



Innovation Grants

February 2025 (revised)

Administered by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR), the Innovation Planning Grant and Innovation Grant programs (sec. [79.038](#), Wis. Stats.) were created in [2023 Wisconsin Act 12](#).

Overview

A county, municipality, or tribe can pursue an Innovation Grant to support the transfer of an allowable service/duty (listed below) that will realize a cost savings of at least 10% – *i.e.*, *innovation plan*

- Public safety, including law enforcement (not jails)
- Fire protection
- Emergency services
- Courts
- Jails
- Training
- Communications
- Public works
- Information technology
- Administration, including staffing, payroll, and human resources
- Economic development and tourism
- Public health
- Housing, planning, and zoning
- Parks and recreation

Innovation Planning Grant – available funding of \$3 million statewide

A municipality or tribe with a population not exceeding 5,000 can apply for the Innovation Planning Grant to fund the staffing or consultant expenses for planning the transfer of one or more allowable services/duties (sec. [79.038\(2\)](#), Wis. Stats.).

How to Apply

Starting November 14, 2024 – municipal clerks and tribe representatives will have access to apply for the Innovation Planning Grant (Form SL-400) within [MyDORGov](#), and must include:

- General description – of the anticipated transfer of service/duty
- Invoice or cost summary – supporting the amount requested on your planning grant application

Note: Form SL-400 will be available until the extended deadline of April 30, 2025.

Awards

DOR will review applications and make determinations over three periods starting in January 2025. For each proposed innovation plan, grant award payments will:

- Be based on the submitted cost/invoice information
- Not exceed \$100,000

Note: DOR will review applications and make distributions through spring 2025.

Innovation Grant – available funding of \$300 million statewide

Under state law (sec. [79.038\(1\)](#), Wis. Stats.), a county, municipality, or tribe (transferor) can apply for an Innovation Grant to support the implementation of a transfer of an allowable service/duty (listed above) to another county, municipality, tribe, nonprofit organization, or private entity (transferee). The innovation plan must realize a cost savings of at least 10%.

How to Apply

DOR expects the Innovation Grant to be available July, 2025 within [MyDORGov](#). More information to come.

Questions? Contact us at lgs@wisconsin.gov.

Contract/Agreement Requirements

A copy of the signed contract/agreement must be sent to DOR with the Innovation Grant application, and must include:

- a. List of the service/duty to transfer
- b. Signature date on or after the November 13, 2024 Administrative Rule notice date for Innovation Grants
- c. Length of the agreement/contract (must be for a minimum of 6 years)
- d. For the transferor – the total cost of the providing the service/duty to the county, municipality, or tribe transferring the service/duty in the calendar year prior to the transfer. The total cost includes the cost of wages, fringe benefits, training, and equipment of providing the service/duty.
- e. For the transferee – if the transferee is a county, municipality, or tribe, provide the transferee's total cost of providing the service/duty in the calendar year prior to the transfer of the service/duty. The total cost of providing the service/duty includes the cost of wages, benefits, training, and equipment of providing the service/duty.
- f. Amount the transferor will pay to the transferee for the length of the agreement/contract
- g. Explanation of how the transfer will yield a projected savings of least 10% of the total cost of providing the service/duty
- h. Details regarding how the grant funds will be allocated to counties, municipalities, or tribes that are party to the agreement/contract
- i. For public safety, fire protection, and emergency services - a stipulation that the service or duty being transferred will maintain the appropriate level of such service

Required Cost Savings

The innovation plan must realize a projected savings of at least 10% of the total cost of providing the service/duty in the calendar year prior to the transfer, within:

- 24 months after the first grant payment – achieve 50% of the projected savings
- 36 months after the first grant payment – achieve the full amount of the projected savings

Note: DOR is required to audit at least 10% of the grants awarded to ensure the projected savings are achieved

Awards

DOR distributes the grant awards in three annual payments. The awards are based on the total cost of providing the service/duty in the calendar year prior to the transfer. Each payment equals:

- 25% of the total cost excluding the district with the highest cost – for plans including only counties, municipalities, or tribes
- 25% of the total cost – when transferring to a non-profit organization or private entity
- No county or municipality may receive more than \$10 million each year

Note: DOR must give priority to innovation plans realizing savings for public safety, fire protection, and emergency services while maintaining the appropriate level of service.