



EMPLOYMENT AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Employer Reasonable Accommodation Fund (ERAF)

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ERAF Program Origin and Administration

- Two-year pilot program that reimburses eligible employers for reasonable accommodation purchases made for job applicants and/or employees with disabilities
 - Reimburses purchases made from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2025
- Promotes hiring of people with disabilities by reducing any real or perceived financial hardships of providing accommodations
- Available to Minnesota small to medium sized employers
- Appropriated \$2m per year, \$400,000 of which is budgeted for administrative costs
- Organizationally housed within State Services for the Blind but marketed as a DEED program
- Official Launch Date: September 1, 2023

Simplified Employer Eligibility Criteria

- 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.

Qualifying Reasonable Accommodations (Examples)

- Assistive technology
- Captioning services
- Ergonomic workstations or seating
- Job coaching
- Lifting aids
- Lighting and alarms
- Low vision aids and devices
- Noise-cancelling devices
- Readers
- Sign language interpreters
- Signage
- Specialized software
- Subscriptions for assistive technology
- Transcription of materials into Braille or audio formats
- Wheelchair ramp

Reimbursement Limits

- The maximum total reimbursement per eligible employer in a state fiscal year (July 1-June 30) is \$30,000. This amount encapsulates both onetime and ongoing reasonable accommodations expenses.
- Submissions for one-time reasonable accommodation expenses must be no less than \$250 and no more than \$15,000 per accommodation. If an employer submits a reimbursement request exceeding this amount for a single accommodation, ERAF will only reimburse up to the \$15,000 limit.
- Submissions for ongoing reasonable accommodation expenses have no minimum or maximum requirements. Ongoing expenses are those expenses for ongoing services, such as sign language interpreting or captioning services.

ERAF Application Process

- 1 Disclosure and Internal Processing** ||
- 2 Consultation** ||
- 3 Purchasing Accommodations** ||
- 4 ERAF Application Submission** ||

Reimbursement Process

- When completing the application, the employer MUST attach proofs of purchase.
- ERAF Program Coordinator reviews application within 5 business days of receipt.
- If application is approved, ERAF technician contacts employer to complete a substitute W-9 form; employer may be asked to register in SWIFT if they anticipate future reimbursements.
 - Our ERAF Technician will help them through the entire process
- Reimbursement is processed in SWIFT, and the reimbursement check is sent to the employer within 30 days. If employer is set up as a supplier in SWIFT, funds can be instead direct deposited.

Reimbursement Denials

- Potential reasons for denials:
 - Not an eligible employer
 - Not a qualifying reasonable accommodation under the definition of the ADA
 - Not for a job applicant or employee with a disability
 - Eligible employer has met \$30,000 fiscal year limit
 - Missing or insufficient documentation for proof of purchase or cost
- Employers are provided an appeal process.

Retroactive Reimbursement Claims

- Businesses can apply for reimbursement of accommodation expenses incurred after July 1, 2023
- Eligible for accommodations purchased regardless of whether the employee is still employed with the business or not
- Helps businesses offset the costs of any past accommodations, freeing up budget for other critical needs.

Important Contact Information

- Website:
 - Short URL www.mn.gov/deed/eraf
 - Long URL www.mn.gov/deed/business/financing-business/eraf/index.jsp
- Email: eraf.deed@state.mn.us
- Phone: 651-539-2390 (1-833-391-8050)
- Program Coordinator: Ray.McCoy@state.mn.us
- Technician: TBD
- Supervisor: Lindsey.Hanson@state.mn.us