

DEEP Beverage Container Recycling Grant Program

(pursuant to [June Special Session, Public Act No. 21-2](#), Section 65)

June 21, 2023 Update – Second Grant Round

The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) is pleased to announce a second round of beverage container recycling (a.k.a. Bottle Bill) grant program opportunities. The grant application process described below is intended to support the establishment of beverage container redemption centers in urban centers and environmental justice communities, with a particular focus on areas that are currently underserved by the independent redemption center sector.

The beverage container recycling grant program application is attached to this announcement. DEEP may ask for additional information related to any received grant program application. Please send all correspondence and applications via email in PDF format to DEEP.RecyclingProgram@ct.gov. Applications for the second grant round will be accepted July 1, 2023. DEEP will begin reviewing applications on August 1, 2023. DEEP will make awards based on the criteria listed in Section 4 of the Beverage Container Recycling Grant Program Requirements in this document.

What is the Bottle Bill program?

Connecticut is one of 10 states in the U.S. that are "bottle bill" states. Bottle bill programs, also known as beverage container redemption programs, may have slightly different provisions in each state, but they work by charging a small deposit on a container at the time of purchase which is then returned to the consumer when the empty container is returned.

Connecticut law requires that certain beverage containers be sold with a deposit – currently set at 5 cents, but set to increase to 10 cents on January 1, 2024 – that consumers can redeem at various locations such as redemption centers or stores where deposit beverage containers are sold. The law also requires that a distributor pay any operator of a redemption center a handling fee of at least two and one-half cents for each container of beer, hard seltzer, hard cider or other malt beverage and three and one-half cents for each beverage container of mineral waters, soda water and other carbonated soft drinks or similar noncarbonated beverages.

Beverage containers currently marked with a deposit for redemption:

- Beer or other malt beverages
- Mineral waters
- Soda water

- Soft drinks/soda
- Bottled water (including flavored water and nutritionally enhanced water)
- Hard seltzer
- Hard cider
- Plant water
- Juice/juice drinks
- Tea
- Coffee
- Kombucha
- Plant infused drinks
- Sports/energy drinks

Beverage containers that are not marked with a deposit for redemption:

- Beverages that contain wine and liquor
- Miniature liquor bottles of 50 mL or less
- Noncarbonated beverage containers of three liters or more
- Noncarbonated beverage containers made of high-density polyethylene
- Any beverage container of less than 150 mL

Beverage Container Recycling Grant Program Requirements

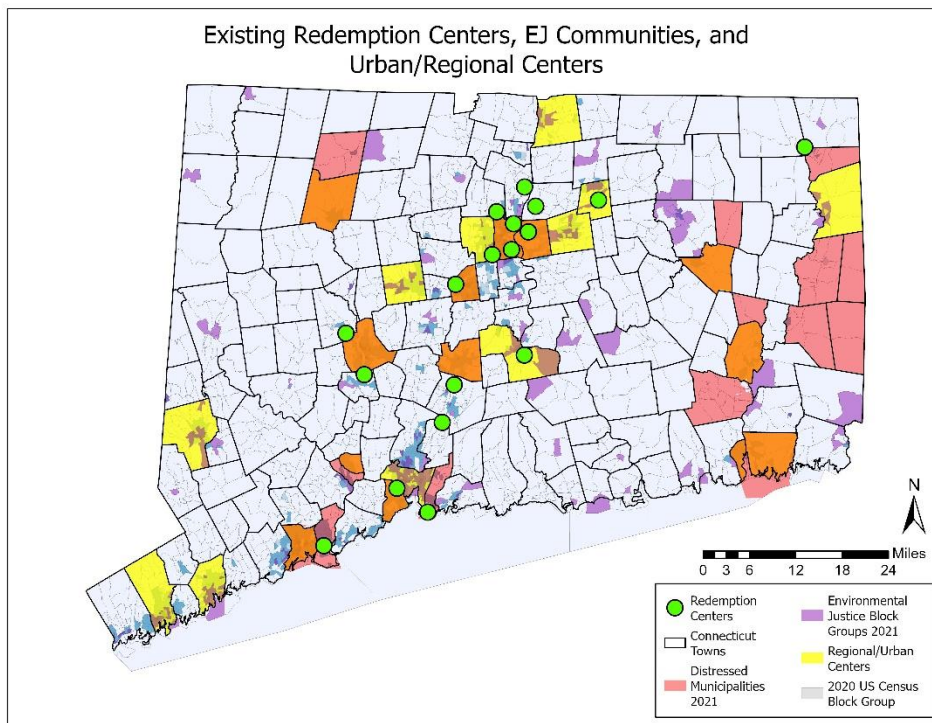
1. Eligible Applicants

- Applicants must have a business registered with the Connecticut Secretary of State's office and must be Connecticut residents.
- Municipalities and Councils of Government (COGs) are eligible to apply for this program.
- Per statute, preference will be given to locally-owned, minority-owned, and/or women-owned business applicants.
- The beverage container recycling grant program prioritizes funding for **new** beverage container redemption centers that are located in communities that lack reliable and convenient access to beverage container redemption locations.
- As of July 1, 2023, any organization that serves persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities also shall be eligible for a grant, regardless of location within the state.
- While this grant program is dedicated to the development of new redemption centers, DEEP recognizes there is a need to ensure that existing facilities will also be able to manage an increased bottle redemption market by 2024. Therefore, DEEP will consider funding grant requests from existing redemption centers that are located in urban centers

and environmental justice communities for infrastructure and new technology investments to the extent that there is available funding once the priority for new facilities is met.

2. Eligible Locations

Grants are intended for new redemption centers that **must** be located in **urban centers** and **environmental justice communities**. For the purposes of this grant program "urban center" has the same meaning as "regional center"ⁱ, as contained in the state plan of conservation and development. "Environmental justice community" has the same meaning as provided in section 22a-20a of the general statutesⁱⁱ, and "beverage container"ⁱⁱⁱ and "redemption center"^{iv} have the same meanings as provided in section 22a-243 of the general statutes, respectively. No application will be considered unless the project location is within one of these geographic areas which are shaded on the map below.



The beverage container recycling grant program is intended to provide funding for new beverage container redemption centers that are located in communities that lack reliable and convenient access to beverage container redemption locations. Consequently, DEEP will be prioritizing support for redemption centers that are a reasonable distance away from existing redemption centers, so as not to undermine the viability of existing redemption centers. In response to the Beverage Container Recycling Grant Program Scoping Document released on November 9, 2021, DEEP received varying comments regarding a potential radius in which new redemptions centers should be eligible. Thus, DEEP will not be including a specific radius in the grant eligibility

requirements. However, an analysis from one commenter suggested a need of 1 redemption center per 72,000 residents. DEEP encourages applicants to be consistent with this analysis. [Existing redemption center locations can be found on DEEP's website](#), and are pinpointed as green dots on the map above.

Applicants are also strongly encouraged to choose sites that have safe, convenient access for pedestrians and riders of public transit, in populous areas that otherwise lack access to redemption facilities (see item 4 *Review Factors* below for more information).

Targeted Communities

DEEP notes that even after the first round of redemption center grants, there are still areas of the state that are underserved by the independent redemption center sector or do not currently have any independent redemption centers. Therefore, DEEP will be prioritizing applications from the following communities (please note that this prioritization does not change the eligible applicant locations as described above):

- Bridgeport
- Bristol
- Danbury
- Enfield
- Groton
- Meriden
- New Haven
- New London
- Norwalk
- Norwich
- Stamford
- Torrington

3. Eligible Uses of Funding; Award Amounts

There is no cap on the amount for individual grant awards. However, eligible costs must be reasonable and prudent, and DEEP may not decide to award the full amount requested due to the limited funds available for the Grant Program. Grant proceeds received pursuant to the beverage container recycling grant program may be used for purposes including **infrastructure, technology and costs associated with the establishment of a beverage container redemption center and for initial operational expenses** of such redemption center. To the extent that there is funding available after the current fiscal year, applicants may be eligible to apply for additional

funding in future fiscal years. However, funding for this program is currently limited and applicants are encouraged to budget for only one year of grant funding.

4. Review Factors

Applicants are encouraged to carefully evaluate and document the following factors when proposing to site new redemption centers, including:

- Proximity to already-existing redemption centers and other proposed new redemption centers;
- Safe pedestrian access to the site;
- Accessibility of the site to public transportation;
- Population density surrounding the site;
- Attributes that make the site and technology convenient for the customer;
- Type of redemption technology to be deployed; and
- The volume of beverage containers sold within the likely service area of the redemption center.

Applications will be evaluated based on the above factors.

5. Reporting

Any person or entity that receives a grant award pursuant to the beverage container recycling grant program shall, not later than October first of each year, submit to DEEP a financial audit of grant expenditures by such person or entity until all grant moneys have been expended by such person or entity. Any such audit shall be prepared by a certified independent auditor, and if DEEP finds that any such grant is used for purposes that are not in conformity with the uses set forth in this section, DEEP may require repayment of such grant.

DEEP will also work with applicants to develop reporting metrics that will be required to measure the success of their projects as funded by the Beverage Container Recycling Grant Program and help inform future investment.

Application Assistance

DEEP recognizes that applicants may require assistance in creating a business plan and/or completing other business-related items in the application. There are resources available, such as the [Connecticut Small Business Development Center](#), that can assist applicants in creating a successful application. General questions about the application can be directed to the email address below.

Grant Program Administration

DEEP has contracted with a third-party vendor, [HEDCO, Inc.](#), to assist with grant program administration including outreach, application review, and award disbursement. Applicants may be contacted directly by a representative of HEDCO during the review process. Awardees should expect to enter into a contractual agreement with HEDCO in order to receive grant funding.

Questions

Do you have questions about the beverage container recycling grant program and/or the grant application? Send an email to DEEP.RecyclingProgram@ct.gov with your inquiry and we will get back to you, or call the Waste Engineering and Enforcement Division Compliance Assistance helpline at 888-424-4193 and your inquiry can be directed to the appropriate DEEP staff.

Application Checklist

- Part I – Cover Sheet
- Part II – Project Narrative
- Part III – Business/Project Plan and Required Format
- Part IV – Additional Required Information
- Part V – Certification

ⁱ The [most recent state plan of conservation and development](#) lists these following municipalities as “**regional centers**”: Ansonia, Bridgeport, Bristol, Danbury, East Hartford, Enfield, Groton, Hartford, Killingly, Manchester, Meriden, Middletown, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Norwalk, Norwich, Stamford, Torrington, Vernon, Waterbury, West Hartford, West Haven, and Windham.

ⁱⁱ CGS 22a-20a defines “**environmental justice community**” as:

“...(A) a United States census block group, as determined in accordance with the most recent United States census, for which thirty per cent or more of the population consists of low-income persons who are not institutionalized and have an income below two hundred per cent of the federal poverty level; or (B) a distressed municipality, as defined in subsection (b) of section 32-9p;”

ⁱⁱⁱ “**Beverage container**” means the individual, separate, sealed glass, metal or plastic bottle, can, jar or carton containing a carbonated or noncarbonated beverage, but does not include a bottle, can, jar or carton (A) three liters or more in size if containing a noncarbonated beverage, or (B) made of high-density polyethylene.

^{iv} “**Redemption center**” means any facility established to redeem empty beverage containers from consumers or to collect and sort empty beverage containers from dealers and to prepare such containers for redemption by the appropriate distributors.