

MAIL LIST
September 26, 2025

| | Date | From | Pertains to: | Agenda/Committee/ Liaison |
|----|-------------|---|--|--|
| 1. | 09-19-2025 | NJDEP | Murphy Administration Announces \$20 Million in Electric School Bus and Charging Station Grant to Mark Drive Electric Month New Jersey Climate Week 2025 Pollution Prevention (P2) National Emergency Preparedness Month Discover Fort Mott State Park Funding Opportunities Join DEP for the 2025 PFAS Summit | Mayor and Council Borough Administrator |
| 2. | 09-19-2025 | DLGS | Local Finance Notice – 2025 Municipal Best Practices Inventory | Mayor and Council Borough Administrator |
| 3. | 09-22-2025 | County of Bergen Division of Community Development | BCDCD Annual Application Period | Mayor and Council Borough Administrator |
| 4. | 09-23-2025 | NJLM Michael F. Cerra | Tour of the Canoe Brook Water Treatment Plan | Mayor and Council Borough Administrator |
| 5. | 09-24-2025 | Liliana Militaru | Thank you to AJ Martin, Department of Public Works Team, and the Borough of Closter | Mayor and Council Borough Administrator |

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| 6. | 09-24-2025 | NJLM | <p>Weekly Roundup</p> <p><u>State Issues</u> SHBP Plan Design Committee Special Meeting on September 24, 2025 DLGS Issues Local Finance Notice on Recently Enacted PILOT Law DLGS Issues LFN 2025-13 Regarding Best Practices Inventory League Comments on DEP PACT/REAL Rule Proposal League Comments onNJDEP/3M Settlement League Comments on NJHMFA Proposed New UHAC Alcohol Beverage Control Proposes New Regulations Acting Governor Signs Bill for Lead Disclosure and Testing Requisites Legislation Signed to Establish NJ Department of Veterans Affairs Seven Northeastern States Form Public Health Collaborative State Announces \$130.7 Million Opioid Settlement Funds Investment <i>NJ Municipalities</i> blog: Grant at Work-Scotch Plains Community Energy Plan</p> <p><u>Federal Issues</u> Congress at Impasse Over Government Funding Floodplain Restoration & Culvert Upgrades Grant Available America Battlefields Protection Program Battlefield Restoration</p> <p><u>Conference Connections</u> NJLMEF Plans Session on Hometown Security & Human Trafficking Apply for the Innovation in Governance Program</p> <p><u>Grants</u> <u>Also of Interest</u> <i>NJ Municipalities</i> Magazine: Renewals</p> | Mayor and Council Borough Administrator |
|----|------------|------|---|--|



i ML 09.26.2025

Mari Margiotta <mmargiotta@closternj.us>

NJDEP Weekly Update

1 message

DEP Local Government Assistance [DEP] <localgov@dep.nj.gov>

Fri, Sep 19, 2025 at 6:06 PM



September 19, 2025

Good afternoon, Mayors and Municipal Officials,

As we bid farewell to summer and welcome the arrival of fall this Monday, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will kick off **Climate Week** on September 22nd. This week, the Murphy Administration announced **\$20 million in grants for electric school buses** and charging stations in celebration of Drive Electric Month. September is **National Emergency Preparedness Month**, and in this week's update, you'll find information on pollution prevention and guidance on managing radiation emergencies. Additionally, you are invited to join the DEP at the New Jersey State Museum for the **Conservation Open House**, which will highlight 'Ecosystems at Risk: Threatened & Endangered in NJ.' Read on...

■

Murphy Administration Announces \$20 Million In Electric School Bus and Charging Station Grants To Mark Drive Electric Month- [Read the full news release.](#)



In celebration of National Drive Electric Month, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) announced the availability of \$20 million in grants from two grant programs to fund the purchases of electric school buses and installation of public charging stations.

Running from Sept. 12 through Oct. 12, [National Drive Electric Month](#) is a nationwide celebration to raise awareness of the many benefits of all-electric and plug-in hybrid cars, trucks, motorcycles, and more.

The DEP's [Electric School Bus Grant Program](#) will provide \$10 million in grants to school districts and contractors that provide bus services to school districts as part of the state's effort to replace dirty diesel buses with clean electric buses. Diesel buses produce emissions that are especially harmful to children.

The DEP's [EV Charging Grant Program](#) will provide an additional \$10 million in grants to install charging stations near multi-unit housing and transit stations as the Murphy Administration continues to work to make electric vehicle use more convenient and attractive in New Jersey. The state now boasts nearly 250,000 EVs on the road (making up 14 percent of new vehicle registrations), demonstrating increasing confidence in EVs and the availability of charging infrastructure.

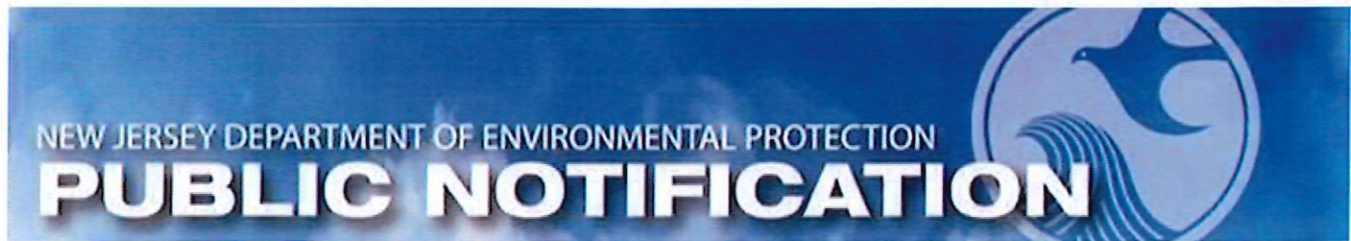
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[Read the full news release](#) to get the Electric School Bus Grant and the EV Charging Grant Program Details.

Applications for the Electric School Bus Grant Program are due Friday, September 26, 2025. More information can be found at dep.nj.gov/stophesoot/electric-school-bus-program/.

Applications for fast-charging electric vehicle stations through It Pay\$ to Plug In will be accepted until October 25, 2025. More information is available at dep.nj.gov/drivegreen/dcfcsolicitation/.

Don't miss this opportunity to [Drive Green](#).





New Jersey Climate Week 2025

NJ Climate Week (9/22-9/26) kicks off next Monday! We'll be celebrating New Jersey's progress on climate action with events, videos, and stories that highlight how communities are preparing for a changing climate.

We'll begin the week with a press event recognizing a New Jersey nonprofit for its important work on regional stormwater management.

All week long, we'll be running a social media campaign that will include short videos highlighting key climate actions as well as, key reports on the economic and environmental impacts of climate change in New Jersey.

We'd be glad to amplify your stories, too!

As our partners in protecting New Jersey's environment, we'd love your help spreading the word. Keep an eye out for our posts and hashtags — **#NJClimateWeek** and **#ClimateWeekNYC**— and please share how your work connects to these efforts.

Thanks for helping make this Climate Week a success!

#NJClimateWeek, #ClimateWeekNYC

Pollution Prevention (P2)

The third week of September is Pollution Prevention Week— a week where we reflect on the Pollution Prevention Program and discuss ways that pollution prevention benefits businesses, communities, individuals, and the environment!



Video: What is Pollution Prevention? (U.S. EPA)

Pollution prevention (P2) is any practice that reduces, eliminates, or prevents pollution at its source before it is created. As shown by the EPA Waste Management Hierarchy, P2, also known as "source reduction," is fundamentally different and, where feasible, more desirable than recycling, treatment, or disposal. It is often more cost effective to prevent pollution from being created at its source than to pay for control, treatment, and disposal of waste products. When less pollution is created, there are fewer impacts to human health and the environment.

Learn more about pollution prevention at the National Pollution Prevention Roundtable website: <https://www.p2.org/> or by visiting this EPA webpage: <https://www.epa.gov/p2>.

PREVENT POLLUTION IN YOUR COMMUNITY

HOME

- Use reusable shopping bags at the store
- Install a programmable thermostat

STATE OR TRIBAL PROGRAM OR UNIVERSITY

- Apply for an EPA Pollution Prevention grant

INDUSTRY

- Switch to low-carbon energy supply and materials
- Reduce or eliminate the use of hazardous chemicals

SCHOOL OR BUSINESS

- Reduce or eliminate the use of single use cups, plates and utensils in the cafeteria
- Look for products with the Safer Choice label
- Establish a sustainable purchasing program

COMMUTE

- Carpool, walk, bike or take public transit
- Keep car tires inflated



www.epa.gov/p2

P2 Technical Assistance Providers

Find regional, state, and local pollution prevention technical assistance resources in your area, including [EPA Regional P2 contacts](#) and [current grantees](#).


National Emergency Preparedness Month

September is National Emergency Preparedness Month. Knowing what to do before something happens is the best way to protect yourself and your loved ones. This week we turn your focus to radiation emergencies. Do you know what to do in a radiation emergency?


Radiation emergencies can be intentional acts designed to hurt others, like a terrorist attack, or they can be accidents that occur from legitimate uses of radioactive material. Learn more and share: <http://emergency.cdc.gov/radiation>.

September is National Preparedness Month



Do you know what to do in a radiation emergency?



GET INSIDE **STAY INSIDE** **STAY TUNED**



Source: emergency.cdc.gov/radiation
Purchased with funds through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security



September is Emergency Preparedness Month

Radiation Emergencies - What should I do?

If a radiation emergency occurs, people can take actions to protect themselves, their loved ones, and their pets.



GET INSIDE

In a radiation emergency you may be asked to get inside a building and take shelter for a period of time.

- This action is called "sheltering in place."
- Get to the middle of the building or a basement, away from doors and windows.
- Bring pets inside.



STAY INSIDE

Staying inside can reduce your exposure to radiation.

- Close and lock windows and doors.
- Take a shower or wipe exposed parts of your body with a damp cloth.
- Drink bottled water and eat food out of sealed containers.



STAY TUNED

Emergency officials are trained to respond to disaster situations and will provide specific actions to help keep you out of harm's way.

- Use radios, televisions, computers, mobile devices, and other tools to get the latest information.
- Emergency officials will provide information about available services and assistance.

For more information, visit emergency.cdc.gov/radiation



U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

Plan Your Next Weekend Adventure with DEP

Conservation Open House

Saturday, September 20

11:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.



Join us this Saturday, Sept. 20 from 11:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. at the New Jersey State Museum as the Bureau of Natural History hosts Ecosystems at Risk!

This conservation open house is a collaborative effort between the Bureau of Natural History and DEP highlighting the Museum's exhibition "Ecosystems at Risk: Threatened & Endangered in NJ" and some of the conservation projects taking place in our state.

Discover Fort Mott State Park- One of New Jersey's Hidden Gems



Don't miss the 21st annual Historic Soldiers Weekend at Fort Mott State Park on Sept. 27 & 28!

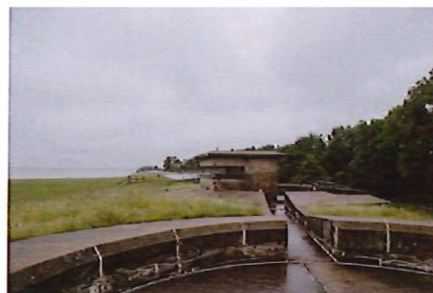
Walk through time as you wander through massive concrete gun batteries and preserved military structures. Witness history from ancient Greece and Rome to modern times, meet veterans and witness military camp life with over 100 reenactors: <https://www.facebook.com/share/1Zvr4LYDBF/>

Location: [454 Fort Mott Rd, Pennsville, NJ](#)

FREE admission

Fort Mott was designed after the American Civil War as part of a three-fort coastal defense system for the Delaware River. Learn more about Fort Mott State Park: [NJDEP | Fort Mott State Park | New Jersey State Park Service](#).

Visit website to see photo gallery



Explore New Jersey Outdoors

Reserve Your Camp Site Today!



Are you ready for to embark on your next camping adventure? Whether you're a tent-pitching enthusiast, a rustic shelter seeker, or someone who craves the snug comfort of a cabin, New Jersey has a camping experience tailor-made just for you. While most sites welcome adventurers from April 1 to October 31, some beckon all year round, offering endless opportunities to explore the state's natural beauty.

New Jersey State Parks, Forests & Historic Sites manages 19 campgrounds across the state. For those seeking water and the convenience of electric hookups, Belleplaine State Forest and Spruce Run Recreation Area have got you covered!

Plan ahead and secure your spot up to 11 months in advance at <https://camping.nj.gov/>.

Dive into the excitement of finding the perfect park site in New Jersey. Reserve your campsite today to uncover the magic of the Garden State. Search by location, availability, and park amenities to craft your ideal adventure. Don't wait another moment—start your journey now and [Check Out Current Sales!](#)



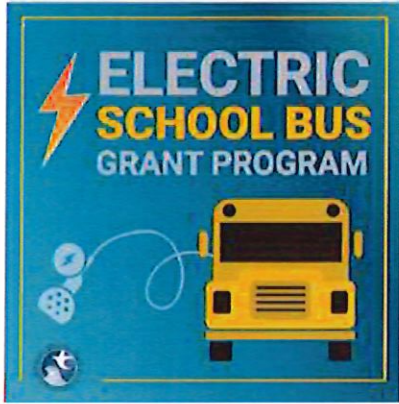
Rare Plant of the Month: Mid-Atlantic Beaksedge (*Rhynchospora mesoatlantica*)

The plant was first found in New Jersey in 1900 at a pond in Cape May County but initially identified as another species of *Rhynchospora*.

A second location, also in Cape May, was then discovered in 2015 by Bob Moyer, an hourly employee with the Office of Natural Lands Management. And in 2024 Bob Moyer reported another small population in Cape May for this new species.

Read the plant's history: [Dodds, Jill S. 2024. Rhynchospora mesoatlantica Rare Plant Profile. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, State Parks, Forests & Historic Sites, Forests & Natural Lands, Office of Natural Lands Management, New Jersey Natural Heritage Program, Trenton.](#)

Funding Opportunities



Electric School Bus Grant Program

Round 2 of the Electric School Bus Grant Program is open. New Jersey is committed to improving school bus fleets by encouraging the transition to electric buses, addressing the fact that over 99% of the state's 21,700 registered school buses still run on fossil fuels. The use of fossil fuels contributes to air pollution, affecting both students and communities. Both school districts, that own their own buses, and school bus contractors, who provide services to schools, are eligible to apply. Contractors must partner with a specific school or district for each application, though they may submit multiple applications if working with more than one.

Applications are due September 26, 2025, 5:00PM. For more information, [click here](#).

Please contact NJ DEP at stopthesoot@dep.nj.gov with any questions, including "Electric School Bus Grant Program Round 2" in the subject line.

The Brownfields Job Training Grants Program

The Brownfields Job Training Grants Program enables communities to address Brownfields challenges through comprehensive job training programs, complementing remediation and redevelopment efforts.



Funding Details:

- Grant awards are available for up to *\$500,000*.
- The project period can extend up to *five years*.
- The total funding available on a national level for this competition ranges from *\$10,000,000 to \$14,000,000*.

Applications must be submitted by September 26, 2025.

Interested applicants can find the grant application on [Grants.gov](#). For additional information, please visit EPA's [Brownfields Job Training Grants website](#).

Potential applicants can reach out to EPA's regional contacts with any questions:

Ricardo Berrios - Berriosperez.ricardo@epa.gov

Anna Bachmann - Bachmann.anna@epa.gov

Yocasta Dejesus - Dejesus.Yocasta@epa.gov

Green Acres 2026 Funding Round

We anticipate that applications will be accepted starting in late September 2025 with a deadline in early February 2026. For more information, please consult our [list of contacts by county](#).

Please note: Applications will not be accepted from applicants who, as of the application deadline, are over their capacity limit (*more than 2 open projects for municipalities and more than 4 open projects for counties*) or that have outstanding stalled compliance issues. Please reach out to your Green Acres contact for information about whether you are affected by these restrictions.

To learn more, visit [Green Acres | Protecting New Jersey's Open Spaces](#).

New Jersey I-Bank Financing

Municipalities and utilities can use short-term, low-interest loans from the I-Bank to fund planning and design costs, including engineering, permitting, and design work. These early steps are key to any successful infrastructure project. Financing these upfront costs helps communities move forward confidently and avoid delays later in the process.



For general information send emails to information@njib.gov

Learn more at: [New Jersey Infrastructure Bank](#)

Phone: 609-219-8600

Deadlines:

| Grant Name | Deadline |
|---|--------------------|
| Electric School Bus Grant Program | September 26, 2025 |
| The Brownfields Job Training Grants Program | September 26, 2025 |
| Resilient NJ: Regional Assistance Program- Regional Planning Grants | October 14, 2025 |
| It Pay\$ to Plug In: DC Fast Charger Solicitation | October 25, 2025 |

Featured Event



Join DEP for the 2025 PFAS Summit

Join us on **October 9th and 10th** for the 2025 PFAS Summit, a multi-sector event to share knowledge and coordinate efforts to address PFAS, also known as "forever chemicals," in our environment. The summit will be NJ's first gathering of academia, government, water, wastewater, air, waste, and site remediation sectors.

At the summit, hear about DEP's recently released "Forever No More: New Jersey's Commitment to PFAS Action" which summarizes NJ's progress and provides a blueprint for critical next steps. Summit sponsors look forward to sharing more about the state's PFAS strategy at the October summit, and we hope to see you there!

Learn more about the summit at: [2025 PFAS Summit](https://dep.nj.gov/pfas-summit).

Learn about DEP's progress at dep.nj.gov/pfas/strategy.

Stay connected with NJDEP throughout the week for environmental news, alerts, webinars, community engagement events, and funding opportunities. Follow DEP on your favorite social media platform. Find us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

Follow DEP Commissioner Shawn LaTourette on Twitter and Instagram @shawnlatur.

Have a great weekend!

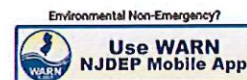
Keiona Miller

Manager | Office of Local Government Assistance
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

keiona.miller@dep.nj.gov localgov@dep.nj.gov

609-633-7700

401 East State St, Trenton, New Jersey 08625



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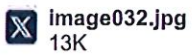


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DIVISION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES



Local Finance Notice

LFN 2025-13

September 19, 2025

Philip D. Murphy
Governor

Tahesha L. Way
Lt. Governor

Jacquelyn A. Suárez
Commissioner

Michael F. Rogers
Director

Contact

Website

www.nj.gov/dca/dlgs

E-mail

dlgs@dca.nj.gov

Phone

609.292.6613

Mail and Delivery

101 South Broad St.
PO Box 803
Trenton, New Jersey
08625-0803

Distribution

- Municipal Managers/Administrators
- Municipal CFOs
- Municipal Clerks
- Municipal Procurement Officials
- Tax Collectors
- Municipal Elected Officials

2025 Municipal Best Practices Inventory

Language authorizing the Best Practices Inventory is included in the [FY2026 Appropriations Act](#). Pursuant to law, the Division of Local Government Services ("Division") has promulgated an updated Best Practices Inventory to all municipalities, through which the State obtains vital information about the status of municipal government practices in New Jersey.

The 2025 Inventory assesses each municipality's compliance with various laws and evaluates the implementation of fiscal and operational best practices. Inventory answers provide taxpayers with an additional means of evaluating their municipality's performance. The Inventory also identifies areas where municipalities may require further technical assistance. Furthering this objective, the Inventory contains an unscored survey section soliciting information on a variety of topics.

All municipalities, including those on a State Fiscal Year budget cycle, must submit their completed Inventory to the Division by close of business **Friday October 24, 2025**. The Division strongly recommends completing and filing the Inventory as soon as possible so any technical or substantive issues can be resolved in a timely fashion. Post-submission answer changes are subject to Division approval.

The Best Practices Inventory is hosted on an [internet-based platform](#). [Platform instructions](#) and a helpful [FAQ document](#) concerning log-in and access are also provided.

The Division must determine whether some portion of a municipality's final formula aid payment will be withheld based on the results of its Inventory. A municipality's full final formula aid payment represents the maximum amount of aid that is subject to withholding. Please review [Local Finance Notice 2025-09](#) for further information on FY26 State Aid to municipalities.

Best Practices Inventory responses may be subject to independent verification.

Question Content and Scoring

The 2025 Best Practices Inventory features new and repeat questions on the following topics:

- Budget
- Capital Projects
- Emergency Services
- Environment
- Ethics
- Financial Administration
- Insurance
- Lead Remediation
- Opportunity Zones
- Personnel
- Procurement
- Redevelopment
- Shared Services
- Technology
- Transparency
- Utilities

A total of 70 questions are distributed amongst three scoring categories: Core Competencies (37 questions), Best Practices (13 questions), and Unscored Survey (20 questions). Four (4) questions in the Unscored Survey category are divided into multiple subparts to better facilitate data tabulation. The Division has introduced a total of six (6) new scored questions and nine (9) new unscored questions to the 2025 Inventory. Five additional questions (three (3) scored and two (2) unscored) have been revived from prior years' Inventories. Each municipality must receive a **minimum score of 32** on the Inventory to receive its full Final Aid payment.

Core Competencies address statutory and regulatory compliance obligations and other areas critical to sound municipal finance and operations. These questions score 1 point each, with positive credit awarded for "Yes" answers as well as "Prospective" and "N/A" responses when permitted by the question. Answers of "Prospective," which apply to certain new questions, should only be used when a municipality is committed to making good faith efforts to implement the practice in the upcoming year.

The 2025 Inventory also includes a Best Practices category, which involves fiscal and operational practices that are of significant benefit to many municipalities but are not foundational in nature or uniformly applicable to all municipalities. All questions in the Best Practices category are worth one-half (1/2) point, with positive credit awarded for "Yes" answers as well as "N/A" responses when permitted by the question. Please note that "Prospective" responses are not permitted responses under the Best Practices category.

Answers of "N/A" are only appropriate if a specific requirement does not apply to a given municipality; however, please note that some questions limit "N/A" responses to certain circumstances. Municipalities answering "N/A" should explain why the question is not applicable in the comment space.

There is a total of 50 scored questions (Core Competencies + Best Practices) for a total of 43.5 points. The thresholds for aid withholding are as follows:

| Inventory Score | Final Payment Amount Disbursed | Impact on final 5% aid payment |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 32 and greater | 100% | No withholding |
| 28-31 | 75% | Lose 25% of final formula aid payment |
| 24-27 | 50% | Lose 50% of final formula aid payment |
| 0-23 | 0% | Lose 100% of final formula aid payment |

Questions in the Best Practices category are considered “extra credit” because the Inventory’s scoring threshold is based on the number of Core Competencies for which the Division determined a municipality should earn positive credit, rather than Core Competencies and Best Practices combined. Thus, positive credit for Best Practices questions helps offset Core Competencies for which a municipality does not earn positive credit.

Unscored Survey questions are meant to gather information and do not count toward a municipality’s final score, although their completion is a required component of the Inventory. Answers to these questions will help determine where municipalities may require additional assistance, where the Division of Local Government Services and the Department of Community Affairs may need to prioritize technical assistance resources, and to determine the scope of potential future grant programs. Responses vary from “Yes/No” to multiple-choice to fill-in. Please note that Question 43b may require the upload of an Opportunity Zone Survey Form if your municipality is designated an Opportunity Zone municipality.

Completing and Submitting the Inventory

A municipality must answer all questions before the Best Practices platform will permit submitting the Inventory. Certain questions require information to be typed into the Comment section before the online platform counts the question as completely answered. Please refer to the [Instructions](#) for further details. Please email Matthew.Gallello@dca.nj.gov if you require technical assistance. For assistance regarding the Inventory questions, contact bestpractices@dca.nj.gov. Failure to submit the Inventory is deemed equivalent to a zero score.

The municipality’s Chief Finance Officer, Chief Administrative Officer and the Municipal Clerk must all certify the Inventory using the Online Platform. The Chief Administrative Officer is an individual who, regardless of title, is responsible for the municipality’s day-to-day operations. If a municipality does not have a Business Administrator or Municipal Manager, this person would be whomever is responsible for running day-to-day operations (e.g., Municipal Clerk, CMFO). Every municipality has a Chief Administrative Officer in some form.

The Municipal Clerk must also certify that the Inventory and the results thereof were or will be discussed at a public meeting, inserting the date on which the meeting was or will be held; with the inventory results and the certification of same by the Clerk and the chief administrative and financial officers referenced in the meeting minutes. The purpose of the acknowledgement requirement is to ensure that local officials are apprised of their municipality’s Best Practices Inventory response. **Please do not wait for the Best Practices Inventory to be discussed at a governing body meeting before submitting the Inventory.**

Appeals of Best Practices Scores

A municipality may appeal its score to the Director, but not before submitting its Best Practices Inventory. Appeals must be submitted by close of business **Friday, October 24, 2025** via email to bestpractices@dca.nj.gov with the heading “Best Practices Appeal.” The Director may exercise discretion upon finding that a municipality’s individual circumstances so warrant. Municipalities that wish to submit an appeal should do so in conjunction with their Inventory submission.

Approved: Michael F. Rogers, Director

| Document | Internet Address |
|-------------------------------|---|
| FY26 Approp. Act | https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2024/AL24/22_.PDF |
| Best Practices Platform | https://njdca.dynamics365portals.us/ |
| BPI Instructions | https://www.nj.gov/dca/dlgs/programs/best_practices_docs/2025/BPI%20Instructions%202025.docx |
| Log-In & Access FAQ | https://www.nj.gov/dca/dlgs/programs/best_practices_docs/2025/BPI%20Log-In%20and%20Access%20FAQ.docx |
| BPI Question List | https://www.nj.gov/dca/dlgs/programs/best_practices_docs/2025/FINAL%20-%202025%20DLGS%20BPI%20Questions.xlsx |
| LFN 2025- 09 | https://www.nj.gov/dca/dlgs/lfns/2025/2025-09.pdf |
| Opp. Zone Survey | https://www.nj.gov/dca/dlgs/programs/best_practices_docs/2025/OZ%20Best%20Practices%20Survey%20Form.xlsx |



COUNTY OF BERGEN
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE
DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
One Bergen County Plaza ■ 4th Floor ■ Hackensack, N.J. 07601-7076
Phone (201) 336-7201 ■ Email resposito@bergencountynj.gov

James J. Tedesco, III
County Executive,

Thomas J. Duch, Esq.
County Administrator, County Counsel

Robert G. Esposito
Division Director

September 22, 2025

Ms. Jennifer Martinez, Deputy Borough Clerk
Borough of Closter
295 Closter Dock Road
Closter, New Jersey 07624

Dear Ms. Martinez:

This letter will serve as formal notification that the Bergen County Division of Community Development’s (BCDCD) Annual Application Period for annual:

- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding,**
- **Home Investment Partnership Grant (HOME) funding, and**
- **Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding**

will begin on Monday, September 29th, 2025 with a submission deadline of Friday, December 19th, 2025.

Applications submitted will be for PY 2026-2027 funding (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027) received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in accordance with the Five-Year Bergen County Community Development Consolidated Plan.

As has been our practice for the past eight years, applications for all grants must be completed and submitted online using our **ZoomGrant platform**. You will be able to access ZoomGrant starting the first day of the application period on Monday, September 29th, by entering the following into your browser:

- **<https://zoomgrants.com/gprop.asp?donorid=2305>**

To assist with your application, I am sharing with you: (1) helpful information about how to use ZoomGrant; (2) a brief overview describing the scope of the CDBG, HOME, and ESG grant programs; and (3) a list of the seven Bergen County Community Development CDBG regions along with related staff contact information.

BOROUGH CLERK

SEP 25 2025

BOROUGH OF CLOSTER



2.

Please note that ZoomGrant offers direct assistance should you have any questions. You can find contact information at the bottom of the two-page ZoomGrant instruction sheet, which immediately follows this letter. Should you have any additional questions, please contact BCDCD Deputy Director Angela Drakes at cdbgapp@bergencountynj.gov or (201) 336-7225.

Our partnership with the County's 70 municipalities and scores of nonprofit and government agencies over the years has resulted in a diverse range of significant quality-of-life improvements for Bergen residents. Whether you have worked with us before or you are a new applicant, our continued success means helping you to achieve yours.

Thank you very much for your attention and all best wishes with your applications!

Sincerely,



Robert G. Esposito
Director

Enclosures

NOTES:

Program Year (PY), No Longer Fiscal Year (FY): In accordance with updated HUD terminology, we now use the phrase "**Program Year**" (PY) rather than "**Fiscal Year**" (FY).

For Nonprofit and Government Agency Applicants: If you are planning to submit an application for the PY 2026-2027 funding cycle, please be sure to make arrangements to receive the mandatory Municipal Endorsing Resolution before Friday, December 19th, the application deadline. **In this regard, we strongly recommend that you contact your municipality and provide them with the necessary information for the Endorsing Resolution by Monday, November 10th.** This will give all municipalities sufficient time to schedule your resolution for governing body consideration and return it to you for attachment as part of your ZoomGrant application before the Friday, December 19th, deadline.

CDBG, HOME, and ESG Are Reimbursement-Based Grants: In order for you to receive funding should your application be approved and you comply with all project implementation requirements, reimbursement vouchers must be submitted to BCDCD along with proof of payment and other mandatory paperwork. **Accordingly, the fiscal statement you provide with your application must indicate that you have the financial capacity to undertake the project.**

Using ZoomGrants to Submit and Manage Applications

1. GO TO ORGANIZATION'S ZOOMGRANTS PAGE

Navigate to the ZoomGrants page for the organization by using the link provided to you by the program administrator.



NOTE: For this first step, do not go to the ZoomGrants homepage. Once you've started an application using the link above, you can log in at <https://ZoomGrants.com/login>.

2. CREATE AN ACCOUNT AND LOG IN

Create your ZoomGrants account and log in using the New ZoomGrants Account box on the righthand side. If you already have an account, log in using the boxes in the upper right corner of the page.

NOTE: In ZoomGrants, each application is officially associated with a single account and each account is 'owned' by a single user and accessed by a single email address. We recommend that the person who will be the primary contact for applications creates the first account for an organization. Once that person creates their account, gets logged in, and starts the application(s), they will be able to invite other people to collaborate on all or some of the applications in their account.



3. CREATE YOUR APPLICATION

Click the Apply button next to the appropriate program to create your first application for that program.

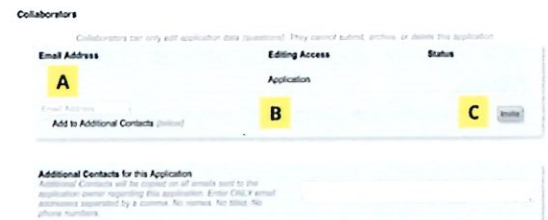


4. INVITE OTHERS TO COLLABORATE

Use the Collaborators section in the first tab of the application to invite others to work on this application with you.

- Enter their email address.
- Indicate on which sections they are allowed to collaborate.
- Click the Invite button. An invitation will be sent to their email address. They'll be able to set up an account by which they can access and edit the application.

NOTE: If granted access, collaborators can do everything that the application owner can do except: editing the Applicant and Organization information sections in the first tab of the application and submitting, archiving, or deleting the application.



ZoomGrants University: help.zoomgrants.com | Email: Questions@ZoomGrants.com
(866) 323-5404 x2 | 8am - 5pm Mountain Time M-F

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COUNTY OF BERGEN

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

One Bergen County Plaza ■ 4th Floor ■ Hackensack, N.J. 07601-7076
Phone (201) 336-7201 ■ Email resposito@bergencountynj.gov

James J. Tedesco, III
County Executive,

Thomas J. Duch, Esq.
County Administrator, County Counsel

Robert G. Esposito
Division Director

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF CDBG, ESG, AND HOME GRANTS

Updated 2025

The Bergen County Division of Community Development (BCDCD) is wholly funded by annual grants received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). As a grantee in a HUD-designated jurisdiction, BCDCD is the seventh largest urban county recipient of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnership Grant (HOME), and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding in the United States. These three HUD grants enable BCDCD to annually provide a multi-million-dollar funding pool accessible to Bergen County's 70 municipalities and eligible nonprofits, government agencies, and residents (for two residential home programs only) on an application basis.

CDBG, ESG, and HOME grant funding is collectively used to address a wide range of important community needs including road and infrastructure improvements; office space/building structural rehabilitation; expanded social services; handicap accessibility improvements; homelessness prevention and care; residential homeownership and home rehabilitation; affordable and special needs housing construction; local economic development and jobs training; and more. Predominantly serving the vulnerable, seniors, and low-to-moderate income people and neighborhoods, BCDCD's application-based funding makes a significant difference for Bergen County residents by helping to create more vibrant communities and improved quality of life through over 150 new projects completed every year.

BCDCD is managed in strict compliance with HUD-mandated procedures and eligibility guidelines, including operating on a July 1st through June 30th fiscal year in alignment with HUD practices.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG):

HUD allocations for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program comprise more than 70% of BCDCD's annual financial portfolio. Every year, CDBG (along with ESG and HOME) funding requests are submitted during a widely advertised late-September through mid-December application period and subsequently reviewed by BCDCD staff for eligibility. In late spring, seven regional "Community Development Committees" composed of representatives appointed by each of Bergen County's 70 towns assess all applications and determine funding awards. These funding decisions are then passed on to HUD in the form of an "Annual Action Plan" for final review and approval. Award and decline letters to applicants are typically emailed by BCDCD in late September or October, following notification of Annual Action Plan approval by HUD.



CDBG funding awards (often called “subgrants”) regularly include: (1) **municipal infrastructure projects** (e.g., municipal road repaving; sewer and drainage improvements; playground and park upgrades; handicapped-accessible curb cuts and public building access upgrades, etc.); (2) **nonprofit and government agency building upgrade projects** (e.g., HVAC, window, emergency generators; handicapped-accessible door and restroom upgrades; etc.); (3) **nonprofit agency social services staff and specialist enhancements** (e.g., staff and specialist salary supplements related to child/teen day/after school care; senior daycare center activities; homelessness prevention and intervention; domestic violence counseling; tenant and housing counseling; etc.); and (4) **nonprofit and government agency economic development** (e.g., job training and employment search counseling, etc.).

As part of BCDCD’s annual CDBG allocation, HUD regulations specify that no more than 15 percent of the funds received be used for what are classified as “**public service**” activities i.e., expenditures for human resources that largely translate into staff salary supplements and fees for specialists who work on social service projects for nonprofit and government agencies. The scope of CDBG public service activities also extends to a small subset of “human-related” resources (e.g., ambulances, emergency medical vehicles, vans, etc.).

CDBG also provides: (1) limited down payment assistance to low-to-moderate income individuals and families who qualify through the American Dream First Time Homebuyers Program; and (2) deferred payback loan assistance to low-to-moderate income individuals and families who qualify through the Bergen County Home Improvement Program (HIP) for major system home repairs/replacements (e.g., new roof, HVAC, sidewalks, windows, siding, porch, plumbing, etc.).

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG):

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding is available to eligible nonprofit and county government agencies and is used for multiple interventions to directly assist the homeless and those at risk of homelessness.

These activities include: (1) assisting with the operations of the Bergen County Human Services Center and other emergency shelters for the homeless; (2) providing essential services to homeless shelter residents; (3) rapidly re-housing homeless individuals and families; (4) preventing individuals and families from becoming homeless; and (5) operating Bergen County’s Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Home Investment Partnership (HOME):

Home Investment Partnership (HOME) funding is available to eligible profit and nonprofit housing developers and service providers, as well as county government agencies. HOME is used for a wide range of affordable housing development activities and tenant services.

A principal activity is working with project and funding partners to build, buy, and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or homeownership for low-to-moderate income residents including seniors, veterans, those with special needs, etc. HOME funds can also be used to provide direct rental and security deposit assistance to low-to-moderate-income individuals and families.

HOME funding is also used for deferred payback mortgage assistance to help low-to-moderate-income individuals and families who qualify through the American Dream First Time Homebuyer Program.



COUNTY OF BERGEN

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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Phone (201) 336-7201 ■ Email resposito@bergencountynj.gov

James J. Tedesco, III
County Executive

Thomas J. Duch, Esq.
County Administrator, County Counsel

Robert G. Esposito
Division Director

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (CDBG) | REGIONS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Central Region

Laura Salandra, Administrator

lsalandra@bergencountynj.gov (201) 336-7228

Elmwood Park
Fair Lawn
Garfield
Hackensack
Lodi
Maywood
Paramus
River Edge
Rochelle Park
Saddle Brook

Northwest Region

Carmela Sciglitano, Administrator

csciglitano@bergencountynj.gov (201) 336-7222

Allendale
Franklin Lakes
Glen Rock
Ho-Ho-Kus
Mahwah
Midland Park
Oakland
Ramsey
Ridgewood
Saddle River
Upper Saddle River
Waldwick
Wyckoff

Southeast Region

Laura Salandra, Administrator

lsalandra@bergencountynj.gov (201) 336-7228

Bogota
Cliffside Park
Edgewater
Englewood
Englewood Cliffs
Fairview
Fort Lee
Leonia
Palisades Park
Ridgefield
Ridgefield Park

Pascack Valley Region

Shanthi Brigati, Administrator

sbrigati@bergencountynj.gov (201) 336-7221

Emerson
Hillsdale
Montvale
Old Tappan
Oradell
Park Ridge
River Vale
Washington Township
Westwood
Woodcliff Lake



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (CDBG) | REGIONS AND ADMINISTRATORS CONTINUED

Southwest Region

Carmela Sciglitano, Administrator

csciglitano@bergencountynj.gov (201) 336-7222

Carlstadt
East Rutherford
Hasbrouck Heights
Little Ferry
Lyndhurst
Moonachie
North Arlington
Rutherford
South Hackensack
Teterboro
Wallington
Wood-Ridge

Northern Valley Region

Carmela Sciglitano, Administrator

csciglitano@bergencountynj.gov (201) 336-7222

Alpine
Bergenfield
Closter
Cresskill
Demarest
Dumont
Harrington Park
Haworth
New Milford
Northvale
Norwood
Rockleigh
Teaneck
Tenafly

Countywide Region

Shanthi Brigati, Administrator

sbrigati@bergencountynj.gov (201) 336-7221

For CDBG Nonprofit and Government Agency
Subgrantees with Projects that Are in More than
One Region or Countywide in Scope

BERGEN COUNTY DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SENIOR STAFF

Director

Rob Esposito

resposito@bergencountynj.gov (201) 336-7201

Deputy Director | CDBG, ESG, CoC Lead

Angela Drakes

adrakes@bergencountynj.gov (201) 336-7225

Business Manager | HOME Lead

Gary Kohles

gkohles@bergencountynj.gov (201) 336-7218



4 ML 09-26-2025

Mari Margiotta <mmargiotta@closternj.us>

Tour of the Canoe Brook Water Treatment Plan

1 message

Michael F. Cerra <mcerra@njlm.org>
To: Executive Director <executivedirector@njlm.org>
Cc: Lori Buckelew <lbuckelew@njlm.org>

Tue, Sep 23, 2025 at 10:55 AM

To NJLM Executive Board and Past Presidents:

Following a recent meeting with representatives of New Jersey American Water, NJAW has invited the leadership of the NJLM to visit and tour its Canoe Brook Water Treatment Plant.

The details are as follows:

Tuesday, October 21, 2025

11:00 – 1:00

[167 JFK Parkway, Short Hills, NJ](#)

The visit will start with a security briefing and video overview of the facility, followed by a tour and a Q&A session.

This would be the first of three site visits scheduled throughout the state in the coming months.

A unique feature of our Canoe Brook Plant is that it is home to the largest floating solar array in North America, consisting of 16,510 solar panels and covering 17 acres. This 8.9-megawatt system, developed in collaboration with NJR Clean Energy Ventures, generates enough clean energy to power 1,400 homes annually and provides approximately 95% of the facility's electricity needs.

Space is limited, so if you're interested in attending, can you please fill out this form:

<https://www.njlm.org/FormCenter/Internal-21/Visit-Tour-NJAWs-Canoe-Brook-Water-Treat-355>

Thank you,

Mike

Michael F. Cerra | Executive Director

New Jersey State League of Municipalities
222 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08608

609-695-3481 extension 120

NJ Municipalities – 2019 MarCom Gold Winner

Website – 2018 Hermes Gold Winner



Join your peers this November 18 - 20 at the Annual League Conference. [Registration is open!](#) #NJLeague25

NJLM is subject to the Open Public Records Act; any email sent or received may be subject to a records request.

5 ML 09.26.2025

Liliana Militaru
233 West St Closter, NJ
Sept.05,2025

Honorable Mayor
Members of the Closter Council
Closter Borough Hall

I am writing to extend my sincere gratitude for the excellent work recently done by AJ Martin and his tree crew in addressing the overgrown tree along the sidewalk near my home. Each member of the crew worked with great care and professionalism, ensuring the tree was removed safely while also being mindful to protect my surrounding landscape and plants. Their attention to detail was evident, and the results are much appreciated.

This is not the first time I have benefited from their efforts. On several occasions, AJ Martin and his team have shown consistent dedication and attentiveness to the needs of residents. Their professionalism and commitment to maintaining the safety and beauty of our community deserve to be recognized.

Thank you for supporting such capable and responsive teams in Closter. It is reassuring to know that our concerns are addressed with such care.

Respectfully,
Liliana Militaru

BOROUGH CLERK

SEP 24 2025

BOROUGH OF CLOSTER



6 ML 09.26.2025

Mari Margiotta <mmargiotta@closternj.us>

SHBP Meeting, Best Practices Inventory, REAL Comments

1 message

NJLM Weekly Roundup <noreply@civicplus.com>

Wed, Sep 24, 2025 at 3:30 PM

Reply-To: noreply@civicplus.com

To: mmargiotta@closternj.us



View a Featured Ad at the End of this Email

September 24, 2025

State Issues

SHBP Plan Design Committee Meeting to be Held on September 24

The State Health Benefits Commission Plan Design Committee is scheduled to hold its regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, September 24.

[Read more: SHBP Plan Design Committee Meeting to be held on September 24](#)

Contacts: Lori Buckelew, Deputy Executive Director, lbuckelew@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x112, and Erin Knoedler, Legislative Analyst, eknoedler@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x116.

DLGS Issues Local Finance Notice on Recently Enacted PILOT Law

The Division of Local Government Services recently issued Local Finance Notice 2025-12 providing guidance on P.L. 2025, c.91, which amended the "Long-Term Exemption Law."

[Read more: DLGS Issues Local Finance Notice on Recently Enacted PILOT Law](#)

Contact: Sadayah Q. DuRant-Brown, Legislative Counsel, sdurantbrown@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x137.

DLGS Issues LFN 2025-13 Regarding Best Practices Inventory

The Division of Local Government Services (DLGS) has issued Local Finance Notice 2025-13 regarding the Best Practices Inventory due on October 24 for all municipalities, including State fiscal year municipalities.

[Read more: DLGS Issues LFN 2025-13 regarding Best Practices Inventory](#)

Contact: Erin Knoedler, Legislative Analyst, eknoedler@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x116.

League Comments on DEP PACT/REAL Rule Proposal

On September 19, the League submitted comments to the DEP regarding this Notice of Substantial Change, expressing continued concerns over the impact they will have on municipal governments and taxpayers. Other stakeholders, including individual municipalities and counties, have also submitted comments expressing concerns regarding the changes.

[Read more: League Comments on DEP PACT/REAL Rule Proposal](#)

Contacts: Mike Cerra, Executive Director, mcerra@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x120, and Sadayah Q. DuRant-Brown, Legislative Counsel, sdurantbrown@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x137.

League Comments on NJDEP/3M Settlement

The League submitted comments in response to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Notice to Receive Interested Party Comments on the Proposed Judicial Consent Order (JCO) to the DEP, as well as several of its members, experts, and other interested parties.

[Read more: League Comments on NJDEP/3M Settlement](#)

Contacts: Mike Cerra, Executive Director, mcerra@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x120, and Sadayah Q. DuRant-Brown, Legislative Counsel, sdurantbrown@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x137.

League Comments on NJHMFA Proposed New UHAC Regulations

After collaboration with experts on Affordable Housing, the League has submitted comments to the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (HMFA) on the proposed 2025 Uniform Housing Affordability Controls (UHAC) regulations.

[Read more: League Comments on NJHMFA Proposed New UHAC Regulations](#)

Contacts: Mike Cerra, Executive Director, mcerra@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x120, and Sadayah Q. DuRant-Brown, Legislative Counsel, sdurantbrown@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x137.

Alcohol Beverage Control Proposes New Regulations

The Division of Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) has proposed three new regulations and amendments to existing rules, which include a Special Permit to Hold a Consumer Alcoholic Beverage Festival Event, Limited Brewery Rules, and Craft Distillery Regulations. Comments are due by November 1.

[Read more: Alcohol Beverage Control Proposes New Regulations](#)

Contact: Paul Penna, Director of Government Affairs, ppenna@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x110.

Acting Governor Signs Bill for Lead Disclosure and Testing Requisites

Acting Governor Tahesha Way signed A-2929/S-1034 into law. P.L. 2025, c. 144 requires landlords to report information about potential lead in the drinking water of residential units.

[Read more: Acting Gov Signs Bill for Lead Disclosure and Testing Requisites](#)

Contact: Erin Knoedler, Legislative Analyst, eknoedler@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x116.

Legislation Signed to Establish New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs

Governor Murphy recently signed legislation that would establish a new cabinet-level Department of Veterans Affairs in New Jersey, reorganizing the existing Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA).

[Read more: Legislation Signed to Establish New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

Contact: Paul Penna, Director of Government Affairs, ppenna@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x110.

Seven Northeastern States Form Public Health Collaborative

Seven Northeastern states have been collaborating since early 2025 and have formally announced the Northeast Public Health Collaborative. It is a voluntary regional coalition of public health agencies brought together to share expertise and improve coordination.

[Read more: Seven Northeastern States Form Public Health Collaborative](#)

Contact: Paul Penna, Director of Government Affairs, ppenna@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x110.

State Announces \$130.7 Million Opioid Settlement Funds Investment

The State announced an investment of \$130.7 million in opioid settlement funds to expand harm reduction services and launch new community-based support initiatives for families impacted by substance use.

[Read more: **State Announces \\$130.7 Million Opioid Settlement Funds Investment**](#)

Contact: Paul Penna, Director of Government Affairs, ppenna@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x110.

***NJ Municipalities* Blog: Grant at Work-Scotch Plains' Community Energy Plan**

This week's *NJ Municipalities* blog looks at the first steps in the creation of Scotch Plains Township's Community Energy Plan.

Scotch Plains is examining its policies and forging a path to efficiency through the creation of a Community Energy Plan (CEP). With the CEP, the township is eligible to apply for additional state funding to help implement local projects outlined in its plans.

Want to share your local story? Please send in your 300- to 1,000-word items and photos to Editor Amy Spiezio at aspiezio@njlm.org.

Contact: Amy Spiezio, Editor, aspiezio@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x123.

Federal Issues

Congress at Impasse Over Government Funding

On Friday, the House voted 217-212 in favor of funding the federal government at current levels through November 21. The Senate, which requires 60 votes, rejected the legislation by a vote of 44-48.

[Read more: **Congress at Impasse Over Government Funding**](#)

Contact: Paul Penna, Director of Government Affairs, ppenna@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x110.

Floodplain Restoration & Culvert Upgrades Grant Available

Municipalities can apply for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's FY25 National Fish Passage Program to support dam removals, culvert upgrades, floodplain restoration, and fishway installations.

[Read more: **Floodplain Restoration & Culvert Upgrades Grant Available**](#)

Contact: Ciara Bradley, Research Associate, cbradley@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x128.

American Battlefield Protection Program Battlefield Restoration Grants

Municipalities can apply for the National Park Service's FY2025 American Battlefield Protection Program's Battlefield Restoration Grants.

[Read more: American Battlefield Protection Program Battlefield Restoration Grants](#)

Contact: Ciara Bradley, Research Associate, cbradley@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x128.

Conference Connections

Secure Your Place: Get Your Tickets to League Events Today

On Wednesday, from 12:15 p.m. to 1:45 p.m. the Mayors' Lunch Briefing will welcome state department heads and will also recognize the [nominees for the Mayors' Hall of Fame](#) for 10, 20, or 30+ years of service, and [nominated Elected Officials](#) with at least 20 years of service. Fee: \$30.

Also, on Wednesday, show your support for women's outstanding achievements at the Women in Municipal Government Networking & Awards Event from 5:15 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Fee: \$35

On Thursday, starting at 12:15 p.m., the Annual Conference ends with the League Delegates Luncheon, which puts you in the room with League and State leadership. Fee: \$45.

Tickets can be purchased during the registration process or added later by [editing your existing Conference registration](#). Only those with a Conference badge may attend the ticketed events. Please note that the Mayor's Lunch Briefing is only open to Mayors and two of their guests.

Exhibit Hall Expands: Map Your Visit

Plan now to maximize your networking opportunities by reviewing the [Exhibit Hall interactive map](#). The Exhibit Hall will be four aisles larger this year to create an even more informative and inspiring experience for attendees.

Block Closing Soon: Conference Hotel Deadline Approaches

The League's room blocks, which close on October 10, provide the best rates and shuttle bus service to the AC Convention Center along with payment by purchase order. Ensure your best Conference experience, [book your housing for the Annual Conference now](#).

Education Options: Check for Session Updates

The [Annual Conference Session Schedule](#) has been expanding over the past weeks as details are finalized and CEU credits are approved. Please visit often to confirm your session planning.

NJLMEF Conference Kick Off: Hometown Security & Human Trafficking Focus

This year, on Tuesday at 9:00 a.m., the NJLM Educational Foundation (NJLMEF) will hold its annual kick-off event with a focus on Hometown Security & Human Trafficking. The event, which includes breakfast, is free, but registration is required, and it will open next month.

Apply for the Innovation in Governance Program

The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and the New Jersey League of Municipalities (NJLM) are accepting applications for the [Innovation in Governance through our annual recognition program](#) through Friday, October 3, 2025.

Showcase innovative solutions developed in your municipality. [Visit our awards page](#) to see previous years' ideas created by our winning municipalities, as well as the full invitation and application to this year's program. For more information on the contest, contact Ciara Bradley, League Research Associate, CBradley@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, ext. 128.


Also of Interest

NJ Municipalities Magazine: Watch for Renewal Emails

Our new subscription system is rolling out to ensure we have a smooth transition. Those who have an email address on file have been emailed their subscription renewals. Ask your staff to check their inboxes for renewal notifications. The new online system will make it easier for subscribers to update and manage their subscriptions online throughout the year. If your subscription is part of a group subscription, renewals have been sent to the person responsible for managing your group.

Not a subscriber yet? Visit the [League's website to sign up](#) before the October issue mails.

Contact: Tasneem Kapadia, Advertising & Subscription Manager, tkapadia@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x121.




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Local Finance Notice

LFN 2025-13

September 19, 2025

Philip D. Murphy
Governor

Tahesha L. Way
Lt. Governor

Jacquelyn A. Suárez
Commissioner

Michael F. Rogers
Director

Contact

Website

www.nj.gov/dca/dlgs

E-mail

dlgs@dca.nj.gov

Phone

609.292.6613

Mail and Delivery

101 South Broad St.
PO Box 803
Trenton, New Jersey
08625-0803

Distribution

Municipal
Managers/Administrators
Municipal CFOs
Municipal Clerks
Municipal Procurement
Officials
Tax Collectors
Municipal Elected Officials

2025 Municipal Best Practices Inventory

Language authorizing the Best Practices Inventory is included in the [FY2026 Appropriations Act](#). Pursuant to law, the Division of Local Government Services (“Division”) has promulgated an updated Best Practices Inventory to all municipalities, through which the State obtains vital information about the status of municipal government practices in New Jersey.

The 2025 Inventory assesses each municipality’s compliance with various laws and evaluates the implementation of fiscal and operational best practices. Inventory answers provide taxpayers with an additional means of evaluating their municipality’s performance. The Inventory also identifies areas where municipalities may require further technical assistance. Furthering this objective, the Inventory contains an unscored survey section soliciting information on a variety of topics.

All municipalities, including those on a State Fiscal Year budget cycle, must submit their completed Inventory to the Division by close of business **Friday October 24, 2025**. The Division strongly recommends completing and filing the Inventory as soon as possible so any technical or substantive issues can be resolved in a timely fashion. Post-submission answer changes are subject to Division approval.

The Best Practices Inventory is hosted on an [internet-based platform](#). [Platform instructions](#) and a helpful [FAQ document](#) concerning log-in and access are also provided.

The Division must determine whether some portion of a municipality’s final formula aid payment will be withheld based on the results of its Inventory. A municipality’s full final formula aid payment represents the maximum amount of aid that is subject to withholding. Please review [Local Finance Notice 2025-09](#) for further information on FY26 State Aid to municipalities.

Best Practices Inventory responses may be subject to independent verification.

Question Content and Scoring

The 2025 Best Practices Inventory features new and repeat questions on the following topics:

- Budget
- Capital Projects
- Emergency Services
- Environment
- Ethics
- Financial Administration
- Insurance
- Lead Remediation
- Opportunity Zones
- Personnel
- Procurement
- Redevelopment
- Shared Services
- Technology
- Transparency
- Utilities

A total of 70 questions are distributed amongst three scoring categories: Core Competencies (37 questions), Best Practices (13 questions), and Unscored Survey (20 questions). Four (4) questions in the Unscored Survey category are divided into multiple subparts to better facilitate data tabulation. The Division has introduced a total of six (6) new scored questions and nine (9) new unscored questions to the 2025 Inventory. Five additional questions (three (3) scored and two (2) unscored) have been revived from prior years’ Inventories. Each municipality must receive a **minimum score of 32** on the Inventory to receive its full Final Aid payment.

Core Competencies address statutory and regulatory compliance obligations and other areas critical to sound municipal finance and operations. These questions score 1 point each, with positive credit awarded for “Yes” answers as well as “Prospective” and “N/A” responses when permitted by the question. Answers of “Prospective,” which apply to certain new questions, should only be used when a municipality is committed to making good faith efforts to implement the practice in the upcoming year.

The 2025 Inventory also includes a Best Practices category, which involves fiscal and operational practices that are of significant benefit to many municipalities but are not foundational in nature or uniformly applicable to all municipalities. All questions in the Best Practices category are worth one-half (1/2) point, with positive credit awarded for “Yes” answers as well as “N/A” responses when permitted by the question. Please note that “Prospective” responses are not permitted responses under the Best Practices category.

Answers of “N/A” are only appropriate if a specific requirement does not apply to a given municipality; however, please note that some questions limit “N/A” responses to certain circumstances. Municipalities answering “N/A” should explain why the question is not applicable in the comment space.

There is a total of 50 scored questions (Core Competencies + Best Practices) for a total of 43.5 points. The thresholds for aid withholding are as follows:

| Inventory Score | Final Payment Amount Disbursed | Impact on final 5% aid payment |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 32 and greater | 100% | No withholding |
| 28-31 | 75% | Lose 25% of final formula aid payment |
| 24-27 | 50% | Lose 50% of final formula aid payment |
| 0-23 | 0% | Lose 100% of final formula aid payment |

Questions in the Best Practices category are considered “extra credit” because the Inventory’s scoring threshold is based on the number of Core Competencies for which the Division determined a municipality should earn positive credit, rather than Core Competencies and Best Practices combined. Thus, positive credit for Best Practices questions helps offset Core Competencies for which a municipality does not earn positive credit.

Unscored Survey questions are meant to gather information and do not count toward a municipality’s final score, although their completion is a required component of the Inventory. Answers to these questions will help determine where municipalities may require additional assistance, where the Division of Local Government Services and the Department of Community Affairs may need to prioritize technical assistance resources, and to determine the scope of potential future grant programs. Responses vary from “Yes/No” to multiple-choice to fill-in. Please note that Question 43b may require the upload of an Opportunity Zone Survey Form if your municipality is designated an Opportunity Zone municipality.

Completing and Submitting the Inventory

A municipality must answer all questions before the Best Practices platform will permit submitting the Inventory. Certain questions require information to be typed into the Comment section before the online platform counts the question as completely answered. Please refer to the [Instructions](#) for further details. Please email Matthew.Gallelo@dca.nj.gov if you require technical assistance. For assistance regarding the Inventory questions, contact bestpractices@dca.nj.gov. Failure to submit the Inventory is deemed equivalent to a zero score.

The municipality’s Chief Finance Officer, Chief Administrative Officer and the Municipal Clerk must all certify the Inventory using the Online Platform. The Chief Administrative Officer is an individual who, regardless of title, is responsible for the municipality’s day-to-day operations. If a municipality does not have a Business Administrator or Municipal Manager, this person would be whomever is responsible for running day-to-day operations (e.g., Municipal Clerk, CMFO). Every municipality has a Chief Administrative Officer in some form.

The Municipal Clerk must also certify that the Inventory and the results thereof were or will be discussed at a public meeting, inserting the date on which the meeting was or will be held; with the inventory results and the certification of same by the Clerk and the chief administrative and financial officers referenced in the meeting minutes. The purpose of the acknowledgement requirement is to ensure that local officials are apprised of their municipality’s Best Practices Inventory response. **Please do not wait for the Best Practices Inventory to be discussed at a governing body meeting before submitting the Inventory.**

Appeals of Best Practices Scores

A municipality may appeal its score to the Director, but not before submitting its Best Practices Inventory. Appeals must be submitted by close of business **Friday, October 24, 2025** via email to bestpractices@dca.nj.gov with the heading “Best Practices Appeal.” The Director may exercise discretion upon finding that a municipality’s individual circumstances so warrant. Municipalities that wish to submit an appeal should do so in conjunction with their Inventory submission.

Approved: Michael F. Rogers, Director

| Document | Internet Address |
|-------------------------------|---|
| FY26 Approp. Act | https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2024/AL24/22_.PDF |
| Best Practices Platform | https://njdca.dynamics365portals.us/ |
| BPI Instructions | https://www.nj.gov/dca/dlgs/programs/best_practices_docs/2025/BPI%20Instructions%202025.docx |
| Log-In & Access FAQ | https://www.nj.gov/dca/dlgs/programs/best_practices_docs/2025/BPI%20Log-In%20and%20Access%20FAQ.docx |
| BPI Question List | https://www.nj.gov/dca/dlgs/programs/best_practices_docs/2025/FINAL%20-%202025%20DLGS%20BPI%20Questions.xlsx |
| LFN 2025- 09 | https://www.nj.gov/dca/dlgs/lfn/2025/2025-09.pdf |
| Opp. Zone Survey | https://www.nj.gov/dca/dlgs/programs/best_practices_docs/2025/OZ%20Best%20Practices%20Survey%20Form.xlsx |