

Guidance for Recycling Businesses in Massachusetts

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

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This guidance document focuses on supporting the growth of recycling businesses in Massachusetts by sharing resources and connecting businesses to state business assistance, workforce development, and job training programs. Recycling businesses include companies that collect, process or manufacture recyclables, and companies that process organic waste such as food scraps, leaves and yard waste through compost or anaerobic digestion. Resources offered by state, federal, and regional agencies include financial and technical assistance on business planning, grant writing, and financial analysis.

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General Business Guidance

The **U.S. Small Business Administration** (SBA) has resources for [writing a business plan](#).

The **Massachusetts Office of Business Development** (MOBD) assists businesses with specific attention to jobs created, jobs retained, and capital invested. For a step-by-step guide to starting a business and a detailed report: [Starting a business in Massachusetts | Mass.gov](#)

[Business Front Door](#) is an online resource for businesses of all sizes and from all sectors to access incentives and to enable more coordinated, organized responses from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Businesses can answer a set of simple questions about their assistance needs (e.g., tax incentives, R&D grants, loans, land, regulatory guidance etc.). Once the business gets started, the business will be paired with a dedicated Team MA Navigator who will provide personalized guidance on available resources and assistance.

[Division of Apprenticeship Standards \(DAS\)](#) provides comprehensive support to help Massachusetts employers recruit, train, and retain skilled workers. A Registered Apprenticeship program ensures high-quality training standards and provides access to state and federal resources, including technical assistance. Businesses may also qualify for tax credits and other financial incentives to help offset training costs. In addition, apprentices gain a nationally-recognized credential, enhancing the business's reputation and attractiveness to prospective employees.

[MassHire Career Information System \(MassHire CIS\)](#) offers resources for employers to recruit, retain, and grow their workforce. MassHire provides a BizWorks Resource Guide that helps to connect Massachusetts businesses with available resources and services. This includes an [On-the-Job Training program](#) that can assist with the costs of hiring and training new employees.

[Supplier Diversity Office \(SDO\)](#) can assist to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in state contracting by certifying diverse businesses (minority, women, veteran, service-disabled veteran, disability and LGBT-owned) and small Massachusetts-based businesses; and connecting them with business opportunities and resources that enhance their marketability when bidding on public contracts.

Support for Recycling & Waste Reduction Businesses

Applicable MassDEP Permit Requirements

- You may be required to obtain either a General Permit or a Recycling, Composting or Conversion (RCC) Operation Permit ([310 CMR 16.04 & 16.05](#)). These permits authorize and set conditions for facilities that intend to recycle, compost or conduct aerobic or anaerobic digestion of certain solid waste materials.
 - Learn more about what the [General Permit](#) entails.
 - Learn more about what the [RCC Operation Permit](#) entails.
- For assistance in determining your permit applicability and local requirements, reach out to your [MassDEP regional office](#).
- [Find your city or town](#) to check whether your business needs a permit or certificate to operate at its location.
- For haulers, review the permitting requirements to see if your local government has permitting requirements for collecting materials:
<https://www.mass.gov/lists/implementing-mandatory-recycling-private-hauler-regulations#-municipal-recycling-rules-&-regulations->

Financial and Technical Assistance

MOBD offers a list of resources for small businesses as well as assistance to targeted sectors.

The **Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development** offers [business counseling and assistance](#).

[MassDevelopment](#), the state's development finance agency and land bank, offers a cost-effective way for companies to finance capital projects, new equipment purchases, and facility expansions. MassDevelopment provides loans and development assistance for early-stage projects.

The [Office of Technical Assistance and Technology](#) provides free, confidential technical assistance, including generator assistance, pollution prevention and resource conservation to Massachusetts manufacturers, businesses, and institutions.

[RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts](#) (RecyclingWorks) is a statewide commercial waste reduction assistance program fully funded by MassDEP and delivered under contract by the Center for EcoTechnology. RecyclingWorks primarily provides guidance to businesses that generate waste and recyclables, and they also work to facilitate connections between these businesses and recycling service providers. In addition, RecyclingWorks runs a [Compost Site Technical Assistance Program](#) that provides free assistance to compost site operators.

Webinars and Workshops

[Massachusetts Small Business Development Center](#) (MSBDC) provides free and confidential one-to-one business advice focusing on business growth and strategies, financing and loan assistance as well as strategic marketing and operational analysis. In addition, low-cost educational training programs are offered across the state targeted to the needs of small businesses.

[SCORE](#), a nonprofit organization and a resource partner of SBA, offers free online webinars on topics ranging from grant writing to business planning and finance. Attendees can view recordings online or attend a live webinar.

MassHire provides a Career Center Seminar for career planning and labor market information research.

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) offers:

- [online courses related to business financing](#)
- resources for [market research and competitive analysis](#)

Grants and Loans

[Recycling & Reuse Business Development Grants](#): MassDEP administers the Recycling & Reuse Business Development Grant (RBDG) program to help meet the capital infrastructure needs of Massachusetts businesses and institutions. RBDG recipients include businesses and non-profit organizations that will use funds to advance reuse and recycling infrastructure in Massachusetts through processing and collection for selected targeted materials. RBDG awards between \$50,000 to \$400,000 for processing targeted materials and \$25,000 to \$100,000 for collection of targeted materials. The grant can be used to pay for equipment costs to expand existing recycling operations or to help pay for costs to build a new facility.

- [Waste Reduction Innovation Grants](#): New and existing businesses and institutions seeking to invest in new equipment or technology that is not prevalent in Massachusetts are encouraged to apply to help spur innovation in the state's recycling and waste reduction sector. Two main categories will qualify for funding: Startups/Pilot Projects and Innovative Capital Investments. Applicants that are eligible for the start-up/pilot funding could be awarded between \$50,000 and \$100,000 with a required 25% grant match. Applicants that are eligible for the innovative capital investment funding could be awarded between \$500,000 and \$2,000,000 with a required 50% match.
- [Reduce, Reuse, Repair Micro Grants](#): MassDEP also offers Reuse Micro Grants, which provides awards of up to \$10,000 to help businesses, non-profits, or municipalities start new reuse initiatives. To qualify, projects are short term projects (≤ 1 year) and must focus on reducing waste generation and prolonging the lifespan of products via donation, rescue, reuse and/or repair in Massachusetts.

- **[Recycling Loan Fund](#)**: The Recycling Loan Fund is funded by MassDEP and administered under contract to MassDEP by BDC Capital to help grow in-state recycling infrastructure and markets for any recyclable material. The Recycling Loan Fund helps existing or new Massachusetts businesses finance investments to advance reuse, recycling, and composting infrastructure. Eligibility for the Loan Fund is broad and qualifying projects may include collection, sorting, processing, recycling, conversion, manufacturing, and wholesale and retail activities related to recycled feedstocks and products. The Recycling Loan Fund offers loans ranging from \$50,000 to \$500,000 for terms of up to ten years.
- **[Agricultural Composting Improvement Grant Program](#)**: Administered by the Department of Agricultural Resources, the goal of the Agricultural Composting Improvement Grant Program (ACIP) is to help agricultural composters improve the overall management of their agricultural composting operations and facilitate on-farm compost use through new equipment or facility upgrades. These may include screeners, spreaders, turners, mixers, window covers, compost pads, improved technology systems. ACIP applicants may be funded 75% of total project or equipment costs up to a maximum of \$75,000.
- **[Workforce Training Fund Program](#)**: The Workforce Training Fund Program is offered by MassHire Department of Career Services and administered by Commonwealth Corporation. It provides grants to small businesses seeking to train existing or new employees. All training programs must be completed within two years and preference will be given to applications that possess selection criteria in association with job growth and increases in skills or opportunities.
- **[Additional Assurances for Anaerobic Digestion Facilities](#)**: MassDEP provides a detailed matrix on applicable grants, loan and other programs available from government agencies and quasi-public organizations, indicating which are most applicable to different project stages and types of sites.