Compliance:** Grantee understands receipt of a grant from MassDEP does not in any way imply that Grantee is in compliance with applicable environmental regulations. This Grant Scope of Work shall not be construed as, nor operate as, relieving Grantee or any other person of the necessity of complying with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and approvals. Grantee's facility(ies) are subject to inspection at any time by MassDEP and noncompliance with applicable environmental regulations may result in formal enforcement actions, including penalties.
13. **Addendums:** Should MassDEP award additional Grant funds, an addendum to the Grant Scope of Work shall be provided to Grantee. The same terms and conditions apply to the addendum.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, MassDEP and Grantee hereby execute this Grant Scope of Work.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

John Fischer, Deputy Division Director, Solid Waste
Department of Environmental Protection

(Date)

GRANTEE/ORG NAME

(Signature of Municipal Official Authorized to Sign)

(Date)

(Print Name)

(Title)