

MAINE.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT

Business Recovery and Resilience Fund Grant Program

Round 2

December 2024

Prepared by the Maine Department of Economic & Community Development

PROGRAM OVERVIEW: The Maine Legislature established the Business Recovery and Resiliency Fund (BRRF) with \$10,000,000 to provide grant opportunities to businesses and organizations, including nonprofit organizations, affected by the specified severe weather-related events. These events include the December 18, 2023 storm, the January 10, 2024 storm or the January 13, 2024 storm. Projects may include a recovery component for damage sustained and must include efforts to increase business resilience to future storms and other climate conditions. As of November 2024, approximately \$8,000,000 of the \$10,000,000 in the program has already been awarded to Maine businesses. Approximately \$2,000,000 remains in the fund for BRRF Round 2.

PROGRAM GOALS: The BRRF program provides grants to businesses and nonprofit organizations impacted by the December 18, 2023 storm, the January 10, 2024 storm or the January 13, 2024 storm for recovery, rebuilding and investments in more resilient infrastructure. Infrastructure project types may include infrastructure upgrades, improvements, or installation of drainage systems, moving electrical or business equipment, relocating the business to a more protected location within Maine and investing in additional insurance. The program is not intended to replace lost profits or revenue but rather to help businesses remain viable and resilient against future weather-related events. The top priority is to ensure that all businesses are reopened.

ROUND TWO: This round will be broken into two distinct groups:

- 1) Businesses who were not recipients of an award from the first round of this grant program. **This group will be prioritized and will be funded before moving on to the second group.**
- 2) Businesses who previously received funding from BRRF, but whose projects are eligible for additional funding, based on receipts and documentation.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY:

This competitive grant program is available to:

- Businesses and nonprofit organizations physically located in the State of Maine that were impacted by the storms on December 18, 2023, January 10, 2024, or the January 13, 2024
- Business entities and non-profit organizations **except**:
 - 501(c)(4) (L3C and benefit corporation are eligible to apply)
 - K-12 schools, including charter, public and private, institutions of higher education
 - State government agencies
 - Foundations and charitable trusts
 - Trade associations
 - Insurance trusts
 - Scholarship funds and programs
 - Gambling
 - Adult Entertainment
 - Membership based private clubs (i.e. private golf course)
 - Cemetery trusts and associations
 - Fraternal orders
 - Hospitals and nursing facilities
 - Residential Rental Properties
 - Home based businesses and home offices
 - No pier/dock infrastructure eligible for DMRs \$25M appropriation from the 2024 supplemental budget (commercial pier/docks not covered by the DMR funding are allowed to apply)
- Organizations must have significant operations in Maine (i.e. business/organization headquartered in Maine, have a minimum of 50% of employees and contract employees based in Maine, etc.)
- Be current and in good standing with all Maine State payroll taxes, sales taxes, and state income taxes (as applicable) through June 30, 2024.
- Be in good standing with all state agencies, including Maine Department of Labor, Maine Secretary of State, Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Revenue Services, Department of Environmental Protection, and Department of Marine Resources.
- Not be in bankruptcy
- Not have permanently ceased all operations and intend to continue as a going concern.
- Must not be otherwise barred from receiving federal funds.
- Organizations with multiple affiliated locations across the State should submit a single application.
 - Regional organizations can apply on behalf of partners (i.e. regional nonprofit on behalf multiple local snowmobile clubs)

If there are applications where the type of business or type of project isn't as clearly defined as the categories above, please apply with clear detail as to how you fit with the eligibility requirements.

Businesses will need to attest to the following:

- Damages came from one or more of storms referenced in the program overview
- Demonstrate that the damage or project costs are not covered by Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster funds, or other insurance, and that the recipient has exhausted all emergency relief funding programs currently available
- Use a contractor that is in good standing with the state of Maine that has all licenses as required
- Match or exceed the funding award (1:1 minimum)

Businesses/organizations must be willing to show before and after pictures of the work completed, if requested by the State. Representatives from State government can inspect the site to ensure proper use of funds, if requested.

Businesses/organizations will be liable for any misuse of funds. The grants are taxable income and subject to audit. Funds must be spent on operations that are strictly within Maine.

- Examples of allowable expenses include:
 - Building and facility repair
 - Trail and outdoor recreational infrastructure
 - Moving electrical infrastructure (such as an electrical panel above the waterline) or moving business equipment
 - Relocating the business to a more protected location within Maine
 - Investing in additional insurance
- Examples of unallowable expenses include (list is not all-inclusive):
 - Depreciation expense
 - Entertainment
 - Lobbying
 - Goods and Services for Personal Use
 - Fines, Penalties, Damages and other Settlements.

GRANT AWARDS:

- Grants will be awarded using a competitive process.
- Project rating criteria may include the viability of the business or nonprofit organization, the ability to match grant funds and the efficacy of the recovery and resilience plan offered in the application.
- Recipients must demonstrate that the damage or project costs are not covered by Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster funds, or other insurance, and that the recipient has exhausted all emergency relief funding programs currently available.
- Initial awards are expected to be capped at \$100,000 with a minimum award of \$2,500.
- Applicants must match the award with a 1:1 investment in the project. Insurance money, SBA recovery loan, or in-kind donations can satisfy the match requirement.
- If the award criteria is met and sufficient documentation provided, grants can be made for work already performed in response to the designated storms (e.g., – pay down a loan to repair the building).

APPLICATION CRITERIA:

What you will need to complete this application:

You will need the following information about your business/organization (and all affiliated businesses/organizations) before you begin your Maine Business Recovery and Resilience Fund grant application:

- Federal Employer Identification Number or Social Security Number
- Type of business/organization (nonprofit or for-profit)
- Principal office address
- “Doing business as” (DBA) name
- Applicant physical address, mailing address (if different) and other contact information
- For businesses: Ownership percentage of each individual owner with greater than 25% equity
- Documentation of any other monies awarded in response to the storms in question (please include all recovery monies received or applied for, to date, including FEMA individual assistance, SBA EIDL program loans, and any other programs)
- A prepared, electronic Maine Vendor Authorization Form/W-9 in the event your business/organization is selected for a grant. Note – an applicant’s Legal Name and any DBA Name need to be listed exactly as it is listed on their IRS Letter/proof of TIN (https://www.maine.gov/osc/sites/maine.gov/osc/files/inline-files/vendor_ME_W9v5.pdf)

How to Apply:

Applicants will apply to an online portal, similar to the previous BRRF grant round. You will need to prepare an excel file that indicates the receipts/invoices in order of the attachments you provide. An example spreadsheet is available on the DECD BRRF website. If you already applied to BRRF previously, and were awarded funds, you may request that your original application is used for your second round application. We will use your first round application for round two. To request this, please email BizAwards.DECD@maine.gov with information as to why you are applying for round two, using the BRRF Additional Funding Consideration Form. If you wish to send additional documentation to support your request, send documentation to BizAwards.DECD@maine.gov. If DECD does not receive adequate information, including the Additional Funding Consideration Form, you will not be eligible for funds.

Application Scoring:

Project rating criteria may include the viability of the business or nonprofit organization, the ability to match grant funds and the efficacy of the recovery and resilience plan offered in the application. The award criteria must require that recipients demonstrate that the damage or project costs are not covered by Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster funds, or other insurance, and that the recipient has exhausted all emergency relief funding programs currently available. The administration of the funds must include sufficient documentation and record-keeping requirements to provide assurance that funds have been awarded consistent with the program guidelines and used for the intended purpose.

As described above, previous BRRF awards from Round 1 will also be taken into consideration when scoring an application.

APPLICATION TIMING AND DEADLINE:

Maine DECD hosted a webinar on May 14, 2024. That recording can be found on DECD's BRRF website.

Applications for BRRF Round 2 will be accepted starting December 3, 2024 through 11:59 PM January 14, 2025. Visit the online application portal to complete the form electronically. You will receive email confirmation that your application has been received. If you are unable to use the online portal, please contact us for assistance using the contact information provided below.

This grant program is a competitive program, but will NOT be first-come, first-served. Applications will be scored based on specific criteria related to the requirements specified in the statute.

For additional information, please refer to the FAQ Document.

If you have any questions that are not addressed in the application instructions or the FAQs, please call: Business Answers at 1-800-872-3838 and select option 3. You can also email questions to BizAwards.DECD@maine.gov. Check the DECD BRRF website for information about office hours regarding this fund.