



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Department of Environmental Protection

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NOTICE OF GRANT OPPORTUNITY **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM** **STATE FISCAL YEAR (SFY) 2022**

Summary of Grant Opportunity: The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) seeks proposals from Eligible Applicants (as defined below) interested in better understanding the assessment and cleanup work being conducted at contaminated properties in their communities. Technical Assistance Grants (TAGs) will be awarded to selected community and citizens' groups for the purpose of obtaining outside expert advice and technical assistance to understand and evaluate the planned implementation of site cleanup response actions and related activities, as well as to enhance public involvement in disposal site assessment and cleanup activities.

Program goals: Public participation is an essential part of the Commonwealth's Waste Site Cleanup Program administered by MassDEP. However, the detailed technical information and regulatory references contained in the cleanup plans and reports are often difficult for the general public to understand, which creates a barrier to effective public involvement. To encourage public participation, MassDEP has established the TAG Program to assist citizens in obtaining and understanding technical information used to make cleanup decisions, and to promote citizen involvement in planning cleanup actions. TAG awards are for **reimbursement only** of allowable expenses, as described below.

TAG Applications are reviewed and evaluated through a competitive process, strictly on the information contained in the Application. The most competitive proposals selected for funding will be those applications that best address the TAG Program goals of assisting citizens in understanding and using the technical information that provides the basis for cleanup decisions, and promoting more informed citizen involvement in planning response actions.

General information about the assessment and cleanup of disposal sites in Massachusetts is available on-line at MassDEP's website at <https://www.mass.gov/guides/the-waste-site-cleanup-program>.

This information is available in alternate format. Contact Michelle Waters-Ekanem, Director of Diversity/Civil Rights at 617-292-5751.

TTY# MassRelay Service 1-800-439-2370

MassDEP Website: www.mass.gov/dep

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Technical Assistance Grants are authorized by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L.) Chapter 21E, §14(c), and are implemented by MassDEP as set forth in the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (MCP) regulations at Subpart N (310 CMR 40.1450 et seq.).

Grant Opportunity and Application, and Requirements: The Technical Assistance Grant Program Opportunity document and TAG Application will be issued on May 19, 2021, and will be posted on MassDEP's website at the following link:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/technical-assistance-grants-waste-site-cleanup>

Eligible Applicants: Groups of individuals who may be affected by oil and/or hazardous materials from an eligible disposal site can apply for TAGs. These groups must:

- Exist as a *legal entity*, with legal authority to receive, disburse, and be responsible for funds at the time the grant is awarded. The legal entity process is coordinated by the Massachusetts Secretary of State Corporations Office (<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/cor/coridx.htm>) and requires a group to establish a Board of Directors and by-laws; and
- Be an "*affected person*," meaning the group is comprised of individuals who may have been impacted by an eligible disposal site.

Types of eligible applicants include:

- Groups of individuals, such as community groups and neighborhood associations, including individuals whose properties may have been impacted by oil and/or hazardous materials from the eligible disposal site;
- A district or other body politic that owns or operates a public water supply which may have been impacted by oil and/or hazardous materials from the eligible disposal site; or
- A city, town or agency which may have been impacted by oil and/or hazardous materials from the eligible disposal site.

Eligible Disposal Sites: TAGs are most effective at disposal sites that are actively being evaluated for future cleanup activities because these sites provide opportunities for involvement and participation in the process of making cleanup decisions. Eligible disposal sites include sites that are:

- Classified as Tier I and Tier II under the MCP (this does not include disposal sites classified as Tier ID by MassDEP);
- A Massachusetts disposal site on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Superfund National Priorities List; or
- Deemed by MassDEP to be "Adequately Regulated" under the MCP (310 CMR 40.0110 et seq.) or by another MassDEP program or another government agency.

Additional information related to specific disposal sites (including but not limited to the current status of assessment and cleanup activities) that applicants may find useful in completing the TAGs application may be found on the EEA Data Portal to Search for Waste Site & Reportable Releases, which is available via MassDEP's website at: <https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/Portal#!/search/wastesite>.

Eligible Activities: In general, TAG funding may be used to provide citizens with:

- Access to outside expert advice and technical assistance related to assessing and cleaning up an eligible disposal site;
- Access to and use of information that has been developed for an eligible disposal site; and
- Information about issues of public concern related to eligible disposal sites.

Examples of eligible activities include, but are not limited to:

- Interpreting technical information and sampling data that have been prepared (or will be prepared) by the person conducting the disposal site response action;
- Observing site assessment, sampling, or response action activities;
- Analyzing split samples (i.e., analyzing duplicates of samples collected by the party conducting disposal site response actions);
- Conducting surveys to gather existing health information through interviews or questionnaires from individuals who may be affected by the disposal site;
- Obtaining legal advice; restricted, however, to legal advice regarding the public's involvement in response actions;
- Conducting public education activities focusing on the eligible disposal site and the affected community; and/or
- Providing a reasonable share of funding for voluntary mediation concerning disposal site response actions.

Funding Availability: MassDEP anticipates that the grant award to any individual applicant in this funding round will be up to a maximum of \$15,000. The total potential funding available for all grant proposals through this program is up to \$150,000, subject to the funding availability in the FY22 program budget. MassDEP reserves the right not to award any grants through this program and/or not to award the total funding currently available. Only one TAG grant will be provided for any specific eligible disposal site through this program.

The grant award will be finalized only after all required grant contract forms have been fully executed. Grantees will be reimbursed for eligible project expenses incurred after the grant has been awarded. Grantees must provide documentation supporting all requests for reimbursement and must also provide documentation indicating that all eligible project expenses were incurred on or before June 30, 2022.

Grant Application Process: Grant applicants must complete and submit the Technical Assistance Grant Program Application. All application materials will be available for download at: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/technical-assistance-grants-waste-site-cleanup>

Pre-TAG Opportunity Issuance Informational Meeting: On Thursday, April 29, 2021, an informational meeting will be held to provide an overview to interested parties of the grant program and application process in advance of the issuance and public posting of the TAG Grant Opportunity. A recording of this informational meeting and accompanying power point presentation will be made available at <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/technical-assistance-grants-waste-site-cleanup><https://www.mass.gov/service-details/technical-assistance-grants-waste-site-cleanup>.

Evaluation Criteria: The evaluation criteria components for MassDEP's review and scoring of proposals are as specified in the Technical Assistance Grant Program Opportunity.

Application Deadline: Applications are due electronically by 5:00 P.M. on July 16, 2021.

Question and Answer Period: Written questions can be submitted to the TAG Point of Contact until Friday, June 11, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. A complete question and answer document will be posted by Friday, June 25, 2021 at: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/technical-assistance-grants-waste-site-cleanup>

Additional Information: for additional information regarding the Technical Assistance Grant Program, please refer to the Technical Assistance Grant Opportunity at: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/technical-assistance-grants-waste-site-cleanup>