



Department of Environmental Protection

One Winter Street Boston, MA 02108 • 617-292-5500

Charles D. Baker
Governor

Karyn E. Polito
Lieutenant Governor

Bethany Card
Secretary

Martin Suuberg
Commissioner

November 7, 2022

NOTICE OF GRANT OPPORTUNITY

MassDEP Small Public Water Systems PFAS Grant Program

Grants to Reimburse Small Public Water Suppliers for Measures to Address PFAS Contamination

Summary of Grant Opportunity:

Multiple scientific studies have shown that exposure to *PFAS contamination* in the environment may be linked to harmful *health effects* in humans and animals. In 2020, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) promulgated regulations to establish a per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) drinking water Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of 20 ng/L, or parts per trillion (ppt) for a sum of six PFAS contaminants (“PFAS6”): perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS), perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), perfluoroheptanoic acid (PFHpA), and perfluorodecanoic acid (PFDA). In 2021-2022, MassDEP offered two Rounds of “PFAS Treatment Grants” for the implementation of treatment systems to remove or reduce PFAS, and two additional rounds of “PFAS6 Interim Response Program Grants” to eligible Public Water Systems (PWS). **This Small PWS PFAS Grant Opportunity provides funds (including reimbursement for costs and expenses already incurred) to impacted small PWSs (serving less than 3,300 in population) for implementing long-term measures, including the design, installation, construction or purchase of systems that reduce PFAS contamination in the drinking water supply.** This PFAS grant funding also focuses on Environmental Justice (EJ) populations, disadvantaged communities, and sensitive receptors.

Grant purpose: The goal of this program is to provide grant funds, including reimbursement of previously incurred costs, to Small (under 3,300 users) Community (COM), Non-Transient Non-Community (NTNC), and Transient Non-Community (TNC) Public Water Suppliers for work that:

- eliminates a public health risk from PFAS contamination of public drinking water, and
- is necessary to achieve or maintain a level of PFAS (below 10 ppt) that is expected to ensure long-term compliance with applicable drinking water quality standards for PFAS and the MCL for PFAS established by MassDEP’s Regulations and its Office of Research and Standards.

MassDEP Environmental Justice Commitment: MassDEP is committed to advancing equity, diversity, and environmental justice (EJ)¹ through its public investments. The agency seeks to prioritize the direction of these resources to benefit EJ

¹ “Environmental justice is based on the principle that all people have a right to be protected from environmental hazards and to live in and enjoy a clean and healthful environment regardless of race, color, national origin, income, or English language proficiency.

communities and to address environmental inequities. To that end, this Program, and all MassDEP grant and funding programs, include criteria and evaluation parameters that emphasize equity, diversity, and environmental justice, in a manner consistent with the program's statutory authority and source of funding.

Eligible Projects and Eligible Entities:

Eligible Applicants include Small (under 3300 users) Community (COM), Non-Transient Non-Community (NTNC), and Transient Non-Community (TNC) MassDEP registered PWSs, under public or private ownership, as defined by MassDEP's regulations at 310 CMR 22.00, that can demonstrate an exceedance of PFAS chemicals in the water supply. **NOTE: PWSs that have already received funding for the same project under MassDEP's previous Rounds 1 and/or 2 of the PFAS Treatment Grant Program, the State Revolving Fund, or any other state or federal grant or loan, are not eligible for this Grant Opportunity.**

Examples of eligible project costs:

- Engineering, design fees, and final designs to construct PFAS treatment systems;
- Purchase and installation of treatment systems that will minimize or eliminate PFAS in drinking water on a long-term basis;
- Purchase and installation of pre-treatment equipment necessary to make PFAS treatment effective (such as for iron and/or manganese), provided that the PFAS treatment system is also installed concurrently;
- Construction or expansion of structures necessary to house the new PFAS treatment system;
- MassDEP Drinking Water Permits for the final design;
- Connection to a municipal or other PWS to provide clean drinking water;
- Reimbursement of eligible costs that were expended prior to contract start date; and/or
- Any other action undertaken to provide drinking water on a long-term basis that complies with PFAS requirements.

Examples of ineligible costs:

- Administrative and mailing costs associated with community notification of the PFAS exceedance;
- Laboratory and sampling costs for PFAS identification in drinking water;
- Expenses relating to ongoing maintenance and treatment at drinking water facilities (whether or not related to PFAS treatment);
- Legal expenses associated with determining liability or addressing other legal matters;
- Pilot studies or other investigations that will lead to permanent resolution of the PFAS contamination problem;
- Work that has already been funded by a prior MassDEP PFAS Grant, the State Revolving Fund, or any other state or federal grant or loan (see also Section 6 above);
- Bottled water, vending units, or other temporary solutions;
- Attorney fees or other administrative expenses related to the PWS response to PFAS exceedance; and/or
- Any other actions that do not result in the long-term delivery of safe drinking water in response to the discovery of PFAS contamination.

Environmental justice is the equal protection and meaningful involvement of all people and communities with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of energy, climate change, and environmental laws, regulations, and policies and the equitable distribution of energy and environmental benefits and burdens." See Environmental Justice Policy of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (updated June 24, 2021): <https://www.mass.gov/doc/environmental-justice-policy6242021-update/download>.

Grant Program Term, Application Process, and Evaluation Criteria:

Grant Program term:

From the date of Grant contract award through June 30, 2023.

Application Deadlines:

The Grant Application deadline for the Small PWS PFAS Grant Program is **December 15, 2022**.

The Small PWS PFAS Grant Opportunity, which is posted on MassDEP's website at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/water-resources-grants-financial-assistance>, includes a procurement schedule for applications and announcements describing the steps of the application process, all project proposal and qualification requirements, and a specific format for responding to this Grant Opportunity.

Evaluation Criteria: Applications from eligible applicants will be evaluated and given points according to the following evaluation criteria. Awards will be granted to the highest scoring proposals, in descending order, until available funds are exhausted.

Total available points: 100

(1) Proposed Work (35 Points)

Applicants must provide: (1) a narrative that describes the overall project goals and rationale; and (2) a detailed description of specific tasks proposed or already completed to create a long-term solution(s) to PFAS contamination in the water supply. Proposed tasks can include: (1) actions directly related to proposed activities within the grant contract period related to reimbursable expenditures; and/or (2) activities occurring before or after the grant contract period (possibly used as match/in-kind services). More specifically, the project will be judged based on a demonstrated preparedness for, and commitment to, the Proposed Project by outlining a strategy for operation and maintenance, planning for disposal costs, and generally describing a management plan to ensure that the Project will be a feasible and effective solution.

(2) Degree of Documented PFAS Contamination (20 points):

The extent to which the PWS is affected by PFAS. Confirmed samples over the MCL from certified laboratories will receive the highest points; single or unconfirmed samples will receive fewer points.

(3) Environmental Justice (15 points)

Work that benefits historically disenfranchised communities that commonly experience disproportionate environmentally poor conditions is a priority for this grant program. The proposal must include a narrative that outlines how EJ populations would benefit from and/or be involved in the proposed project. PWSs that serve 100% EJ users and/or provide a greater benefit to EJ populations will receive the highest points.

(4) Status as Disadvantaged Community, as defined in Section 5 above (15 points)

The points for this criterion will be awarded as follows:

- For Tier 3: 15 points.
- For Tier 2: 10 points.
- For Tier 1: 5 points.
- Not disadvantaged: 0 points.

(5) Percentage of Sensitive Receptors (as defined in Section 5 above) (15 points).

Maximum points for high percentage of sensitive receptors.

In its discretion, the Grant Review Team may consider any and all relevant information that is or may become available through MassDEP's Statewide Sampling Program or its Drinking Water Program activities, up to and including the date of the MassDEP's Grant Review Team's final review meeting for the Small PWS PFAS Grant Program applications, with respect to all applications submitted for funding through this Grant Program.

Funding Availability:

Funding availability: The total amount of funding currently available for all grant/reimbursement requests through this Program is \$1.05 million. Applicants should note that MassDEP reserves the right to not award the total funding currently available for this Program and also reserves the right to award lesser individual grant/reimbursement amounts, based on availability of funds. MassDEP currently anticipates that the maximum award per application will be \$50,000; however, MassDEP reserves the right to grant larger or smaller awards based upon the review of the quantity and quality of the applications received. MassDEP also reserves the right to increase individual awards if all applicants have received the maximum awards and funds remain to be distributed at the end of the application period. Contingent upon the availability of funding, MassDEP may, in its discretion, offer one or more additional rounds of grant/reimbursement opportunities in the future for this Program. Applicants must only propose project scopes that can be completed by June 30, 2023. In its discretion, MassDEP reserves the right increase or eliminate the total funding amount based upon funding availability and/or other factors.

Application Completion and Submission Instructions:

For all requests, applicants must complete all application requirements, including but not limited to the Application Form provided with the Grant Opportunity. Once the Application is complete, the application materials can be submitted electronically in Microsoft Word; or, to reduce file size, the documents may be converted and submitted as an Adobe PDF file.

Applications must be submitted electronically, via email to:

Yvette DePeiza, Small PWS PFAS Grant Coordinator
Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
program.director-dwp@mass.gov
617-292-5857

In the subject line of the email, please write the Applicant's name and "Small PWS PFAS Grant Program.

All applications must be received electronically by MassDEP by 5:00 P.M. on Thursday, December 15, 2022, for the Small PWS PFAS Grant Program. Applications received after the deadline will be rejected automatically. MassDEP reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or request additional information if needed.

Additional Information: For additional information regarding the Small PWS PFAS Grant Program, please refer to the Grant Opportunity posted at the MassDEP website link: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/water-resources-grants-financialassistance>.