



June 29, 2020

Re: Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Drinking Water Grant

To Whom It May Concern:

The Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) is opening the call for projects for the Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Drinking Water Grant, which is authorized by the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act. Georgia's FY2018 and FY2019 total allotment for this new grant program is \$1,001,000.

The Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Drinking Water Grant will provide funding for drinking water projects in underserved communities, meaning the water system has violated a requirement of a national primary drinking water regulation. The community must also qualify as "small" or "disadvantaged." GEFA's affordability criteria on page five of this letter will be utilized to award the grant to communities with the greatest need.

Please note that the Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Drinking Water Grant requires a 45 percent cost-share for the total project budget. Please review the eligible match sources on page two of this letter.

To be eligible for the Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Drinking Water Grant, submit a grant application via waterresources@gefa.ga.gov by Monday, July 24, 2020. An application does not guarantee funding. The application and additional guidance are available at <https://gefa.georgia.gov/water-resources/small-and-disadvantaged-communities-drinking-water-grant>.

Please contact the Water Resources Division at 404-584-1000 or waterresources@gefa.ga.gov if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Clark". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Kevin Clark
Executive Director

**Georgia Environmental Finance Authority
Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Drinking Water Grant
Project Submission Guidelines and Program Requirements**

All applications must be submitted via waterresources@gefa.ga.gov.

Deadline	Application Website	Questions
5:00 p.m., July 24, 2020	https://gefa.georgia.gov/water-resources/small-and-disadvantaged-communities-drinking-water-grant	404-450-8381 404-584-1023 404-584-1075 waterresources@gefa.ga.gov

Who Can Apply for the Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Drinking Water Grant?

- Georgia cities and counties; water, sewer, and sanitary districts; or state and local authorities, boards, and political subdivisions created by the Georgia General Assembly.
- The applicant **MUST** meet the following criteria of an “underserved community”:
 - Served by a public water system that violates, or exceeds, as applicable, a requirement of a national primary drinking water regulation, including:
 1. A maximum contaminant level;
 2. A treatment technique; and
 3. An action level.
- The applicant **MUST** meet at least one of the following criteria to be considered “small” and/or “disadvantaged”:
 - The community served has a population of less than 10,000 individuals.
 - The community is considered disadvantaged based on the affordability score, as determined by the criteria on page five of this letter.

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 under this program.
- Only applicants within counties that have current DCA-certified Service Delivery Agreements (HB 489) may receive funding under this program 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.
- All applicants within the Metro North Georgia Water Planning District (MNGWPD) must be certified by the director of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) as either being in compliance 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 in order to be eligible to receive funding.
- The applicant **MUST** be able to provide a cost-share of 45 percent of the total project budget. The cost share can be provided from one or more of the following fund sources: local funds, in-kind contributions, a Georgia Fund loan from the GEFA, a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) commitment from DCA, a Water and Waste Disposal loan from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA-RD), or federal disaster relief funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) or Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA).

Eligible Projects and Activities

Grants can be used to support projects and activities in underserved, small, and disadvantaged communities that include:

- Investments necessary for a public water system to comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA)
- Assistance that directly and primarily benefits a disadvantaged community
- Programs to provide household water quality testing, including testing for unregulated contaminants
- Activities necessary and appropriate for a State to respond to a contaminant

Example project and activity categories are:

- Treatment
- Transmission and distribution
- Storage
- Consolidation
- Household water quality testing, including for unregulated contaminants
- Assistance to increase technical, managerial, and financial capacity
- Drinking water contamination response efforts

Proposed Timeline for Funding

June 29, 2020 – Call for projects opens

July 24, 2020 – Deadline to submit application via GEFA's website at gefa.georgia.gov

FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

Davis-Bacon Wage Requirements

Davis-Bacon wage rate requirements apply to all projects funded by the Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Drinking Water Grant. The grant recipient shall insert the Davis-Bacon requirements in full in any contract in excess of \$2,000 that is entered into for actual construction, alteration, and/or repair of a public treatment works that is financed in whole or in part by the Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Drinking Water Grant, and that is subject to the requirements of the Davis-Bacon Act. The document entitled "Supplemental General Conditions for Federally-Assisted State Revolved Fund" can be located on the GEFA website at gefa.georgia.gov/loan-documents.

American Iron and Steel

American Iron and Steel (AIS) requirements apply to any project that is funded by the Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Drinking Water Grant. The grant recipient shall insert the AIS requirements in full in any contract that is entered into for construction, alteration, and/or repair of a public treatment works that is financed in whole or in part by the Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Drinking Water Grant. The document entitled "American Iron and Steel (AIS) Special Conditions" can be located on the GEFA website at gefa.georgia.gov/loan-documents.

National Environmental Review Process

All projects funded by the Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Drinking Water Grant must undergo a federal environmental review in accordance with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA). This environmental review is conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through either a Categorical Exclusion (CE) or Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) process. This process is designed to address issues such as environmental impact, potential historical preservation issues, potential endangered species concerns, and permit compliance. Applicants should contact GEFA's Water Resources Division via waterresources@gefa.ga.gov to discuss the process of undergoing a NEPA review. Please note that this process will be carried out by EPA, unlike the regular process for GEFA loans that is conducted by Georgia EPD.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)

As a part of GEFA's grant agreement, grant recipients are required to encourage the participation of minority- and women-owned businesses in all project subcontracts. Georgia's participation goals are 4 percent for Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) and 4 percent for Women Business Enterprises (WBE). Applicants should review the "Supplemental General Conditions for Federally-Assisted State Revolved Fund," which can be located on the GEFA website at gefa.georgia.gov/loan-documents.

**Georgia Environmental Finance Authority
Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Drinking Water Grant
2020 Affordability Criteria**

GEFA's affordability criteria uses data on median household income, 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 2018 American Community Survey. The applicant's data is categorized in percentiles. GEFA will use the affordability criteria to rank applicants for funding priority for the Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Drinking Water Grant.

1. Median Household Income (MHI)

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (4 points)	50th Percentile (3 points)	75th Percentile (2 points)	100th Percentile (1 point)
MHI	\$31,701	\$40,155	\$52,234	\$52,235 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	2.2%	3.6%	5.1%	5.2% 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	36.6%	43.8%	50.9%	60.0% 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	13.2%	21.2%	28.7%	28.8% 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	28.9%	35.7%	42.6%	42.7% and higher

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	3.9%	6.8%	9.9%	10.0% 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	0.5%	1.3%	2.5%	2.6% 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	11.6%	18.8%	26%	27% 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	57.8	67	77.3	77.4 and higher

10. Population Trend

The following categories will be used to determine scoring for change in population from 2011 to 2018.

- 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)