



Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

Illinois Economic Development Weekly Update as of Friday, October 3, 2025

presented by DCEO's Office of Regional Economic Development (RED)



Manufacturing: "Honoring Illinois Manufacturing Legacy and Future"

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) is proud to support October as Manufacturing Month and celebrate the present and future makers across our great state. Join us and industry partners as we explore more about one of Illinois' top industries, learning about its rich legacy and robust ecosystem. We are the fourth largest manufacturing state in the country, with over 14,000 companies employing over 650,000 Illinoisans. In the years ahead, this industry is on pace to grow for the future – and this month we will join the national celebration of Manufacturing Month to educate, inspire, and cultivate the next generation of makers in Illinois. Throughout the month of October, DCEO, agency leaders, and partners will be hosting a series of webinars, participating in events, and visiting industry leaders and the next generation of Illinois makers.

[Read the proclamation](#)

Events

[The Solution to Finding and Retaining Talent](#)

Thursday, October 23, 2025 | 10:30 – 11:30 AM | Virtual

In this webinar, attendees will meet employers and employer support organizations who are developing solutions for workforce integration including neurodivergent onboarding and re-entry programs for returning citizens to help companies manage their talent pipeline and increase productivity. Panelists will share how these programs have helped solve their overall workforce challenges and shape the culture of their team. This webinar is designed for CEOs, HR Professionals, Economic Development officials or anyone else needing strategies to find and retain a loyal workforce.

Panelists include: Ben Schatzel – Founder, Stannum Core Solutions; Tom Welge – President, Gilster-Mary Lee Corporation; Courtney Geiger – Vice President, Mission Services for Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois

[Register Here](#)

IMEC/IMA Events

- [IMEC/IMA Bus Tour – Makers on the Move](#)
- [IMEC Manufacturing Events](#)



It's that time of year: Time for the 2025 Business Development Roadshow! The Regional Economic Development Team along with our partners from DCEO and others are bringing our exciting information to a location near you. The Roadshow events will take place across all 10 economic development regions from October 21st through November 7th. We kicked off the Roadshow with a virtual meeting in August. However, these in person events will have additional new information. We look forward to seeing you on the road!

Please register for session near you: [2025 DCEO Roadshow Registration](#)

Date	Time	Location
Tuesday, October 21, 2025	9:30 AM - 11:00 AM	Lockport
Tuesday, October 21, 2025	1:30 PM - 3:00 PM	South Holland
Wednesday, October 22, 2025	9:30 AM - 11:00 AM	Crystal Lake
Thursday, October 23, 2025	1:30 PM - 3:00 PM	Libertyville
Thursday, October 23, 2025	9:30 AM - 11:00 AM	Hoffman Estates
Friday, October 24, 2025	9:30 AM - 11:00 AM	City of Chicago
Tuesday, October 28, 2025	9:30 AM - 11:00 AM	Belevidere
Tuesday, October 28, 2025	2:00 PM - 3:30 PM	Dixon
Wednesday, October 29, 2025	9:30 AM - 11:00 AM	Macombe
Wednesday, October 29, 2025	2:00 PM - 3:30 PM	East Peoria
Thursday, October 30, 2025	9:30 AM - 11:00 AM	Champaign
Thursday, October 30, 2025	1:30 PM - 3:00 PM	Decatur
Tuesday, November 4, 2025	9:30 AM - 11:00 AM	Belleville
Tuesday, November 4, 2025	2:30 PM - 4:00 PM	Marion
Friday, November 7, 2025	9:30 AM - 11:00 AM	Centralia
Friday, November 7, 2025	2:00 PM - 3:30 PM	Effingham



Please join the [Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity](#) (DCEO) as we celebrate and promote Illinois women-owned businesses during National Women's Business Month. Throughout October, DCEO is elevating resources and opportunities to bolster women-owned businesses throughout the state. Leverage business resources and learn more about how to get involved and support women-owned businesses throughout Illinois below!

Data

Learn how Illinois is supporting Illinois women-owned businesses and how we're one of the top innovated U.S. states. [Click here](#) to learn more!

Events

Coffee and Conversations- From Burnout to Breakthrough: Thriving During Uncertainty

Tuesday, October 21, 2025 | 8:30 -11:30 am | in Chicago at the [Chicago Urban League](#) - 4510 South Michigan Avenue | [Register here](#)

Tailored for Black women business owners and future entrepreneurs, with attendees from all backgrounds welcome to join us! Celebrate National Women's Business Month by joining us at this free community event focused on advancing Black women-owned businesses and future entrepreneurs. Join us for coffee and learn from inspirational business owners and cross-sector leaders. Presenting organizations include: [DCEO](#), [Chicago Urban League](#), [Cook County Bureau of Economic Development](#), [Strategic Exceptions](#), [Women Employed](#), and the [YWCA Metropolitan Chicago](#)

Women, Agriculture & Business Development in Illinois

Thursday, October 23, 2025 | 9:00 am - Noon | in-person in Noble at the [IL SBDC at IECC](#)

320 E. North Avenue, Noble, IL | [Register here](#) *Tailored for economic development professionals, city, village and elected officials, women-owned businesses of all stages, future women business owners, & aspiring female entrepreneurs, with attendees from different geographical regions and of all genders welcome to join and learn!* In recognition of National Women's Business Month, this workshop highlights the vital role of women in agriculture and rural enterprise. Participants will gain insight into programs, technical assistance through business advising, and funding opportunities that support business growth, resilience, and innovation across Illinois. Designed for women entrepreneurs, farmers, business leaders, and economic development professionals, this session will provide practical tools and resources to strengthen operations, access funding, and build sustainable futures in agriculture and beyond. Presenting organizations include: [DCEO](#), [Illinois SBDC at IECC](#), [Illinois Farm Bureau](#), [APEX Accelerator](#), [University of Illinois Extension Center](#), [IL Department of Agriculture](#) and [Purdue Institute for Family Business](#).

Connecting HER to Illinois Business Resources-Chicago Southland

Tuesday, October 28, 2025 | 11:30 am – 1:00 pm | in-person at the Flossmoor Village Hall- 2800 Flossmoor Road | [Register here](#) *The lunch & learn overview is tailored for early-stage and growing women-owned businesses along with cross-sector stakeholders who support entrepreneurs. Attendees from all genders, business stage levels, etc. are welcome to join us!* Celebrate National Women's Business Month by joining us at this free lunch and learn presentation focused on inspiring, connecting, and advancing Illinois women-owned businesses and future women business owners. Increase your knowledge with new business resources and opportunities offered across Illinois' entrepreneurial ecosystem, ignite ideas, and build community with us!

Additional Events Throughout Illinois' Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

To view additional upcoming events for women-owned businesses happening throughout Illinois during the month of October and year-round.

Mentoring Program Invite - Milestone Circles

We invite Illinois entrepreneurs to apply and join Milestone Circles during National Women's Business Month in October! Milestone Circles is a free, virtual mentoring program, which is powered by the [Nasdaq Entrepreneurial Center](#) with the support of the [Wells Fargo Foundation](#), in collaboration with the Illinois Women's Business Collective which is powered by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) – [Office of Economic Equity & Empowerment](#) (OE3). We encourage Illinois businesses owners to select a virtual onboarding session **the week of October 14th**. You're also welcome to choose a different October onboarding session or a session anytime during the year if you can't start the week of October 14th; however, if you're unable to make those sessions, you won't be guaranteed to be in an onboarding session with other Illinois entrepreneurs. [Learn more](#) here about the Milestone Circles invite and application.

Additional Mentoring/Bootcamp/Cohort/Fellowship Programs

For additional programs for business owners as well as volunteer opportunities for mentors, check out the [Social Capital for HER Illinois Business tool](#).

Resources

Connecting HER to Illinois Business Resources Guide

As the most in-depth, cross-sector business resources tool in the state, this tool provides a wealth of knowledge for Illinois women-owned businesses, future women business owners, aspiring female entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs from all communities; many of the resources are applicable to all genders, too. Offerings in the statewide tool include business resources presented by entrepreneurial support organizations (ESOs) and aligned multisector organizations. Resources include financial capital (*grants, loans, tools, etc.*), social capital (*mentoring programs & networking opportunities*), contractor & vendor opportunities, and much more!

Growing HER Business Beyond the \$1Million Milestone

As generating revenue of over \$1 Million is reached by about 1.9% of businesses started by women in the U.S., Illinois ranks #5 in the U.S. with the number of female-owned businesses with achieving \$1 Million and over. Below are a few Illinois organizations to help increase women-owned businesses' social capital.

- The Chicago Network | [link](#) The Economic Club of Chicago | [link](#) EO Chicago | [link](#)

Celebrate Illinois Women-Owned Businesses

Throughout the month of October, we encourage Illinoisans to support and utilize women-owned businesses in their local communities and during their travels in the state. To find business directories and articles which list Illinois women-owned businesses, click this [link](#). Check with your local chambers of commerce organizations, economic development corporations (EDCs), non-profits, etc. for business directories as well!

The state's Women's Business Month resources for Illinois women-owned businesses, future women business owners, aspiring female entrepreneurs, and business owners from all backgrounds, are presented by DCEO's [Office of Economic Equity & Empowerment \(OE3\)](#) and [Office of Regional Economic Development \(RED\)](#). For more information on Illinois' Women's Business Month 2025 events planned for businesses and/or to learn more about ongoing resources and programs for women-owned businesses and future women entrepreneurs, please click this [link](#). You can also contact any team member from [Team OE3](#) and/or [Team RED](#) as well as to the 2025 DCEO Women's Business Month Committee: [Michelle Lura White](#): Women's Business Development Manager, DCEO-OE3 michelle.white@illinois.gov | 872.272.0094; [Anggi Lewis](#): Marketing Data Specialist: DCEO-OE3 anggi.lewis@illinois.gov; [Kala Lambert](#): Southeast Regional Manager, DCEO-RED kala.lambert@illinois.gov | 217.836.8376; [Sacella Smith](#): Northeast Regional Manager, DCEO-RED sacella.smith@illinois.gov | 312.814.1297



Illinois is honored to celebrate our diverse Latino and Hispanic communities in observation of Hispanic Heritage Month, September 15th through October 15th. During this month-long celebration, DCEO will be hosting a series of events, including an Office Hour Roadshow to meet with members of the Latino businesses across the state. Through a monthlong social media campaign, DCEO will also highlight Latino community leaders, organizations, and business enterprises throughout the state.

Hispanic Heritage Month Open Office Hours Roadshow

During the monthlong celebration, DCEO will be hosting open office hours in person and virtually. Join us for free office hours designated to support your business growth or kick-start your business! Connect with funding opportunities, obtain resources, and get personalized guidance from our team to support your business. Register for an event in your area below. If you prefer to meet virtually, contact Diana Alfaro, Latinx Business Development Manager, at diana.alfaro@illinois.gov.

Business & Community Resources

- [DCEO OE3 Newsletter](#) – DCEO OE3’s monthly newsletter shares business resources including grants, loans, and other helpful resources for businesses
- [Business Information Center](#) – Provides comprehensive information and technical support to businesses with questions and concerns about mitigations, government regulations and business assistance programs. First Stop can be reached at 1-800-252-2923 or ceo.firststop@illinois.gov.
- **Small Business Development Center (SBDC)** – They are centers located across the state that provide no cost business counseling. They can assist you with a business plan, marketing, financial bookkeeping, finding grants, how to start a business, how to grow your business, etc. Here is more info on SBDCs: [Illinois Small Business Development Centers \(SBDC\) - First Stop](#). To find one near you go here: <https://viewer.blipstar.com/blipstar?uid=5161672>. **Please note**, there are some SBDCs that do provide Spanish assistance. If you need help finding a SBDC that provides assistance in Spanish, please contact Diana Alfaro, diana.alfaro@illinois.gov.
- **Apex Accelerator (formerly Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTACs))** - They provide at **no cost** assistance to businesses who want to get into the world of government contracting and assist with certifications like getting certified as minority/Latino/a/e/x or Hispanic owned. For more information, please click [HERE](#). To find one near you, please click [HERE](#).
- [Small Business Environmental Assistance Program \(SBEAP\)](#) - The Small Business Environmental Assistance Program is a non-regulatory program which provides free, confidential assistance to Illinois small businesses to help them succeed. Services include a toll-free helpline 1-800-252-3998 for confidential regulatory questions.
- [Incentives and Tax Assistance](#) - Illinois offers a competitive range of incentives for locating and expanding your business, including tax credits and exemptions that encourage business growth and job creation.
- Visit illinoisimmigrationinfo.org for immigration rights resources and information.

For more information on Hispanic Heritage Month and Support Latino Business Day events planned for businesses, contact Diana Alfaro, the Latinx Business Development Manager, at Diana.Alfaro@Illinois.gov.

Illinois INVENT

The Illinois Innovation Venture Fund (INVENT) is a \$114 million direct equity capital program funded through the U.S. Department of the Treasury State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) and administered by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO).

DCEO is committed to ensuring opportunities for founders and communities that have faced barriers to accessing capital. The funds are expected to provide small businesses with the resources they need to sustainably grow and thrive, and to improve access to capital for traditionally underserved entrepreneurs. INVENT is dedicated to ensuring that it supports investments in very small businesses (fewer than 10 employees); Capital Disadvantaged Business (CDB) owners and businesses owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals (SEDI); and businesses in industries aligned with the state's key sectors in our economic development plan. Visit [SEDI and CDB](#) and [Key Sectors](#) for additional information. Illinois has a rich network of resources and leading research institutions committed to innovation. Through INVENT, we will help entrepreneurs leverage resources available to build successful businesses that will create jobs, grow our state’s economy, and serve as a catalyst for innovation that will make an impact in our communities and society at large.

INVENT will host a virtual Information Session monthly as an opportunity to learn and ask questions about our program. This webinar is for potential investees, private capital investors, and individuals who are interested in learning more about INVENT.

Next Session: **Tuesday, October 21** | 11:00 AM Registration [Link](#)

Federal Grant Support Program – Round 2

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's (DCEO)'s Federal Grant Support Program-Round 2 is open and will make \$16.9 million available to Illinois-based proposals seeking competitive federal grants. This match program will encourage more applicants to apply for federal grant opportunities, provide critical assistance to meet the minimum match eligibility requirements, increase the competitiveness of applications, and provide the State of Illinois with an opportunity to make a firm commitment and demonstration of support for projects that are well aligned with the State's economic development goals and priorities. For more information about the program, including links to the NOFO and application, visit this [link](#).

Illinois Grocery Initiative Equipment Upgrade Round 2

The Illinois Grocery Initiative Equipment Upgrades Program will provide grants for new energy-efficient equipment upgrades for existing independently owned for-profit grocery stores, cooperative grocery stores, or not-for-profit grocery stores. While the Illinois Grocery Initiative is intended to reduce or eliminate the existence of "food deserts" in Illinois and will prioritize stores located in food deserts, the Equipment Upgrades Program is not limited to establishments located in food deserts. These grants are intended, however, to facilitate energy-efficient equipment investment and sustainability for stores located in food deserts, areas that could become food deserts, and other areas that are underserved to a lesser degree. These grants will reimburse costs for the purchase and installation of new energy-efficient equipment. Certain costs, including investment in solar generation equipment and remodeling, are ineligible for this program. The following expenditures will be eligible for reimbursement under this program, insofar the equipment will result in energy efficiency improvements: heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment; refrigeration units and freezers; and lighting systems. Cost sharing or Matching is required for this opportunity. Applicants are required to provide 25% of the total project costs, representing a 1:3 match. These matching funds can come from any nonstate sources such as local municipal funds, federal funds, or private investment. Such sources of funds shall be identified and documented in the application. To review the NOFO and application information click [here](#) **Application deadline is December 15, 2025.**

DCEO Office of Energy & Business Utility

The Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity's Office of Energy & Business Utility has multiple clean energy economic development funding opportunities available currently. These opportunities are designed to offer direct funding to communities across the state to develop clean energy projects. Click on the name of the programs below to access additional information regarding grant application requirements.

- [Equitable Energy Future Grant Program](#) - \$25.5 million total award funding
- **Anticipated Awards:** 40 awards
- **Award Range:** \$250,000 - \$1,000,000

- **Eligible Applicants:** Equity Eligible Contractor; Business, Non-profit, Cooperative Organization that meets equity building criteria.
- **Application Deadline:** December 31, 2025
- **Program focus:** Provides pre-development funding to support the development of renewable energy and energy efficiency projects benefitting businesses, community organizations, and the workforce in Illinois, with a specific focus on historically disadvantaged communities.
- **[Community Solar Energy Sovereignty Program](#)** - \$8.5 million total award funding
- **Anticipated Awards:** 40 awards
- **Award Range:** \$50,000 - \$1,000,000
- **Eligible Applicants:** Community-based organizations, public entities, and technical service providers in partnership with community-based organizations.
- **Application Deadline:** December 31, 2025
- **Program focus:** Provides pre-development funding to support the development of programs and entities to assist in the long-term governance, management, and maintenance of community solar projects, such as community solar cooperatives.

One-on-one technical assistance will open for each grant above following its NOFO Information Session. For questions, please email CEO.CEJA@illinois.gov

Office of Accountability

Curious about the grant lifecycle or wanting to learn more about the different facets of grants? Do you have a grant-related question that you would like answered in real time? DCEO is pleased to offer three training options for current and potential grantees. Interested in participating in a training session? Learn more and sign up to register at this [link](#).

Virtual Office Hour Q & A - Tuesdays at 2pm:

Join for a virtual question and answer session via Webex in which potential and current Grantees may attend to ask questions and seek assistance. Technical Support Managers will be online to field questions, demonstrate steps, or provide instructions as needed to assist entities and individuals with the grant process.

Pre-Qualification Training – 1st Wednesday of the month 9AM:

This slide presentation will cover Pre-Qualification requirements. Pre-qualification is required of all grantees with the State of Illinois and must be maintained throughout a grant program. To be in pre-qualified status means that all required registrations have been met and an entity is in good standing and able to conduct business with the State of Illinois. Join DCEO's Technical Support Team as we explain each step in the pre-qualification process and how to get started.

Various topics Training – 3rd Wednesday of the month 9AM:

This slide presentation will discuss important grant-related topics pertaining to grant management. Each month we will discuss a different component, process, or emerging practice that can benefit potential and existing grantees. Register or view recording of past grant trainings at this [link](#).

- **October 15, 2025 – Capital Grants:** This training will explain what a capital grant is, requirements and eligibility for capital grants, application documents, and an overview of the grant lifecycle.

- **November 19, 2025 – Notice of Funding Opportunities: (NOFOs)** This training will explain what a Notice of Funding Opportunity is and give a breakdown of the template and where to find information.
- **December 17, 2025 – Audits:** This training will introduce grantees to the different Audit types, requirements, and the importance of record retention.

Need assistance with a grant-related question? Please email inquiries to ceo.GrantHelp@illinois.gov or use this [Help Desk Inquiry Form](#). All inquiries submitted outside of business hours will be addressed the following business day.

For a complete list of current DCEO grant opportunities, upcoming grant trainings, video resource library and Grant Help Desk assistance, visit [DCEO Grants \(illinois.gov\)](https://illinois.gov/dceo/grants)

- [Illinois Grocery Initiative - Equipment Upgrade Program \(Round 2\)](#): Applications due **December 15, 2025**
- [Equitable Energy Future Grant Program](#): Applications due **December 31, 2025**
- [Community Solar Energy Sovereignty Program](#): Applications due **December 31, 2025**
- [SBIR/STTR Match Program](#): Application due **June 30, 2026**
- [Business Attraction Prime Sites](#): Application due **June 30, 2026**
- [Community Development Block Grant Economic Development Program](#): Applications are rolling
- [CDBG Disaster Response Program](#): Applications are rolling
- [Illinois Returning Residents Clean Jobs Program \(CEJA\)](#): Applications are rolling
- [Illinois Reproductive Grant Expansion Program](#): Applications are rolling

Other Federal and State Agency Grants & Programs

IDOT Safe Routes to School Program

Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has announced the 2025 Safe Routes to School program will begin accepting applications **until October 13**. Safe Routes to School has three main goals: enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school; to make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age; and to facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity (within 2 miles) of primary, middle, and high schools (grades K-12).

For complete information about this IDOT opportunity, visit this [link](#).

For more information about IDOT’s Small Business Enterprises workshop schedule, visit this [link](#).

Illinois EPA Driving A Cleaner Illinois

Illinois EPA is accepting applications to fund a portion of the eligible costs associated with the replacement (not re-power) of eligible existing and licensed on-road diesel Class 4-8 medium- and heavy-duty local freight trucks (at least 14,001 lbs. GVWR) and Class 8 port drayage trucks (at least 33,001 lbs. GVWR). Each new replacement truck must be of the same type and class as the retired truck and be a licensed on-road all-electric Class 4-8 medium-

and heavy-duty local freight truck or Class 8 port drayage truck (hereinafter “all-electric trucks” or “electric trucks”) located and operated in any of the three VW Priority Areas established in the Beneficial Mitigation Plan.

The types of trucks covered under this NOFO are those used to haul and deliver freight or cargo, including delivery/box trucks, waste haulers, Class 8 port drayage trucks, landscape trucks, dump trucks, and freight/transport trucks. If the existing diesel truck to be replaced and the proposed new electric truck is not routinely hauling any type of freight or cargo by design or actual use, it is ineligible for this NOFO. In addition to providing funding for new all-electric trucks, Illinois EPA will also fund a portion of necessary new Level 2 or DCFC charging equipment if charging infrastructure is needed.

Applicants may find the NOFO and all application materials on the [Driving a Cleaner Illinois](#) website and also at Illinois’ [GATA webpage](#). Applicants must pre-qualify prior to application submission. The application period will remain open until funds are depleted. Applications should be signed, scanned and submitted to epa.vwgrants@illinois.gov.

The Illinois EPA will accept applications for eligible new all-electric trucks and any necessary charging infrastructure for the trucks requested in this application. From a business or government entity located in the following VW priority area and the eligible trucks will operate in the priority areas:

- Priority Area 1: Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will counties, Oswego Township in Kendall County and Aux Sable and Goose Lake townships in Grundy County
- Priority Area 2: Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties
- Priority Area 3: Champaign, DeKalb, LaSalle, McLean, Peoria, Sangamon, and Winnebago counties.

For a complete list of current IEPA funding opportunities, visit this [link](#).

Illinois EPA Green Infrastructure Grant Opportunities

The Green Infrastructure Grant Opportunities (GIGO) Program funds projects to construct green infrastructure best management practices (BMPs) that prevent, eliminate, or reduce stormwater runoff into Illinois' rivers, streams, and lakes. Projects that implement treatment trains (multiple BMPs in a series) and/or multiple BMPs within the same watershed may be more effective and efficient than a single large green infrastructure BMP. The GIGO NOFO is now open and accepting applications through November 5, 2025.

For GIGO, green infrastructure means any stormwater management technique or practice employed with the primary goal to preserve, restore, mimic, or enhance natural hydrology. Green Infrastructure includes, but is not limited to, methods of using soil and vegetation to promote soil percolation, evapotranspiration, and filtering or the harvesting and reuse of precipitation.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, localized and riverine flooding will likely become more frequent. Localized flooding happens when rainfall overwhelms the capacity of the urban drainage systems, while riverine flooding happens when river flows exceed the capacity of a river channel. By reducing stormwater runoff in urban areas, detaining water away from impacted areas, and reconnecting streams to their floodplains, GIGO can improve water quality through the reduction of the number and duration of both localized and riverine flood events.

For more information on the GIGO program and how to apply, visit this [link](#). For more information on ALL Illinois Environmental Protection Agency funding opportunities, visit this [link](#).

Illinois EPA Unsewered Communities Planning Grants

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Acting Director James Jennings announced a new funding opportunity to assist communities where there are currently no wastewater collection and/or treatment facilities. Illinois EPA is making \$1 million available for grants through the Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program, which will assist small and disadvantaged communities in developing a project plan that identifies a solution to wastewater collection and treatment needs. A Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) has been posted to the [Illinois EPA website](#).

The Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program (UCPGP) provides grant funding to develop a plan that will address problems associated with the collection and treatment of wastewater in an unsewered community. Ultimately, this information can be used in an application for a project that would be funded by the Illinois Unsewered Communities Construction Grant Program. Funding for the UCPGP is made possible by utilizing a portion of Illinois EPA's Water Pollution Control Loan Program Loan Support funds generated from loan repayments. Applicants that qualify can receive funding up to \$30,000, and Illinois EPA expects to fund up to 50 grants.

All required forms and information are available on the [Illinois EPA's UCPGP webpage](#). **The application period will remain open until all funding has been expended.** Applications will be reviewed for eligibility and completeness and awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis. Applicants must be pre-qualified through the [Grant Accountability and Transparency Act \(GATA\) Grantee Portal](#).

Illinois EPA Lead Service Line Inventory Grant

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced \$6.57 million to assist communities across the state in meeting the inventory requirements of the Lead Service Line Replacement and Notification Act (LSLRNA). More information can be found at this [link](#). Please note this grant program is for lead service line inventorying purposes only, and lead service line replacement costs are ineligible for this grant program.

Illinois Electric Vehicle Rebate Program

The Illinois EPA will open the next EV Rebate Program funding round on October 28, 2025. The funding round will run from October 28, 2025, to January 31, 2026. There have been numerous changes to the rebate program; review changes on our [EV Rebate website](#) to determine if you are eligible to apply for the rebate. Illinois residents that purchase a new or used all-electric vehicle from an Illinois licensed dealer, meet all other eligibility requirements, and apply during a rebate cycle will be eligible for a rebate. Applicants that certify as low income are given an enhanced rebate and priority in disbursement.

EV rebates are subject to the availability of funds for each cycle. The Illinois General Assembly has appropriated \$14 million to Illinois EPA for the current fiscal year, which ends on June 30, 2025. Actual funding amounts will be determined by the amount of money available in the Electric Vehicle Rebate Fund, not to exceed \$14 million.

Applicants must apply during the rebate cycle window and within 180 days of purchase of the vehicle. The application and instructions will be available shortly before the opening of the rebate cycle on the Illinois EPA's [Electric Vehicle Rebate Program](#) webpage.

Eligibility requirements for an EV rebate in Illinois include, but are not limited to:

- The vehicle must be a new or used all-electric vehicle and legally permitted to drive on all public roadways, including interstate highways.

- The selling price of the vehicle cannot exceed \$80,000, not including state and local taxes, license and registration fees, documentary service fees, and aftermarket products, if itemized separately on the bill of sale.
- The vehicle must be purchased from a dealership licensed by the Illinois Secretary of State and be the owner of the vehicle at the time the rebate is issued. Rented or leased vehicles, vehicles purchased from an out-of-state dealership, and vehicles delivered to or received by the purchaser out-of-state are not eligible for a rebate under the Act.
- A rebate cannot have been previously issued for the vehicle that is the subject of the application. The Illinois EPA uses the vehicle VIN number to track issued rebates. A searchable list of vehicle identification numbers for vehicles that have received a rebate under the Act is below.
- The applicant must reside in Illinois, both at the time the vehicle was purchased and at the time the rebate is issued.
- The applicant must not have received a rebate under the Act in the 10 years prior to the date an application is received by the Agency.
- The applicant's family income cannot exceed 500% of the federal poverty line for the current State fiscal year.
- The applicant must apply for the rebate within 180 days of the vehicle purchase date and provide and certify to all of the information specified in the application. The application must be postmarked during an open rebate application cycle.
- The purchaser must retain ownership of the vehicle for a minimum of 12 consecutive months immediately after the vehicle purchase date. The purchaser must register the vehicle in Illinois during that time frame.
- Only individuals can receive a rebate. Businesses, government units, organizations, and other entities that are not individuals that submit an application will be denied.
- The rebate amount cannot exceed the purchase price of the vehicle.

Helpful Resources

Grant Help Desk Resources DCEO Office of Accountability

- Office Hours for Grantees – Office of Accountability is hosting a weekly office hour **every Tuesday from 2-3pm** for any questions grantees or potential grantees may have.
- [Sign up for any of these sessions with this link](#)
- **Email Us:**
- ceo.granthelp@illinois.gov
- Or use our Inquiry Form: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/df9d38efa4e241218ced486c54f3c109>
- **Visit Our Website:**
- <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities.html>
- Video Training & Resources Library [Video Training & Resources \(illinois.gov\)](#)

Grant Accountability and Transparency (GATA)

- GATA Grantee Portal: <https://grants.illinois.gov/portal/>

- GATA Grantee Portal New User Guide: <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/GATA/Documents/Resource%20Library/GATA%20New%20User%20Guide.pdf>
- GATU Resource Site: <https://gata.illinois.gov/>
- Catalog of State Financial Assistance (CSFA): <https://gata.illinois.gov/grants/csfa.html>
- DCEO Current Grant Opportunities: <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/grants.html>

Audit Report Review Process Manual:

<https://gata.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/gata/documents/audit/audit-manual-august-2018-revision.pdf>

State of Illinois Commission on Equity & Inclusion

The Commission on Equity and Inclusion (CEI) was created to expand access to state contracts for minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and veterans and assist the state in enhancing equity and inclusion throughout its workforce. CEI's reach into state hiring and contracting is expansive and encompasses the involvement of several state agencies and commissions.

The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) for businesses owned by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities is committed to fostering an inclusive, equitable, and competitive business environment that will support underrepresented businesses in increasing their capacity, growing revenue, and enhancing credentials.

Business Enterprise Program (BEP) Certification [BEP Certification](#)

The Veterans Business Program (VBP) assists businesses owned by qualified service-disabled and veteran-owned businesses in gaining access to State of Illinois contracting opportunities and participating in the competitive procurement process.

Veterans Business Program (VBP) [VBP Certification](#)

Workforce Development – Office of Employment & Training

The Office of Employment and Training supports innovative workforce programs and career, training and employment services that connect employers to a highly skilled workforce. Providing assistance and resources for job seekers is central to Illinois' commitment to ensuring that businesses thrive in our state.

Programs and services:

- [Illinois workNet®](#)
- [WIOA Works Illinois](#)
- [Apprenticeship Illinois](#)
- [Trade Adjustment Assistance Program \(TAA\)](#)
- [WIOA Success Stories](#)
- [More Programs and Resources](#)
- [Illinois Workforce Development System \(IWDS\)](#)
- [Climate and Equitable Jobs Act](#)

DCEO Business Information Center (BIC)

The BIC serves as a comprehensive resource for entrepreneurs and small businesses. Our services include assistance with licensing and permitting, resource referrals, small business environmental assistance, and regulatory alerts for small businesses.

[License & Permit Assistance and Resource Referrals](#)

Contact us at BIC@Illinois.gov or 800-252-2923

Explore: [Self-Serve Knowledge Base](#)

[Regulatory Flexibility Program](#)

Contact us at ceo.regflex@illinois.gov or 217-299-1263

View our weekly [Illinois Regulatory Alert](#)

[Small Business Environmental Assistance](#)

Contact us at dceo.sbeap@illinois.gov or 800-252-3998

Explore: [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

DCEO Website – <https://dceo.illinois.gov>

The Illinois DCEO website includes a page dedicated to current state and federal grant opportunities as well as Grantee resources. Click [here](#) to find valuable information!

Join DCEO's Team

DCEO's Team is expanding around the state. To view and apply for these jobs, please click this [link](#).

Following DCEO & Connecting with Team RED

If you have upcoming meetings or events and would like DCEO to participate, please reach out to us. Follow us on our social media channels for real-time updates.

Facebook: [@illinoisdceo](#)

LinkedIn: [Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity](#)