

Employer Reasonable Accommodation Fund

Legislative Report
As required by 2023 Minn. Laws, Chap. 53, Art. 15, Sec. 31, Subd. 9
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Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)
Employer Reasonable Accommodation Fund

180 E. 5th St
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Natasha Jerde, Director State Services for the Blind
(Phone) 651-539-2390
natasha.jerde@state.mn.us

<https://mn.gov/deed/business/financing-business/eraf/>

As requested by Minnesota Statute 3.197: This report cost approximately \$312.52 to prepare, including staff time, printing and mailing expenses.

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Background

The Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Employer Reasonable Accommodation Fund (ERAF) creates a central fund where small to mid-sized Minnesota employers can request reimbursement for expenses related to providing reasonable accommodations for job applicants and employees with disabilities. The ERAF's purpose is to encourage employment of people with disabilities by reducing any perceived or real financial barriers.

An employer is eligible to apply for accommodation reimbursement under this program if the following conditions are met:

- The employer is domiciled within the legal boundaries of Minnesota and has its principal place of business as identified in its certificate of incorporation in the state of Minnesota;
- The business employs not more than 500 employees on any business day during the preceding calendar year; and
- The business generates \$5,000,000 or less in gross annual revenue.

Only reasonable accommodations made for an individual with a disability, either a job applicant or employee, will be considered for reimbursement. Employers must certify on the application form that the reasonable accommodations were made for a qualifying job applicant or employee. No personal identifiable information will be collected about the individual with a disability, outside of general demographic information for tracking and reporting purposes.

The types of accommodations are:

- Auditory or Communicative Aids (e.g. amplified telephones, captioning, sign language interpreters, communication boards)
- Cognitive Aids (e.g. job coaching, task boards)
- Mobility Aids (e.g. ramps, standing devices, walkers, assist rails)
- Motor Aids (e.g. doorknob latch extenders, adapted writing utensils, dictation software, page turners)
- Visual Aids (e.g. Braille printers, screen reading software, magnifiers)
- Other

The maximum total reimbursement per eligible employer in a state fiscal year (July 1-June 30) is \$30,000. This amount includes both one-time and ongoing reasonable accommodation expenses. Submissions for one-time reasonable accommodation expenses must be no less than \$250 and no more than \$15,000 per individual with a disability. If an employer submits a reimbursement for more than the maximum amount, ERAF will only reimburse up to the \$15,000 limit. One-time expenses are those expenses that are only made one time, such as a purchase of an item or device.

ERAF is a two-year pilot program from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2025. This program is appropriated \$4,000,000. The commissioner may use up to 20 percent of the biennial appropriation for administration, marketing, and providing technical assistance to employers.

Eligible Applications

72 applications were approved for 43 employers in the amount of \$435,621.13 in FY24.

Table - Eligible Applications – FY24

Employer	Amount Approved
Adapt Design Works	\$1,040.00
Century Partners LLC	\$30,000.00
Charles Cabinets LLC	\$1,256.52
Cherished Services	\$8,450.00
CHOICE, unlimited	\$3,215.00
Daily Work	\$1,014.57
DARTS	\$599.98
Dendros Group LLC	\$6,088.00
Discover Chiropractic	\$29,803.41
D-Tails Construction Services Inc	\$3,160.63
Dunn Brothers Coffee - Excelsior	\$14,053.11
Dunn Brothers Coffee - Hopkins - 007	\$15,000.00
Dunn Brothers Coffee - Minnetonka - 221	\$15,000.00
Farm in the Dell of the Red Valley	\$30,000.00
Ghost Dog Media, LLC	\$13,807.30

Employer	Amount Approved
Goldwood Kennels	\$921.15
Golf Evil LLC	\$12,663.80
Greater Mankato Growth	\$523.00
Hazel Park Learning Center	\$1,810.00
Hope Fieldhouse	\$29,730.00
Hornets Hive dba CornerStone	\$14,078.00
Jam HOPE Foundation	\$23,857.00
Jam Hops Gymnastics Factory, Inc.	\$8,260.00
JET Limited Liability Company	\$6,205.03
Lake Darling Resort	\$30,000.00
Lanesboro Area Chamber of Commerce	\$1,087.36
Lyle Public School	\$463.91
Midwest Autism & Psychological Services	\$1,567.00
MN EyeCareNetwork, Inc DBA Azure Vision Care	\$1,362.10
NATIV3	\$748.04
New London Food Cooperative	\$536.98
North Star Law Group LLC	\$6,707.42
Oleb Media, LLC	\$21,551.73

Employer	Amount Approved
Precision Medical Glass LLC	\$362.26
Premium Moving Services LLC	\$7,250.00
Queermunity Collaborative, LLC	\$29,845.86
Slow Road Photo (aka Erika Morrow Photography)	\$8,206.96
Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership	\$455.20
Stevens County Economic Development Commission	\$4,147.39
Treat Enterprises Edina, LLC	\$2,585.74
Vaulted Jewels LLC	\$17,063.68
Willow Pathways Therapeutic Services LLC	\$1,143.00
Wise Elephant Consulting LLC	\$30,000.00
Total:	\$435,621.13

61 applications were approved thus far for 45 employers in the amount of \$423,449.73 in FY25.

Table - Eligible Applications – FY25

Employer	Amount Approved
Advanced Auto Care of Fergus Falls, LLC	\$5,067.12
Aitkin County Developmental Achievement Center, Inc. (DAC)	\$3,865.00
Annex Teen Clinic	\$1,500.00

Employer	Amount Approved
Carefree Travel of Sauk Centre	\$4,041.80
Charles Cabinets	\$165.81
CHOICE, unlimited	\$2,175.00
Clay Coyote Arts, Inc	\$471.83
Cornerstone Creative	\$4,970.45
Daily Work	\$111.32
DARTS	\$525.00
Dendros Group LLC	\$9,262.50
Digital Accessibility by WeCo	\$8,431.24
Discover Chiropractic Corp, PC	\$30,000.00
D-Tails Construction Services Inc	\$2,320.05
Dunn Brothers Coffee - Excelsior	\$5,655.81
Dunn Brothers Coffee - Hopkins - 007	\$5,630.41
Dunn Brothers Coffee - Minnetonka - 221	\$5,630.41
Farm in the Dell of the Red River Valley	\$18,467.20
First Financial Title	\$266.46
First Unitarian Universalist Church	\$349.00
Flourish Counseling Center LLC	\$2,523.99

Employer	Amount Approved
Ghost Dog Media	\$16,119.08
Hazel Park Learning Center	\$4,172.00
Helping Paws of MN	\$30,000.00
Hope Fieldhouse	\$29,904.00
IB Industries dba IBI Data	\$5,000.00
Inclusive Networking	\$2,802.14
JET Limited Liability Company	\$2,086.85
Mahtowa Tavern LLC	\$30,000.00
New London Food Coop	\$13,675.05
Omni Mental Health, Inc	\$1,016.31
Park East Chiropractic PC	\$1,336.00
Premium Moving Services LLC	\$15,000.00
Queermunity Collaborative	\$30,000.00
Randy's Cabinets and Woodworks	\$15,000.00
Realief Neuropathy Centers of MN PA	\$1,170.52
Roots and Wings Therapeutic Services LLC	\$1,434.99
Rubenstein Studio, LLC	\$1,320.00
Sssdude-Nutz LLC dba The Donut Trap	\$18,230.00

Employer	Amount Approved
St. Francis Xavier Church and School	\$14,775.13
SVJ Creative Designs, Inc.	\$30,000.00
Vision Loss Resources	\$14,475.00
Willow Pathways Therapeutic Services LLC	\$935.50
Wise Elephant Consulting	\$25,763.70
Wright County Community Action Inc	\$7,802.10
Total:	\$426,949.73

Table - Eligible Accommodations total FY24 & FY25

Number of approved applications	132
Number of approved employers <i>(some employers submitted multiple applications)</i>	68
Type of approved accommodations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auditory or Communicative Aids: 17 • Cognitive aids: 13 • Mobility aids: 29 • Motor aids: 10 • Visual aids: 14 • Other: 49 	

Ineligible Applications

In FY24 and FY25, a total of 42 applications amounting to \$366,341.95 were denied under the Employer Reasonable Accommodation Fund (ERAF). These applications came from 28 employers, with some submitting multiple requests. The primary reasons for denial included employer ineligibility, which accounted for a significant portion of the denials, as well as missing or insufficient documentation for proof of purchase or cost. Mobility aids were the most frequently denied type of accommodation, highlighting a potential area for further applicant education regarding eligibility criteria.

ERAF staff remains committed to refining the application screening process to ensure that funding is distributed accurately and equitably. By improving review protocols and enhancing applicant guidance, ERAF aims to strike a balance between maintaining program integrity and supporting employers in their efforts to provide reasonable accommodations. These ongoing efforts underscore ERAF's dedication to ensuring that funds are utilized to maximize accessibility and inclusivity in the workplace.

Table - Ineligible Applications and Accommodations – FY24 & FY25

Number of denied applications	42
Number of denied employers (some employers submitted multiple applications)	28
Denial reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not an eligible employer: 16• Not a reasonable accommodation under the definition of state law: 7• Missing or insufficient documentation for proof of purchase or cost: 11• Other: (reasons listed below)<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Amount requested is under the \$250 minimum: 4○ Did not understand what was covered: 2○ Requested reimbursement for payroll/services they provided: 1	
Type of denied accommodations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Auditory or Communicative Aids: 8• Cognitive Aids: 5• Mobility Aids: 17• Motor Aids: 2• Visual Aids: 1• Other: 8	

Remaining Balance

As of January 13, 2025, the Employer Reasonable Accommodation Fund (ERAF) has demonstrated remarkable progress in its efforts to support workplace accessibility. ERAF has nearly matched its total reimbursements from all of FY24, with \$426,949.73 reimbursed in FY25 compared to \$435,621.13. This rapid pace of reimbursements reflects the program's growing impact and the increasing awareness among employers about the benefits of providing reasonable accommodations.

With a remaining balance of \$2,851,238.51, ERAF is well-positioned to continue meeting employer needs while maintaining financial sustainability. This success highlights the program's effectiveness in efficiently distributing funds and supporting Minnesota businesses as they foster inclusive workplaces. These accomplishments underscore ERAF's potential for continued positive outcomes in the years ahead.