



**Brian P. Kemp**    **Hunter Hill**  
Governor            Executive Director

October 1, 2023

Re: 2024 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Base and Supplemental Call for Projects

To Whom It May Concern:

The 2024 DWSRF Intended Use Plan (IUP) call for projects is now open. The DWSRF provides low-interest financing for publicly-owned drinking water systems. Types of projects eligible for DWSRF funding include, but are not limited to, projects that:

- Maintain compliance with drinking water rules and regulations; and
- Improve drinking water supply.

To be eligible for funding, submit a DWSRF pre-application via GEFA's website by 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, January 31, 2024. Pre-applications received after this time will not be scored for principal forgiveness. A pre-application does not obligate you to apply or guarantee funding. The pre-application and additional guidance are available at [gefa.georgia.gov/call-for-projects](https://gefa.georgia.gov/call-for-projects).

Please note the following:

- The architecture and engineering qualifications-based selection requirements are on page 5;
- The affordability criteria are on pages 7 and 8; and
- The new project scoring criteria are on pages 9 and 10.

Please contact the Water Resources Division at 404-584-1000 or [waterresources@gefa.ga.gov](mailto:waterresources@gefa.ga.gov) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Hunter Hill'. Below the signature is the printed name 'Hunter Hill' in a black, sans-serif font.

Hunter Hill

Enclosures



**Georgia Environmental Finance Authority  
2024 Base DWSRF Call for Projects  
Project Submission Guidelines and Program Requirements**

Deadline	Pre-application Website	Questions
5:00 p.m., January 31, 2024	<a href="https://gefa.georgia.gov/call-for-projects">gefa.georgia.gov/call-for-projects</a>	404-584-1000

**Who Can Apply for DWSRF Loans?**

- Georgia cities
- Georgia counties
- Georgia water and sewer authorities
- Community Improvement Districts (CID)
- Any state or local authority created by the Georgia General Assembly

**Minimum Criteria for Eligibility**

- Only those counties and municipalities certified as Qualified Local Governments by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and the water and sewer authorities within those certified governments may receive funding.
- Only applicants within counties that have current DCA-certified Service Delivery Agreements (HB 489) may receive funding and the proposed project must be consistent with the verified strategy.
- Applicants must be in compliance with state audit requirements. Compliance questions can be answered at [audits.ga.gov](https://audits.ga.gov).
- Applicants within the Metro North Georgia Water Planning District (MNGWPD) must be certified by the director of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) as complying or making a good faith effort to comply with all MNGWPD plans and/or enforcement measures.
- Project must conform to applicant's regional Water Development and Conservation Plan, once adopted.
- All applicants must adopt and enforce the state minimum standard plumbing code provisions outlined in O.C.G.A. Section 8-2-3 to be eligible to receive funding.

**Eligible DWSRF Projects**

- Correcting water system deficiencies including water quality, capacity, pressure, and water loss;
- Providing new or existing water service to other water systems through consolidation projects;
- Implementing security measures such as fencing and surveillance equipment;
- Installing backflow prevention devices and enhanced filtration/disinfection treatment;
- Maintaining compliance with existing or proposed standards and regulations;
- Rehabilitating or replacing aging infrastructure;
- Rehabilitating or developing sources to replace contaminated sources of drinking water, including replacing contaminated private wells with public water supply;
- Installing or upgrading treatment facilities to improve drinking water quality;
- Installing or upgrading storage facilities to prevent microbiological contaminants from entering system; and
- Installing or replacing transmission and distribution pipes to prevent contamination.

### **Ineligible DWSRF Projects**

- Projects primarily to serve future population growth;
- Projects for systems in significant noncompliance, unless funding will ensure compliance;
- Projects for systems lacking adequate financial, management, and/or technical capability, unless assistance will ensure compliance;
- Construction of reservoirs and dams or the rehabilitation of dams; and
- Projects needed primarily for fire protection.

### **DWSRF Water or Energy Conservation Projects**

- Distribution pipe replacement or rehabilitation to reduce water loss and prevent water main breaks;
- Pressure management activities designed to regulate water pressure and reduce water loss;
- Installing water meters in previously unmetred areas;
- Replacing broken/malfunctioning water meters or upgrading existing water meters with automatic meter reading (AMR) or advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) systems;
- Installing or retrofitting water efficient devices such as plumbing fixtures and appliances;
- Implementing incentive programs to conserve water such as rebates for water efficient fixtures;
- Recycling and water reuse projects that replace potable sources with non-potable sources;
- Power production projects via wind, solar, geothermal, and micro-hydro that directly serve the publicly-owned water utility; and,
- Motor replacement projects, lighting upgrades, SCADA equipment, variable frequency drive projects, and projects designed to eliminate pump stations are eligible if there is a documented reduction in energy consumption.

### **Project Priority and Rank**

Project ranking is based on factors including A/E procurement, readiness to proceed, public health compliance benefits, and project benefits. Projects will be listed in priority order on the DWSRF Fundable Priority List and incorporated into the IUP to be submitted to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). GEFA will score all pre-applications and rank projects in descending order. GEFA will fund as many eligible projects as financing is available. It is important that applicants complete the pre-application in its entirety, including all supplemental attachments, to ensure the proposed project is accurately scored.

## Federal Requirements

### **Architectural/Engineering Qualification-Based Selection Process**

Borrowers must comply with Section 602(b)14 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, which requires competitive procurement for architectural and engineering (A/E) services through a Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) procedure. This applies to contracts for program management, construction management, feasibility studies, preliminary engineering, design, engineering, surveying, mapping, or other engineering-related services.

To be eligible for financing from the 2024 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, all borrowers must comply with the following A/E selection requirement:

- If the anticipated project cost is less than \$1,000,000 and A/E services are less than \$100,000, a QBS procedure is not required.
- If the anticipated project cost is \$1,000,000 to \$3,000,000 and A/E services are more than \$100,000, a **ONE-STEP procurement** is required for selecting an A/E firm. In a one-step procurement, the borrower selects a consultant based on the scoring methodology that has been published in a Request for Qualifications for A/E Services.
- If the anticipated project cost is more than \$3,000,000 and A/E services are more than \$100,000, a **TWO-STEP procurement** is required for selecting an A/E firm. In a two-step procurement, the borrower uses the scoring methodology published in its RFQ to narrow down the candidates to three to five "finalist" firms. Then, the borrower interviews the "finalist" firms to select the most qualified candidate.

Guidance and templates for a one-step and two-step QBS process can be found on the GEFA website at [gefa.georgia.gov/architectural-and-engineering-services](https://gefa.georgia.gov/architectural-and-engineering-services).

### **Davis-Bacon Wage Requirements**

The provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act apply to all projects financed in whole or in part by the DWSRF. These requirements apply to projects for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a treatment works. In all contracts in excess of \$2,000, the Borrower shall insert in full the document entitled "Supplemental General Conditions for Federally-Assisted State Revolving Fund." This document is located on the GEFA website at [gefa.georgia.gov/loan-documents](https://gefa.georgia.gov/loan-documents).

### **American Iron and Steel**

The American Iron and Steel (AIS) requirements apply to all projects financed in whole or in part by the DWSRF. These requirements apply to projects for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a treatment works. In all contracts, the Borrower shall insert in full the document entitled "AIS Special Conditions." This document is located on the GEFA website at [gefa.georgia.gov/loan-documents](https://gefa.georgia.gov/loan-documents).

### **State Environmental Review Process**

Projects funded by the DWSRF must undergo an environmental review via the EPA-approved State Environmental Review Process (SERP). This environmental review is conducted by EPD through either a Categorical Exclusion (CE) or Notice of No Significant Impact (NONSI). This process addresses issues such as environmental impact, potential historical preservation issues, potential endangered species

concerns, and permit compliance. Borrowers should review the "Guidance Document for Project Requirements" document, which is located on the GEFA website at [gefa.georgia.gov/loan-documents](https://gefa.georgia.gov/loan-documents).

### **Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)**

As a part of GEFA's loan agreement, loan recipients are required to encourage the participation of minority- and women-owned businesses in all project subcontracts. The state's DWSRF percentage goals through September 30, 2023, are four percent for Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) and four percent for Women Business Enterprises (WBE). Borrowers should review the "Supplemental General Conditions for Federally-Assisted State Revolving Fund," which are located on the GEFA website at [gefa.georgia.gov/loan-documents](https://gefa.georgia.gov/loan-documents).

### **Build America Buy America (BABA)**

Alongside BIL, Congress passed BABA, which establishes strong and permanent domestic sourcing requirements across all federal financial assistance programs. BABA, which is a component of the Infrastructure and Jobs Act (IIJA), requires federal agencies to ensure that "none of the funds made available for a Federal financial assistance program for infrastructure, including each deficient program, may be obligated for a project unless all of the iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States."

**Georgia Environmental Finance Authority  
2024 DWSRF Affordability Criteria**

GEFA's affordability criteria uses data on median household income (MHI), unemployment rate, percentage not in labor force, poverty rate, percentage on Social Security, percentage on Supplemental Security Income (SSI), percentage with cash public assistance, percentage with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), age dependency ratio, and population trend from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020 American Community Survey. The applicant's data is categorized in percentiles. GEFA will use the affordability criteria to score communities for principal forgiveness. **Please note that the affordability percentiles may change based on updated census data.**

**1. Median Household Income (MHI)**

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (4 points)	50th Percentile (3 points)	75th Percentile (2 points)	100th Percentile (1 point)
MHI	\$34,679	\$45,093	\$59,178	\$59,179 or higher

**2. Unemployment Percent**

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (1 point)	50th Percentile (2 points)	75th Percentile (3 points)	100th Percentile (4 points)
Unemployment Percent	1.5%	2.9%	4.2%	4.3% and higher

**3. Percentage Not in Labor Force**

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (1 point)	50th Percentile (2 points)	75th Percentile (3 points)	100th Percentile (4 points)
Percentage Not in Labor Force	35.7%	43.5%	50.7%	50.8% and higher

**4. Poverty Rate**

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (1 point)	50th Percentile (2 points)	75th Percentile (3 points)	100th Percentile (4 points)
Poverty Rate	10.4%	18.8%	26.2%	26.3% and higher

**5. Percentage on Social Security**

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (1 point)	50th Percentile (2 points)	75th Percentile (3 points)	100th Percentile (4 points)

Percentage on Social Security	28.6%	35.9%	43.4%	43.5% and higher
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#### 6. Percentage on SSI

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (1 point)	50th Percentile (2 points)	75th Percentile (3 points)	100th Percentile (4 points)
Percentage on SSI	3.0%	6.1%	9.7%	9.8% and higher

#### 7. Percentage with Cash Public Assistance

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (1 point)	50th Percentile (2 points)	75th Percentile (3 points)	100th Percentile (4 points)
Percentage with Cash Public Assistance	0.0%	1.2%	2.4%	2.5% and higher

#### 8. Percentage with SNAP

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (1 point)	50th Percentile (2 points)	75th Percentile (3 points)	100th Percentile (4 points)
Percentage with SNAP	9.2%	16.3%	23.5%	23.6% and higher

#### 9. Age Dependency Ratio

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (1 point)	50th Percentile (2 points)	75th Percentile (3 points)	100th Percentile (4 points)
Age Dependency Ratio	57.2	67.3	78.3	78.4 and higher

#### 10. Population Trend

The following categories will be used to determine scoring for change in population from 2011 to 2020.

- Positive growth or no growth (1 point)
- Between -0.01% to -1% (2 points)
- Between -1.01% and -2% (3 points)
- Greater than -2% (4 points)

**Georgia Environmental Finance Authority  
2024 Base DWSRF Call for Projects  
Project Ranking Criteria**

Projects will be rated in three categories to determine eligibility and selection for funding under the DWSRF.

**DRINKING WATER SRF**

**Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Scoring System (maximum 100 points)**

1. Readiness to proceed (25 points)
2. Compliance benefit (50 points)
3. Project benefits (25 points)

**DWSRF Scoring System – Detailed Breakdown**

**1. Readiness to Proceed (only one option can be selected)**

- |   |        |
|---|--------|
| a. SERP issued (Categorical Exclusion or Notice of No Significant Impact determination published in a letter from EPD). | 10 pts |
| b. SERP approved (EPD published a final approval letter).   | 25 pts |

**2. Compliance Benefits (only one option can be selected)**

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| a. Project to facilitate compliance with primary drinking water standards. To qualify projects must correct deficiencies resulting in non-compliance with the primary drinking water standards. (if selected, explain)   | 50 pts |
| b. Project is needed to <b>FULLY ADDRESS</b> deficiencies documented in an enforcement action, e.g., Notice of Violation, Consent Order, Administrative Order (must provide copies to receive points). The NOV, CO, or AO must be within the last 3 years.                                       | 50 pts |
| c. Project will provide additional water supply to systems that have neither a backup well nor an emergency tie-in to another system.  | 50 pts |
| d. Project will expand an existing system capacity or construct a new drinking water system to ensure safe drinking water to serve <b>EXISTING</b> residences/businesses in unserved areas. This could include a project to acquire a failing privately-owned system by a publicly-owned system. | 50 pts |



**3. Project Benefits (select all that apply)**

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| a. Project will provide a redundant power supply (e.g., generators with an automatic transfer switch or alternative energy sources) to prevent interruption of operations during an emergency. | 5 pts  |
| b. Project will reduce water loss (e.g., water meters, water line replacements, valves).   | 10pts  |
| c. Project creates redundancy and system reliability (if selected, explain).   | 10 pts |

\* GEFA reserves the right to verify any information submitted within the pre-application.

Please contact the Water Resources Division at 404-584-1000 or [waterresources@gefa.ga.gov](mailto:waterresources@gefa.ga.gov) if you have any questions about the 2024 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Call for Projects.