



Local Efficiency Achievement Program (LEAP)

Grant Management Guidelines

Fiscal Year 2025

**State of New Jersey
Philip D. Murphy, Governor**

**Department of Community Affairs
Jacquelyn A. Suárez, Commissioner**

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on being awarded a FY 2025 Local Efficiency Achievement Program Grant (LEAP). The LEAP Implementation and Challenge Grants are competitive grants that afford unprecedented opportunities to incentivize shared services implementation across New Jersey's local government entities, advancing the mission of the Shared Services Program. The LEAP facilitates exploring and establishing shared services. The LEAP provides counties, municipalities, school districts, commissions authorities, and fire districts assistance for the study or implementation of promising shared services projects undertaken pursuant to the Uniform Shared Service and Consolidation Act. The program is available to all New Jersey local government entities.

The LEAP is comprised of three primary components: County Shared Service Coordinator Grants, Challenge Grants, and Implementation Grants including

The Division of Local Government Services (DLGS) is responsible for administering the LEAP. Eligible local government entities are invited to apply for grant funds under each of the LEAP Grants.

GRANT MANAGEMENT

Now that your local government entity has been awarded this grant, managing your LEAP will be an important part of the grant process. The Department of Community Affairs utilizes The System for Administering Grants Electronically (SAGE), a web-based application process to accept and approve grant applications and manage executed grants. SAGE can be located at: <https://dcasage.intelligrants.com/portal.asp>. The SAGE User Manual is available on the grantee's SAGE home page.

All communications and actions in administering the grant between the grantee and the DLGS will occur through SAGE.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENTITY RESPONSIBILITIES – AGENCY INFORMATION

Each local government entity has an Agency Profile or Agency Information page. Each local government entity is required to keep this information up to date. For example, when mayors change due to elections and/or other circumstances, the mayor's information is required to be updated. **Please note:** the mayor or executive director are the only authorized individuals that can approve a grant agreement. Other contact information for the financial officer and other agency contacts must be updated when there is turnover in responsibilities.

SAGE requires a minimum of (2) agency contacts, the mayor or executive director and the financial officer. The DLGS is requiring additional agency contacts be added for the agency staff that will be administering the grant on behalf of the local government entity.

Each local government entity is also required to have accurate information regarding certain fields listed on the Agency Information page as listed below:

- Entity Name, Address, City, State, Zip Code, and Phone Number
- Main Contact, Mayor/Executive Director, Financial Officer
- Federal Employer I.D. Number
- SAM Unique Entity ID
 - Please note that your entity's DUNS number is no longer valid. Entities are required to use SAM's 12-digit alpha-numeric Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), that took effect on April 1, 2022. Your financial officer should know the UEI as it is used in reporting American Rescue Plan Local Fiscal Recovery Funds reporting to the U.S. Treasury.

VENDOR NUMBER

Applicants who do not already have a New Jersey State Vendor ID number are required to complete a W9. You will also need to complete an ACH form for electronic receipt of grant funds. For assistance, please contact: AAIUNIT@treas.nj.gov

GRANT ADMINISTRATION PROCESS

GRANT APPLICATION - MODIFICATIONS

Following the announcement of LEAP Grant awards, DLGS staff will review each grantee's initial budget request in SAGE and will modify the grantee's budget request (if necessary) for funding to the awarded amount of the grant.

Please note: if DLGS is unable to identify budget components to modify, the grantee's application will be returned to the grantee for modification. Notification will appear on the grantee's task list when signing into SAGE. An email notification will also be sent to the agency contacts listed in SAGE.

The grantee will then be required to make the budget modifications necessary to match the award of the grant. Modifications are only required to the DCA funds requested by the grantee and not the other funds listed in the budget. Once complete the grantee will submit the application.

Upon acceptance of the grantee's budget modifications, the DLGS will process internally, and grant award letters will be distributed to grantees through SAGE. Once an award letter is received by the grantee, the agency's CFO can set up a grant receivable and a grant appropriation on the grantee's financial books. The grantee may then move forward with the project.

TIMEFRAME OF ELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

The State of New Jersey operates on a fiscal year calendar. The LEAP appropriation becomes effective July 1st of each year. Expenses incurred prior to July 1st as identified on the grant recipients purchase orders and vendor invoices are ineligible for reimbursement.

GRANTS AGREEMENTS

After the award letters are distributed, DLGS will create grant agreements for each applicant. The grant agreement outlines the terms and conditions of the grant. More importantly, the grant agreement will identify the term of the grant which will be 1 year and 6 months from the date the award letters are sent out. Grant agreements will be distributed through SAGE and will appear on

the mayor's or executive director's task list for approval. Once approved the grant agreement will be executed.

PROGRESS/PERFORMANCE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Grantees are required to submit periodic progress/performance reports. Progress/Performance reports are required to be submitted by the grantee bi-annually (every 6 months). SAGE will reflect the progress/performance report schedule listed on the grantee's grant menu as Grant Report Periods. Sage will not send out a reminder that progress reports are due. DLGS recommends that the grantee's grant administrator update a personal calendar to remind them of filing progress reports.

GRANT FUNDING PROCESS – MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

Following execution of the agreement, the grantee can seek reimbursement of eligible costs, provided that all award agreement conditions have been satisfied.

Grantees shall maintain and retain accounting and other grant-related records and information for the duration of the project funded by the grant, as required by applicable state and local laws and regulations, for no less than two (2) calendar years.

Such records shall be subject to examination, audit, and inspection by DLGS and/or any other federal, state, or local agency that has jurisdictional authority.

DLGS reserves the right to rescind or reclaim funds, withhold future grant funding and/or disqualify a grantee from participating in future grant awards if any condition of the grant program is unmet, including if grant funds received by the grantee are not properly accounted for, or if the grantee fails to meet reporting or certification requirements.

REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS

Following execution of the agreement, the grantee is permitted to move funds between authorized categories within these guidelines for eligible items without requesting prior approval from DLGS. LEAP grants are reimbursement based. There will be no advance payment of grant funds. While reimbursements may be made semi-annually when semi-annual progress reports are due, DLGS recommends filing for reimbursement after all grant funds have been expended. Eligible costs are reimbursed to the grantee upon submission of evidence of payment by the grantee. **Please note: Purchase orders, vendor invoices and proof of payment documentation dated prior to the award announcement date are not eligible for reimbursement.**

Requests for payment must be made through the NJDCA SAGE portal by submitting a Financial Status Report (FSR), Expense Report, and Project Progress Report stating that filings are up to date. The recipient is required to upload a PDF file containing copies of fully executed purchase orders, vendor invoices and copies of cancelled checks (front & back) documenting the expenditure of funds for which reimbursement is sought. **Please note: Do not use any special characters in the uploaded file names as SAGE will not recognize the file and cannot be opened for review.**

Reimbursement requests are required to be received by DLGS no later than two (2) months after the expiration of the agreement.

Payment will be made via electronic transfer of funds to the account and financial institution identified within the vendor ID listed on your agency information page.

GRANT CLOSEOUT PROCESS

At the conclusion of the approved project period, which may coincide with the date upon which the grantee requests final payment but shall not be before the completion of the project components for which funding was provided, except as otherwise provided in writing by DLGS, the recipients must submit a final report documenting that all administrative responsibilities and required activities under the grant agreement have been satisfactorily completed.

ASSISTANCE

Applicants may contact Matt Gallelo at (609) 930-1969 to discuss program and project needs up to submission of the application. Questions may also be submitted via e-mail to dlgs.leapgrant@dca.nj.gov.