

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
Recycling & Reuse Business Development Grant (RBDG) 2025
Grant Guidelines for Processing

I. Introduction and Background

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) seeks to provide grants to recycling processors and manufacturers in Massachusetts that will create sustainable markets and add value to municipal and business recycling efforts.

The *2030 Massachusetts Solid Waste Master Plan* sets a goal to reduce the amount of waste disposed of in Massachusetts by 30% below the 2018 baseline, or 1.7 million tons by 2030. The Master Plan relies on a comprehensive mix of strategies to reduce waste disposal, including through source reduction, reuse, recycling, composting, and other options. One key element is fostering local recycling markets, particularly for targeted materials that lack strong markets and demand. Stronger local recycling markets support a robust, sustainable, and cost-effective recycling infrastructure. At the same time, these local markets will foster economic development and job creation.

MassDEP's authority to establish a Recycling Business Development Grant (RBDG) is conferred pursuant to M.G.L. c.25A § 11F(d), 310 CMR 19.303(2)(b) and the Declaration of Trust for the Sustainable Materials Recovery Program Expendable Trust. Article 2.1 of the Declaration of Trust allows for trust funds to be used for grants to entities to enhance waste reduction and recycling programs.

Funding for Processing

The RBDG 2025 grant for processing intends to assist recycling processors and manufacturers in Massachusetts that will create sustainable markets and add value to municipal and business recycling efforts. The focus of this round is on better management and increasing recycling and/or reuse of the following target materials:

- plastic films/wraps,
- reusable materials (building materials, furniture, and food service wares),
- household hazardous waste (operations that accept, sort and process hazardous household products for recycling and safe disposal),
- textiles (recycling only),
- food materials,
- solar panels.
- bulk rigid plastics (large containers, furniture, toys, buckets, etc.)

The minimum grant award for 2025 processing grants is \$50,000 and the maximum grant award per applicant is \$500,000.

II. Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements to be considered for an award. These requirements are specific to this grant application round and may vary from other applications. Please review the requirements carefully, as ineligible applications will be disqualified and will not be evaluated. The Commonwealth makes no guarantee that any grants will be awarded to any applicant. In addition, MassDEP may issue partial grant awards based on multiple factors including, but not limited to, evaluation and scoring of applications, the total number of applications and funding requests received, and funding availability.

Applicant Requirements

- Applicants must have a location in Massachusetts at the time of contracting and all grant awards shall provide a direct, measurable economic benefit to Massachusetts. Any equipment funded by MassDEP must be used exclusively in Massachusetts and must remain in the state and be used for its funded purpose.
- Applicants must be a company or corporation (for-profit or non-profit) properly licensed to do business in the Commonwealth at the time of contracting, including being registered with the Secretary of State's office.
- Applicants must have no active unresolved MassDEP higher level enforcement actions against them.
- Project timeline for processing shall not exceed 30 months from the date of contract signing (purchase of equipment within 12 months, performance within following 18 months). (*Grant contracts are typically completed and signed 6-9 months after the application deadline.*)
- A minimum financial match of 25% is required (e.g., the minimum applicant match amount for a \$100,000 grant request would be \$25,000). These must be direct contributions from the applicant, exclusive of other state or federal grants or loans. The matching contribution must be for eligible expenses as defined for the processing grant category. Larger match amounts will be viewed favorably for grant evaluation purposes.

Material Requirements for Processing Grants

Eligible materials for this application are:

- **Plastic films and wraps**
- **Reusable Materials:** building materials, furniture and food service wares (reuse only)
- **Household Hazardous Waste:** Operations that accept, sort and process a comprehensive range of hazardous household products for recycling and safe disposal
- **Textiles:** recycling of textiles such as clothing, footwear, bedding, towels, curtains, and fabrics that are not acceptable for reuse
- **Food Materials:** food rescue and donation OR composting, anaerobic digestion, animal feed production, or processing operations for source-separated food scraps that divert food material from the solid waste stream
- **Solar panels**
- **Bulk rigid plastics:** large containers, furniture, toys, buckets, etc.

Activity Requirements for Processing Grants

Eligible grant-funded costs include equipment or other capital costs for:

- Processing activities, which include those reclaiming activities that aggregate, dismantle, densify, shred, bale, pulverize or otherwise process eligible materials
- Manufacturing activities, which include those activities that manufacture products with eligible materials
- Reuse activities that use eligible material again, either in its original state or with refurbishment, for its original purpose or for a non-traditional purpose; infrastructure development for reuse (donation center, workspace, storage) is eligible
- For household hazardous waste, grant-funded projects must accept a comprehensive range of materials at least one day per week

Ineligible activities and expenses include:

- the exclusive use of internally generated scrap materials or materials already on site
- the incineration of materials or the manufacture of a product designed for burning for energy, excluding the burning of wood for energy
- Recovering energy from the combustion of a material or creating a fuel, with the exception of activities defined as "conversion" in 310 CMR 16.02
- feasibility studies or design work
- operation and maintenance costs associated with the proposed grant investment
- collection or brokering activities
- staff or consultant time

Definitions under 310 CMR 16.00: Site Assignment for Solid Waste Facilities are available on MassDEP's website at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/310-cmr-1600-site-assignment-for-solid-waste-facilities>.

III. Evaluation Criteria

Applicants must meet the grant eligibility requirements to be considered for evaluation and review. Ineligible applications will be disqualified and will not be evaluated. MassDEP will evaluate applications based on the following 10 criteria and will be scored on a scale with a total of 50 points:

Project Description and Operation (up to 5 points)

- How well does the proponent describe the project and expected benefits of the investment?
- Are goals clearly identified?
- Is the proposed operation/activity explained in sufficient detail?
- Are existing market conditions described adequately?
- Does the proponent have capacity to meet the proposal's goals?

Growth/Market Impact (up to 5 points)

- How well does the proponent quantify the amount of recycling activity (reuse, recycling, composting, digestion) as a result of the use of grant funds?
- Is there a significant increase in tons per year of throughput?
- Is there a significant increase in the value of materials?
- Is there significant market potential and growth identified?

Timeline (up to 5 points)

- Do the major milestones seem reasonable and achievable?
- Did the applicant include estimated dates for each step of the grant-funded activities such as when grant-funded equipment would be ordered, delivered and operational and/or the dates when phases of deliverables, such as reports, would be completed?
- Is the project timeline realistic and can the project be completed within the 30-month grant period?

Qualifications (up to 5 points)

- Does the applicant include materials detailing the relevant experience, qualifications and skills of the applicant organization and the principals that will be involved in the grant-funded activity?
- Do the levels of experience and qualifications demonstrate the ability to effectively implement and grow the project?
- If applicable, has the applicant successfully implemented similar past grant awards from MassDEP?
- What is the applicant's environmental compliance history?

Feasibility (up to 5 points)

- Does the applicant provide the status of any required approval(s) or authorization(s) of the proposed activity by state or local authorities, including any appropriate documentation?
- Are there any barriers or additional steps required for the project to proceed and might these prevent the successful implementation of a grant-funded project?
- How likely is it that the proposal will accomplish the projected results?

Sourcing (up to 5 points)

- Does the applicant have an adequate plan to source material?
- Who are the supplier(s) and/or generator(s) of the source materials/feedstocks?
- Does the applicant have any sourcing commitment letters or contracts from any entity?

Markets (up to 5 points)

- How will the project expand or develop new markets?
- Did the applicant identify the buyer(s) or market(s) for the proposed end-products?
- Does the applicant currently have any commitment/contracts with any buyer?

Investment Justification/Sustainability (up to 5 points)

- How will the applicant sustain the project after the grant ends?
- How important is RBDG grant funding in the execution of the proposed activity?
- Does the applicant identify revenues from applicable tip fees and sale of commodities/products, capital expenses, operating costs, projected profit margins, etc.?
- How will the applicant withstand economic and technical challenges?

Budget/Financial Leverage (5 points):

- What is the investment per ton of material diverted?

- Does the applicant have any finances or resources that the grant will help leverage from outside sources (for example, private entities such as trade associations or banks and public entities such as federal or state government); financial support (such as matching contributions, loans or grants); and, in-kind support (such as feedstock, labor, property, etc.)?
- Did the applicant receive any RBDG grant in the past five years? Applicants that have not received an RBDG grant from MassDEP within the past five years will be scored more highly than applicants with a prior RBDG award.

Disadvantaged Communities Investments (up to 5 points)

- How will the applicant support and engage with Disadvantaged Communities?

Disadvantaged Communities Investments

MassDEP is committed to supporting Disadvantaged Communities through its public investments. The agency seeks to prioritize the direction of these resources to benefit communities defined as Disadvantaged Communities and to address environmental inequities.

Therefore, this Grant Opportunity will prioritize proposals that directly benefit communities designated as a Disadvantaged Community, and that fall within one of three Affordability Tiers following a system first utilized by the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust and the State Revolving Fund. A “Disadvantaged Community” is a community that falls into one of the three tiers using an affordability calculation based on the State’s **“Adjusted Per Capita Income”** (*Per Capita Income * Employment Rate * Population Change (2020/2010) = APCI*). The State’s Adjusted Per Capita Income for the purposes of this solicitation is **\$53,549.85**, from FY25, the most recent year data is currently available.

Tier 1: Communities with APCI more than 80% but less than 100% of the State’s APCI.

Tier 2: Communities with APCI more than 60% but less than 80% of the State’s APCI.

Tier 3: Communities with APCI less than 60% of the State’s APCI.

The calculations may be viewed online here: [FY25 Disadvantaged Communities Affordability Calculations | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/fy25-disadvantaged-communities-affordability-calculations)

IV. Grant Conditions

If awarded, specific terms and conditions will be outlined in the grant scope and contract.

Grant Reimbursement

- As a condition of receiving the grant, grantees are required to meet their recycling and reuse goals for 3 years. Success will be measured primarily by whether the grantee meets its goals and milestones as specified in the application and grant agreement. **Therefore, applicants should propose goals that are realistic, accurate, and achievable.** MassDEP reserves the right to require the grantee to refund, in whole or in part, the grant funds if MassDEP determines that the grantee's success and level of effort is not satisfactory, or if the grantee moves the operation outside of Massachusetts within 3 years of receiving the grant.
- Grant payments will be made on a **reimbursement basis** based on completion of 3 tasks (Task 1 for equipment purchase and installation, Task 2 for performance-based payments and Task 3 for final reporting).
- All final requests for reimbursement must be received within 30 days of the contract end date or all remaining grant funds will be forfeited.
- Requests for reimbursement must include proof that funds were spent on the budgeted items and include a copy of the paid receipt for the purchased equipment under the grant project. **Purchases made before a grant contract is signed by MassDEP and the grant recipient will NOT be reimbursed.** MassDEP will notify any entities of receiving a grant award when it is acceptable to purchase grant-funded equipment. **Awarded entities should not purchase any grant-funded equipment prior to receiving email confirmation from MassDEP.** In this context, “purchase” includes paying for equipment or receiving delivery of equipment. Any vendor invoice for grant-funded equipment should be dated after the contract start date.
- **Final 10% of Grant Funds** –The final 10% of grant funds will be held until an approved final report, in a format approved by MassDEP, has been received by MassDEP. The report must be received and approved prior to the end date of the contract. All final requests for reimbursement must be received within 30 days of the contract end date or all remaining grant funds will be forfeited.

Recycling Loan Fund

RBDG grant awards and Recycling Loan Fund loans, when combined, may not exceed the total cost of a project for which a RBDG grant has been issued. RBDG grant funds cannot be used to repay Recycling Loan Fund loans.

Publications

All documents and publications associated with a grant agreement must be submitted to MassDEP in electronic format in Microsoft Word/Excel or as a PDF file.

Site Visit

MassDEP staff reserves the right to visit awarded applicants during and/or after the grant period.

Estimated Grant Timeline

Application opens, and formal question period begins. All questions must be submitted in writing to Sowayib Sikder at Sowayib.Sikder@mass.gov	December 19, 2025
Deadline for questions	February 6, 2026 (11:59 p.m. ET)
Answers posted to website	February 20, 2026
Application deadline	April 3, 2026(11:59 p.m. ET)
MassDEP reviews applications received	April – May 2026
Award finalists announced (pending agreement on grant scope and contract)	June 2026
Grant Contracts finalized and signed	July-August 2026
Awarded projects begin	September 1, 2026
Awarded projects end	February 28, 2029

V. How to Apply

MassDEP will be accepting applications online only. Applicants shall complete and submit the complete application posted on the MassDEP website. The online application link will ask 3 types of questions such as Applicant Information, Material & Activity and Narrative Scoring Component.

Applicant Information: includes name of entity, registration with secretary of state, FEIN number, facility address, mailing address and contact information.

Material, Activity and Matching requirement: includes (1) types of activity (processing/manufacturing/reuse), (2) type of material (solar panels, food material, hazardous household products from residents, plastic films/wraps, rigid bulk plastics, single-use food service ware replacement, C&D materials) and (3) matching amount that should come directly from the applicant. A minimum financial match of 25% is required (e.g., the minimum applicant match amount for a \$100,000 grant request would be \$25,000).

Narrative Scoring Component: includes 10 evaluation criteria (please see section III Evaluation Criteria). In this section, applicants will be able write the answers with a limit of characters. For timeline and pro-forma, there is the ability to write or make a table (word document) following the samples and copy/paste answers.

The deadline to submit a complete application is April 3, 2026 (11:59 p.m. ET). Submission of an application or parts of an application will not be considered after the deadline.

Sample Project Timeline:

Tasks	Estimated Completion Date
Establish grant agreement and contract with MassDEP	August 2026
Receive all local government approvals	December 2026 or earlier
Complete all required MassDEP permitting	December 2026 or earlier
Order equipment for project	March 2026
Install equipment	June 2026 or earlier
Task 1- Invoice to MassDEP for grant-funded portion of equipment cost	June 30, 2026
Task 2- Begin full operation and processing materials	July 1, 2026- February 28, 2029
Task 3- (10% retainer invoice) & report	February 28, 2029
Submit final project report to MassDEP	February 28, 2029

Sample pro-forma:

The pro-forma statement should include all applicable revenues and costs related to the grant-funded project.

REVENUE	Year 1 (2026)	Year 2 (2027)	Year 3 (2028)
(add line-item description)			
(add additional line item as needed)			
Net Total (+)			
COSTS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
(add operating costs, cost of sales, etc.)			
(add additional line item as needed)			
Net Cost (-)			
Gross Profit or Net Income Before Taxes			
Taxes on Income			
Net Income After Taxes			
Net Income			

Applicants are advised that materials submitted in connection with a grant application may be subject to disclosure under the Commonwealth's Public Records Law. Applicants filing information they wish to be kept confidential and exempt from public disclosure as trade secrets should follow the procedures outlined on MassDEP's website at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/guidance-on-requests-to-maintain-trade -secret-information-confidential>.

Additional Required Documentation

If selected for an award, the applicant will be required to sign and submit the following forms to complete the agreement process.

1. Commonwealth Standard Contract Form (completed and signed by the applicant). The Standard Contract Form is listed under Contracts on this website: <http://www.macomproller.org/forms>
2. Commonwealth Terms and Conditions. These Terms and Conditions are incorporated by reference into the Standard Contract Form, and do not need to be executed separately. <http://www.macomproller.org/forms>

3. Commonwealth W-9 tax information form completed and signed by the applicant with DUNS number and Federal Tax ID. <http://www.macomproller.org/forms>
4. Completed Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing Form. www.macomproller.org/forms
5. Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) form. <http://www.mass.gov/how-to/tips-for-completing-the-electronic-funds-transfer-eft-form>
6. Scope of Work

Applicants are encouraged to review these forms prior to submitting an application.