



# Business Recycling Incentive Program 2025 Funding Guidelines



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## Introduction

Dakota County (County) is required by state law to develop programs to reduce waste being landfilled and to achieve a 75 percent recycling rate for all waste generated in the County. Businesses produce over half of the waste in Dakota County and all commercial organizations are required to recycle a designated list of materials (paper, cardboard, metals, plastic, glass, cartons). In addition, certain large generators of organics (food scraps) are subject to a phase-in requirement to implement organics collection.

The County's Business Recycling Incentive Program funding can assist businesses and organizations, including non-profits, to:

- Reduce or prevent waste, including food donation
- Start or improve recycling (e.g., cardboard, paper, metal, plastic, glass, cartons)
- Start or expand organics collection (e.g., food scraps)

## Available Assistance

Dakota County is offering assistance to eligible businesses and organizations.

### Incentive Funding

Eligible businesses can apply for incentive funding up to \$10,000 (maximum per location) for eligible items as described below. No matching funds are required. Eligible businesses can apply up to two times through a new or amended application, along with a new or amended contract, if (a) justified by a new scope of work (e.g., adding organics collection) and (b) the \$10,000 limit per location will not be exceeded.

### Free Technical Assistance

The County provides free assistance to eligible businesses. Three touch points are provided:

1. On-site visit to determine what is needed to implement a successful waste diversion project and to assist with completing and submitting a full application.
2. On-site assistance to help implement the project—from container placement to employee education and troubleshooting.
3. Assistance with project evaluation, including project reporting.

### Free Container Labels

Dakota County will provide free container labels for recycling, organics, and trash in a variety of sizes (Appendix C). Labels are color-coded and meet County ordinance requirements for standardized terminology and images.

## Application Process

Eligible businesses and organizations must complete the County-provided Application. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis throughout the calendar year from eligible businesses on a first-come, first-served basis until funds are fully allocated. During the review process, County staff may contact the applicant for additional information or to clarify proposed project activities in the Application.

Applications for a collaborative project involving two or more businesses may be submitted, with one business acting as the primary applicant and responsible party, submitting the application on behalf of the group (e.g., for businesses within a strip mall).

## Eligible Businesses and Organizations

### Businesses and organizations with the following characteristics are eligible to participate.

- Is physically located in Dakota County and registered with the Minnesota Secretary of State. If the business or organization has multiple locations, each location in Dakota County is eligible for funding.
- Be willing to cooperatively work with the County to identify improvements and implement a successful project.
- Generates recyclable material that is eligible to be counted toward the County's 75 percent recycling rate goal in accordance with MN Stat. § 115A.551 or will result in a significant reduction in waste being landfilled, as determined by the County.
- Is classified in sectors 31–81 in the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS):

#### Eligible NAICS Sectors

- 31–33 Manufacturing
- 42 Wholesale Trade
- 44–45 Retail Trade
- 48–49 Transportation and Warehousing
- 51 Information
- 52 Finance and Insurance
- 53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
- 54 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
- 55 Management of Companies and Enterprises
- 56 Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services
- 61 Educational Services
- 62 Health Care and Social Assistance
- 71 Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
- 72 Accommodation and Food Services
- 81 Other Services (Except Public Administration)

Businesses and organizations that request containers must also meet or be willing to meet the following requirements within 12 months of beginning the program:

1. Collect and provide recycling containers for employees to recycle the County's [Designated List of Recyclables](#).
2. Pair recycling containers with trash containers (i.e., each trash container has a recycling container within 10 feet).
3. Label each indoor and outdoor container with County standardized labels or labels that follow [County labeling requirements](#).

## Business and organizations classified as follows are *not eligible* to participate.

- Home-based businesses, homeowner associations, and other home-based enterprises.
- Residential buildings and dwellings, including multiunit dwellings (e.g., condos, apartments, townhouses).
- Public and non-public schools (kindergarten– 12<sup>th</sup> grade), excluding preschool and higher education, municipalities, and other federal, state, and local public entities or otherwise publicly-owned or -operated facilities that are eligible for other County programs for recycling improvements.
- Businesses and other organizations not physically located in Dakota County even if owned or operated by a Dakota County-based business or organization.

## Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

Funds are available to help reduce waste, start or improve collection of recyclables, and/or start or improve organics collection and recovery (i.e., food donation) in business operations.

### Eligible Expenses

1. **Recycling and Organics Containers.** Bins, barrels, sorting stations, and containers for collecting recyclables and organics at facilities, with a maximum of \$6,250. This includes totes, carts, cart tippers, and other waste containers for transportation of recyclable materials to containers serviced by the waste hauler. *Applicants are highly encouraged to choose bins and containers from the County's standard, pre-approved list in Appendix B.*
2. **Bins and containers** other than those on the pre-approved list are eligible if they can be purchased at a lower cost than listed in Appendix B, are being chosen to match existing containers, or follow industry standards/regulations.
3. **Employee Training.** Including time for key employees (e.g., train the trainer) to participate in employee training to learn about the new or expanded recycling and organics programs and hiring an interpreter or translator to help with employee training.
4. **Equipment.**
  - a. Shredders or other processing equipment that results in increased recyclability of material and reduced landfilling.
  - b. Lifts, recycling container wash stations, and equipment for debagging of recyclables.
  - c. Dishwashing equipment (must be Energy Star certified) to support use of washable serviceware. Must be National Sanitation Foundation Certified, and a plan review must be submitted to the regulating health authority when applicable.
  - d. Water filling stations to support waste reduction with a maximum reimbursement of \$2,000.
  - e. Refrigerators /freezers (must be Energy Star certified) to extend the life of donated food (prevent food waste). This only applies to charitable, food rescue organizations or businesses and other organizations donating food to charitable, food rescue organizations (e.g., food shelf, food pantry, or meal program) that distribute food in the community such as to food-insecure individuals.
5. **Custom Container Labels.** Custom signage and labels that meet County labeling requirements. Appendix C contains container labels that meet County mandatory labeling requirements that can be ordered from the County at no cost, and their use is preferred.

6. **Educational Materials.** Custom recycling and organics educational materials that meet County education requirements. Customizable education templates are available at no cost through the County, and their use is preferred.
7. **Back-of-House Organics Supplies and Hauler Collection Services for New Organics Collection Programs.** Items specific to start organics projects when at least a 12-month program is implemented:
  - Six-month supply of BPI-certified compostable bags for lining organics collection containers.
  - Six months of organics hauling service cost reimbursement with at least 12 months of service. Applicant must submit documentation of hauling service to be reimbursed, and hauling service must be a new service, not an existing one.

***Back-of-house** means the kitchen, food preparation, dishwashing, storage areas, and other areas where food is offered for consumption or sale. It does not include food waste generated from food that has been served to customers or the public.*

8. **Back-of-House Organics Supplies for Expanding or Changing Organics Management Collection Programs.** Six-month supply of BPI-certified compostable bags for lining organics collection containers in the *new areas* where a new or expanded program is implemented for at least 12 months.
9. **Waste Reduction and Reuse Materials.** Materials to reduce waste generation through reuse and waste minimization. Equipment, tools, and materials that result in demonstrated sustained waste reduction.
10. **Reusable Serviceware.** Reusable serving ware, such as dishes and silverware, used in employee common areas (e.g., break rooms, kitchen and cafeteria areas) to reduce waste. Reusable serviceware must stay on the premises of the organization.
11. **Food Waste Prevention Tools.** Equipment to put food byproducts to greater use and tools, including software, to prevent food waste. Software examples: LeanPath, Phood, Winnow.
12. **Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Tools.** Tools and equipment, including software, to increase environmentally preferable purchasing (i.e., waste reduction, reuse of products, increased recycled content, toxicity reduction) and to yield more sustainable upstream purchasing.

The County reserves the right to negotiate with the applicant prior to contract execution for reasonable pricing of eligible items.

## **Ineligible Expenses**

1. Hauler services related to trash and recycling, including containers normally provided by a waste or recycling service provider, such as carts, dumpsters, compactors, and open-top or enclosed roll-off boxes.
2. Pallet jacks, janitorial carts, and other similar equipment.
3. All containers and equipment intended to collect and move trash unless they are part of a County pre-selected waste station in Appendix B or are equivalent in type and match the existing collection system.
4. Installation costs (e.g., dishwasher, recycling equipment).
5. Replacement or service costs for currently functioning materials/equipment (e.g., containers, reusable service ware, dishwashers, refrigerators/freezers, and water filling stations).
6. Appliance disposal costs.
7. Employee labor costs to collect and manage waste and recycling/organics.
8. Vehicle-related costs such as trucks, trailers.

9. Compostable food serviceware (e.g. plates, cups, flatware).
10. Plastic bags used for trash or recycling collection.
11. Items, supplies, or equipment for employee recognition or employee rewards or that are likely to be taken off site (e.g., tumblers).
12. Environmentally preferable products (e.g., cleaners, copy paper).
13. Project-related costs incurred before contract execution.
14. Project-related costs in areas where waste cannot be safely and effectively managed, as determined by the County.
15. External storage/enclosure space improvements or expansions.
16. Compactors and balers.

## Participation Requirements

Participants must agree to the following:

- A. Host a minimum of three (3) site visits and work with the County to:
  1. Determine what is needed to implement a successful waste diversion project that complies with county recycling requirements and to assist with completing and submitting a full Application.
  2. Implement the project as outlined in the Application, including labeling and placing containers in keeping with guidance provided by the County's contractor, educating employees and others responsible for collecting and transporting recyclables and organics, and trouble-shooting.
  3. Provide assistance with project evaluation, including project reporting.
- B. Complete and submit a full Application. Requests for reimbursable products and infrastructure must include a quote with specifications and costs.
- C. Complete a County-provided Baseline Report with the Application and provide pre-project information and data for post-project comparison. The County is available to help collect this information.
- D. Execute a contract with the County.
- E. Provide a completed W-9.
- F. Begin project activities within three (3) months of contract execution. Implement project activities identified in the Application using Best Management Practices identified by the County.
- G. Complete all project activities within 12 months of contract execution.
- H. Complete a County-provided Final Report and provide post-project data to help gauge project success and areas for County program improvement. The County is available to help collect this information.
- I. Adjust the hauler collection schedule (frequency of pick up) and container capacities (dumpster sizes), as necessary, during the 12 months of the contract to sufficiently contain all the recyclables and organics (if applicable) collected from the Participant's building and public spaces.
- J. Complete a final report upon project completion. Provide or allow pre- and post-project photos for planning and documentation purposes.

## Fund Distribution

Funding and reimbursement approved by County staff will be distributed as follows:

- A. **Standard Containers and Labels.** No funds will be transferred to businesses or organizations for pre-selected bins and containers identified in Appendix B and labels identified in Appendix C. These will be ordered by the County upon execution of a contract.
- B. **Reimbursable Expenses.** Requests for reimbursement of eligible expenses must include proof that funds were spent on approved items and include a copy of the paid receipt for the purchased equipment or work completed under the terms of the executed contract.