



**NEW JERSEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
COMMUTER AND TRANSIT BUS PRIVATE CARRIER RELIEF AND JOBS
PROGRAM – PHASE 2
*NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY***

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) will begin accepting applications for the non-competitive Commuter and Transit Bus Private Carrier Relief and Jobs Program – Phase 2 (“Program”) at 10:00 AM on Tuesday, March 5th, 2024. The deadline to apply is 3:00 PM on Thursday, March 28th, 2024. The application can be accessed at <https://www.njeda.gov/busreliefphase2/>

Purpose and Overview

On November 16th, 2023, the NJEDA's Board approved the grant funding for Phase 2 of the Commuter and Transit Bus Private Carrier Relief and Jobs Program. Subsequently, on February 7th, 2024, the board approved an amendment to the award calculator. Similar to Phase 1, Phase 2 offers a one-time grant to eligible commuter and transit bus private carrier companies in New Jersey. This Program continues to assist these companies in addressing ongoing revenue losses, which have not been addressed through any other funding sources (“unmet need”), due to the evolving economy and reduced ridership stemming from the shift towards remote work in a post-pandemic economy.

Supporting the State's private carrier industry will contribute to the overall well-being of communities, help maintain essential transportation services, and foster economic resilience within the state. Incorporating the policy of providing relief grants to private carrier companies facing reduced ridership due to remote work not only addresses their financial challenges, but also advances the State’s priority of investing in communities and infrastructure. By adapting to the evolving transportation landscape, these private carriers can continue to serve their communities effectively, contributing to the overall success of the State's development goals. Additionally, this Program aims to support job retention and creation, as well as benefit New Jersey residents who rely on the State's commuter bus services and residents employed by the private carrier companies.

To receive funding, applicants must meet all eligibility criteria described below. The Program funds will be allocated on a predefined formula to ensure the Program can be efficiently administered. The potential award amount is based upon current information about funding availability; NJEDA reserves the right to increase that amount and number of awards should additional funds become available.

Funding

This Program is funded by utilizing the \$12 million that was appropriated to the Authority in the SFY2024 State Budget for Phase 2 of the Commuter and Transit Bus Private Carrier Relief and Jobs Program.

Eligibility

To streamline the program and ensure the Authority can efficiently deploy this funding, program eligibility will be based on certain non-discretionary criteria, and grant amounts will be calculated based on a predefined formula. (See below.) To be eligible, an applicant must demonstrate the following in a manner acceptable to the Authority:

- Have been in business prior to February 15, 2020;
- Be a for-profit business (non-profits are excluded from the Program based on other required criteria). Note: Public Agencies, authorities, governmental entities or the like are NOT eligible
- Be registered to do business in and operating in the state of New Jersey, as evidenced by a current New Jersey Tax Clearance Certificate;
- Provide fixed route bus service (MB) or commuter bus (CB) service, as defined in the Federal Transit Administration's December 22, 2021, *National Transit Database (NTD) Glossary*. Note: Other services, including, but not limited to, those provided by charter buses, school buses, municipal shuttles, vanpool, and on-demand bus services, are not eligible;
- Have reported Vehicle Revenue Miles for fixed route bus service (MB) or commuter bus service (CB) greater than 0 in New Jersey directly to the NTD, as recorded in Annual Data Tables 2022 Service, or through NJ Transit as a private carrier in 2022;
- Demonstrate systemic decrease in revenues (losses) in the state of New Jersey in 2022, due to the new realities in working habits (calculated as the difference between each applicant company's 2022 NJ-generated revenues and 2019 NJ-generated revenues, as reported in the respective NJ CBT-100 or CBT-100S tax returns, Schedule J) that has not been fully addressed by other public or private relief funding sources;

- Certify bus service, through peak vehicle requirements or notice of service changes, has not voluntarily reduced since 2021, from time of application, at milestone stages, and through the end of the grant compliance period;
- Satisfy the Authority’s debarment/disqualification review, and not have any defaults or outstanding obligations to the Authority; and
- Be in good standing with the following sister agencies: New Jersey Department of Labor, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, New Jersey Department of Taxation, and New Jersey Transit.

Eligible Uses:

Grant funding may be used for reimbursement of “unmet need”, as discussed below.

Grant Amounts

Grant amounts will allocate funds based on each eligible applicant's proportional share of the total eligible applicant’s vehicle revenue miles (VRM) in New Jersey for 2022, Any leftover funds would be reallocated proportionally based on VRM. The basic formula is shown below.

$$Award\ amount = \left(\frac{Applicant\ VRM}{Total\ VRM} \right) * Total\ Grant\ Pool$$

Total grant pool = \$11,400,000

Applicant VRM = Vehicle Revenue Miles submitted to NTD for NJ in 2022

Total VRM = Sum of Vehicle Revenue Miles submitted to NTD for NJ in 2022 for all eligible applicants

Total base awards = Sum of base awards for all applicants

The maximum award will not exceed the applicant’s unmet need. The unmet need is defined as 2022 New Jersey revenue losses (calculated as the difference between each applicant company’s 2022 revenues reported in New Jersey and 2019 revenues reported in New Jersey) less any other public or private funds that a company received for 2022.

Any funding that exceeds unmet need will be re-allocated to the pool proportionally based on vehicle revenue miles, to be disbursed to other eligible applicants.

Application Process

Upon closure of the application period, the Authority will review applications for completeness. Applicants that submitted incomplete applications will be provided the opportunity to correct the applications to include the missing information within 10 business days.

At the sole discretion of the Authority, staff may ask for clarification of the information included in the application, including but not limited to narrative responses, supporting documentation, and attachments. Applicants will have 10 business days thereafter to provide missing or incomplete documents.

Disbursement of Funding

In recognition of the ongoing commitment to sustain essential service providers and ensure that funding aligns with evolving service demands, Phase 2 of the Program will introduce a milestone-based disbursement process. As part of this approach, successful applicants will receive half of their awarded funds upon the completion and execution of the grant agreement.

The second disbursement of the remaining half of the award, will be contingent upon the outcome of the 2024 NJ Transit review of peak vehicle requirements, which will be available in Q3 2024. Approved applicants will only receive their final disbursement once NJ Transit confirms no variances in peak vehicle requirements. In the event of that NJ Transit's review of peak vehicle requirements confirms that there is less than amount confirmed at the time of application, or if there is a notice of decreased service, the awardee will forfeit the remaining reserved approved funds.

In the event an awardee forfeits the remainder of their grant funds, the funds will be redistributed to the remaining eligible awardees and disbursed accordingly.

Fees

No application fees will be assessed, per the NJEDA's revised fee rules.

Additional Information

Additional information on the Commuter and Transit Bus Pandemic Relief and Jobs Program may be found at <https://www.njeda.gov/busreliefphase2/>

The NJEDA is subject to State and Federal statutes including but not limited to the following which may impact affiliates: N.J.S.A. 52:32-60.1, et seq., which prevents the New Jersey government entities from certain dealings with businesses engaged in prohibited activities in Belarus or Russia; N.J.S.A. 24:6I-49 which provides that the following are not eligible for most State or local economic incentives (a) a person or entity issued a license to operate as a cannabis cultivator, manufacturer, wholesaler, distributor, retailer, or delivery service, or that employs a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service; and (b) a property owner, developer, or operator of a project to be used, in whole or in part, by or to benefit a cannabis cultivator, manufacturer, wholesaler, distributor, retailer, or delivery service, or to employ a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service; and N.J.S.A. 52:13D-12, et seq., which prohibits a member of the Legislature or a State

officer or employee or their partners or a corporation in which they owns or controls more than 1% of the stock to undertake or execute any contract, agreement, sale, or purchase of \$25.00 or more, made, entered into, awarded or granted by any State agency, with certain limited exceptions.