

New Jersey Economic Development Authority
ROUTE 80 BUSINESS ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM
Notice of Funding Availability

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (“NJEDA” or “Authority”) will begin accepting applications for the Route 80 Business Assistance Grant Program (“Program”) during three application windows beginning on April 22, 2025 at 10:00 AM EST.

The Program will make available up to \$5 million in grant funding, as approved by the Authority Board on April 9, 2025, [Route 80 Business Assistance Board Memo](#), to eligible applicants that have suffered negative financial impacts due to the closures of Route 80 caused by sinkholes with a physical commercial location in Morris County, New Jersey for working capital reimbursements that meet the eligibility requirements discussed below.

Applications will be accepted on the following schedule *based upon available funding*:

Morris County, NJ Businesses within a 5-mile radius of Exit 34 Closures

Open: April 22, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. EST

Close: April 28, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. EST

The application will only open on the dates below if funding remains available.

Morris County, NJ Businesses within a 10-mile radius of Exit 34 Closures

Open: April 29, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. EST

Close: May 5, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. EST

All Morris County, NJ Businesses

Open: May 6, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. EST

Close: May 9, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. EST

No application fees will be charged for this program. The application can be accessed at:

<https://programs.njeda.com/en-US/>

Purpose and Overview

On March 8, 2025, Governor Murphy issued Executive Order 383 declaring a state of emergency following geophysical hazards created along eastbound Interstate 80 (“I-80”) in Morris County, New Jersey due to sinkholes, resulting in the temporary closure of a portion of the roadway. In response, the Program was created to provide short-term financial support for small and medium-sized businesses in the area experiencing decreased revenue due to reduced customer access and disrupted supply chains.

Funding Source

The total funding available for the Program is up to \$5 million allocated from the Economic Recovery Fund (“ERF”).

The total funding and award amount are based upon current information about funding availability. NJEDA reserves the right to increase that amount and number of awards should additional funds become available.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for the Program are small and medium-sized enterprises (“SMEs”) with up to 50 full-time equivalent employees (“FTEs”) that have a **physical commercial location in Morris County, New Jersey**.

The eligibility requirements are as follows:

1. **Operation Date:** The SME must have been in operation on December 1, 2024.
2. **Employee Count:** The SME must have no more than 50 FTEs as reported on their 4th Quarter 2024 WR-30 form with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development.
3. **Location:** The SME must have a physical commercial location in Morris County, New Jersey, and must have sustained negative financial impact to their commercial location as a result of the Route 80 closures.
4. **Financial Impact:** Applicants must certify to a negative financial impact that is greater than \$1,000 for the first quarter of 2025.
5. **Business Registration:** At the time of approval, the SME must be registered to do business in the State of New Jersey, evidenced by a valid Business Registration Certificate from the Division of Taxation. If not recognized by the Division of Taxation, the SME must provide proof of registration with the State prior to December 1, 2024, and a valid Business Registration Certificate.
6. **Tax Clearance:** The SME must have tax clearance, confirmed with the New Jersey Division of Taxation or through the submission of a tax clearance certificate prior to approval.
7. **Application Limit:** Entities can submit only one application per Employer Identification Number (“EIN”). Businesses with multiple locations within Morris County but only one EIN will be limited to one application, though all revenues and impacts will be considered during the approval process.
8. **Use of Funds:** Applicants must acknowledge and agree that grant proceeds can only be used for reimbursement of working capital expenses.
9. **Duplication of Benefits:** There is a restriction on duplication of benefits that could exclude potential applicants that have already received business interruption assistance.

Ineligible Applicants

Ineligible applicants include, but are not limited to: gambling or gaming activities; the conduct or purveyance of “adult” (i.e., pornographic, lewd, prurient, obscene or otherwise similarly disreputable) activities, services, products or materials (including nude or semi-nude

performances or the sale of sexual aids or devices); any auction or bankruptcy or fire or “lost-our-lease” or “going-out-of-business” or similar sales; sales by transient merchants, Christmas tree sales or other outdoor storage; any activity constituting a nuisance; cannabis licensed or certified businesses and any illegal purposes.

Home-based businesses are **not** eligible for this Program. Landlords are also **not** eligible for this Program.

Eligible Uses

Grant funding may **only** be used for reimbursement of working capital expenditures.

Ineligible Uses

Grant funding may **not** be used for other direct use of funds, including capital expenses such as remediation or construction.

There is a restriction on duplication of benefits that could exclude potential applicants who have already received business interruption assistance.

Application Submission and Review Process

Applications will be accepted through the Program’s online application portal using a tiered application process to streamline the allocation of funding, prioritizing businesses based on their proximity to Route 80 exit 34 sinkholes. All required application questions must be completed fully.

In the first phase, businesses situated within a 5-mile radius, based on their zip code will be eligible to submit their applications, granting them initial access to the funding pool. Following the initial phase, **and subject to funding availability**, the application process will also open to businesses located between 5.01 and 10 miles from the sinkhole site. Finally, businesses situated more than 10 miles away, but still located within Morris County will have the opportunity to apply, **should funding be available**.

NJEDA staff will review all applications for completeness and eligibility. The funding is allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, determined by the submission date of each application.

Grant Amounts

The Program provides grants ranging from a minimum of \$1,000 to a maximum of \$15,000 based on the number of full-time equivalent employees and the negative financial impact for the first quarter of 2025.

The award amounts are structured as follows:

- 0-5 FTEs: \$5,000 maximum
- 6-20 FTEs: \$10,000 maximum
- 21-50 FTEs: \$15,000 maximum

The grant is **capped at the lesser** of the applicant's FTE jobs **or** the negative financial impact for the first quarter of 2025.

Fees

No application fees will be charged for this program.

Additional Requirements and Information

Comprehensive information about the Route 80 Business Assistance Grant Program is available at [Route 80 Business Assistance Grant Program - NJEDA](#)

Questions concerning this Program's Notice of Funding Availability should be submitted to CustomerCare@njeda.gov.

State and Federal Requirements

Funding for this grant 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; Compliance with the list of Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons promulgated by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), <https://sanctionssearch.ofac.treas.gov>; 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 including grant awards by the New Jersey Commission on Science, Innovation and Technology.