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Contact: Gina Trish, Tammori Petty, Lisa Ryan
(609) 292-6055



Phillip D. Murphy
Governor

PRESS RELEASE

Sheila Y. Oliver
Lt. Governor & DCA Commissioner

Murphy Administration Announces \$2.5 million in Local Government Grant Awards to Promote and Implement Shared Services Programs

Programs Are Designed to Reduce Costs While Enhancing Services

TRENTON, NJ - The Murphy Administration and New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Division of Local Government Services (DLGS) today announced the award of 23 Local Efficiency Achievement Program (LEAP) grants to local governmental entities across New Jersey. These grants, totaling over \$2.5 million, will help local governments pursue shared services to reduce taxpayer costs and enhance services. The grant awards will support design and implementation of a variety of shared services initiatives including 911 dispatch, regional municipal courts, sanitation, public works, correctional facilities, and school feasibility studies.

“In the wake of the pandemic, local governments are looking for innovative ways to cut costs to offset unexpected expenses incurred this past year. Shared services are a proven way to accomplish this while preserving and even enhancing existing services,” **said Lieutenant Governor Sheila Oliver, who serves as Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA).** “The LEAP grants being awarded today are specifically designed to help towns streamline resources to achieve taxpayer savings without sacrificing the quality of services their residents need.”

The LEAP program is comprised of three grant initiatives: Challenge Grants, which promote innovation and collaboration on more expansive projects that produce shared services of notable significance; Implementation Grants, which assist in covering costs associated with the implementation of shared services and school feasibility studies; and County Coordinator Fellowship Grants, which support the hiring of a full-time County Shared Service Coordinator to identify and advance shared service opportunities within a county.

“We applaud these local governments who, in the midst of COVID-19, are taking the time to figure out how to do things better by working together. DCA stands ready to partner with any local government in its shared services efforts,” **said DLGS Director Jacquelyn Suárez.**

The following local government entities will be awarded 2021 LEAP grants:

Applicant	Grant Type	Grant Award
Atlantic County	Challenge Grant	\$150,000
Atlantic County Utilities Authority	Implementation Grant	\$250,000
Bergen County	County Coordinator Fellowship Grant	\$50,000
Bergen County	Challenge Grant	\$150,000
Berkeley Heights Township	Implementation Grant	\$243,000
Cumberland County	Implementation Grant	\$250,000
Cumberland County Improvement Authority	Implementation Grant	\$166,076
Dennis Township Board of Education	Challenge Grant	\$28,927.45
East Newark Borough	Challenge Grant	\$100,000
Franklin Township (Gloucester County)	Implementation Grant	\$16,644
Hamilton Township (Atlantic County)	Implementation Grant	\$250,000
Henry Hudson Regional School	Implementation Grant	\$65,000
Kingsway Regional School District	Implementation Grant	\$75,000
Middle Township Public Schools	Implementation Grant	\$47,000
Mount Laurel Township Municipal Utilities Authority	Challenge Grant	\$9,000.00
Mount Olive Township	Implementation Grant	\$172,620
Mountain Lakes Borough	Implementation Grant	\$38,340

Morris Township	Challenge Grant	\$90,000
Ocean Township Board of Education (Monmouth County)	Challenge Grant	\$150,000
Oxford Township Board of Education	Implementation Grant	\$33,000
Port Republic School District	Implementation Grant	\$66,250
Seabright Borough	Implementation Grant	\$141,515
Union County	Challenge Grant	\$150,000

Challenge Grants have been awarded to entities seeking new and innovative ways to share services in a wide array of areas including: shared digital platforms for everything from tracking food security issues to fire hydrant locations; sharing public safety and dispatch services equipment; sharing heavy equipment across towns; and joint maintenance of equipment, grounds, and facilities.

Implementation Grants are used to help local governments defray costs associated with moving to a shared model. These include: regionalizing sanitation services across towns; shared records management systems; shared equipment programs; regional 911 systems; and a shared regional county municipal court.

Additionally, LEAP grants have been utilized to cover school consolidation studies. As school budgets continue to be the largest expense funded by property taxes, the State of New Jersey will continue prioritizing new and innovative methods of achieving cost savings in schools, while also maintaining or improving upon the state's high degree of educational excellence.

While the deadline for Challenge Grants has passed, there are still funds available and local entities may still submit applications for Implementation Grants until June 30, 2021. For more information, interested local governments can email dlgs.leapgrant@dca.nj.gov.

To support local governments' interest in shared services, DLGS established the Local Assistance Bureau (LAB), which provides technical assistance for each step of the shared services process from identification through implementation. The LAB team is comprised of municipal professionals who possess tremendous expertise and accumulated knowledge, skill sets and insights to bring a fresh, enthusiastic, progressive, and professional outlook to the field of municipal shared services.

Furthermore, in 2018, Governor Murphy appointed Nicholas Platt and Jordan Glatt to serve as Shared Services Czars, who are ready and available to provide guidance and support to local governments considering entrance into a shared service agreement.

"Municipalities continue to be under extraordinary pressure to find tax savings and the Governor's shared services program was established to help elected officials do just that," **said Nicholas Platt, a former mayor and current township committeeman of Harding Township, Morris County.** "The funding of these LEAP grants is an important way to get the word out on how other communities are driving down their operating costs."

"As municipal budgets are being depleted by COVID-19, it is incumbent on municipalities to look for any and all savings," **said Jordan Glatt, a former mayor of Summit in Union County.** "Shared services do exactly that. We are thrilled to be able to provide support to help communities through these difficult times."

Local governments interested in learning more about shared services can send an email to localassistance@dca.nj.gov or visit www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/dlgs/programs/lab.html.

The DCA offers a wide range of programs and services, including affordable housing production, fire safety, building safety, community planning and development, local government management and finance, and disaster recovery.

For more information about DCA, visit nj.gov/dca/ or follow the Department on social media:



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