

Small, Underserved, and Disadvantaged Communities Grant Program



The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), as amended by the 2016 Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act and the 2018 America's Water Infrastructure Act, authorizes the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to award grants to assist underserved, disadvantaged communities and small communities with meeting SDWA requirements. EPA is also authorized to award grants to states for responding to a drinking water contaminant.

Description

To assist underserved, small and disadvantaged communities with improving their drinking water resources, this program will include approximately \$25.8 million in funding. Grants will be awarded as non-competitive grants to states, with a 10 percent tribal allotment of \$2.64 million. The grant program is designed to help public water systems in underserved communities meet and comply with SDWA requirements. The grant program will provide assistance to underserved communities that have no household drinking water or wastewater services or are served by a public water system that violates or exceeds any Maximum Containment Level, treatment technique, or action level.

Eligible Entities

Grants will be awarded to states and tribes to support underserved communities that meet the small or disadvantaged statutory definition. A small or disadvantaged community is one:

- That the state determines to be a disadvantaged community under SDWA section 1452(d)(3) or may become a disadvantaged community as a result of carrying out a project or activity, or
- With a population of less than 10,000 individuals that does not have the capacity to incur debt sufficient to finance a project to comply with the SDWA.

Eligible Projects

Projects eligible for assistance include those to return a public water system to compliance; efforts that benefit disadvantaged communities on a per household basis; programs to provide household water quality testing, including testing for unregulated contaminants; and activities necessary for a state to respond to a contaminant.

Approach for State Grants

EPA will award funding to states and territories based on an allocation formula that includes factors for population below poverty, small water systems, and underserved communities, including a 10% tribal allotment. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until June 2022. For FY 2021 funding the 45 percent non-federal cost share or match is not required. EPA is applying a waiver to all grant applicants of the statutory 45 percent cost share for FY 2021 funding only, due to the financial constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic across the country. Waiver of the 45 percent cost share is at the discretion of EPA.

States will need to develop a robust list of fundable projects that meet the requirements of the grant program to receive funding. States will consult with EPA regional offices on their project and activity lists prior to final selection.

Tribal Allotment

The tribal allotment is approximately \$2.64 million. Learn more about the Tribal Program at <https://www.epa.gov/tribaldrinkingwater/wiin-act-section-2104-assistance-small-and-disadvantaged-communities-tribal>.

For more information please visit <https://www.epa.gov/safewater/grants>.