



Regional Institution Strategic Enterprise Zone (RISE Zone)

Application Instructions Qualified Institution

Department of Commerce

401 East Pratt Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202

<http://commerce.maryland.gov>

Wes Moore, Governor

Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor

Harry Coker, Jr. Secretary

REGIONAL INSTITUTION STRATEGIC ENTERPRISE (RISE) ZONE PROGRAM

Application for Qualified Institutions

The purpose of these instructions is to provide institutions that are applying to be designated a Qualified Institution as part of the RISE Zone program with specific information about the application requirements and should not be considered a substitute for the RISE Zone statute and regulations.

RISE Zone Definitions

A Regional Institution Strategic Enterprise (RISE) Zone is a geographic area in immediate proximity to a qualified institution that is targeted for increased economic and community development, meets all requirements and is designated by the Secretary of Commerce.

- RISE Zone is not required to be in immediate geographic proximity to a Qualified Institution if:
 - An appropriate nexus for the increased economic and community development is established with the Qualified Institution, or
 - If the proposed zone is in a rural part of the State.

Qualified Institution is an entity designated by the Secretary of Commerce and includes:

- An institution of Higher Education
- A Regional Higher Education Center
- A Non-profit organization that is affiliated with a federal agency. “Non-profit Organization is an organization that is exempt or eligible for exemption from taxation under §501 (C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Intent and Purpose

The RISE Zone program's purpose is to access institutional assets that have a strong and demonstrated history of commitment to economic development and revitalization in the communities in which they are located.

A qualified institution shall:

- Evidence an intention to:
 - Make a significant financial investment or commitment in an area of the State that the applicant intends to become a RISE Zone
 - Create a significant number of new jobs within the area it intends to become a RISE Zone;
 - Use the resources and expertise of the applicant to spur economic development and community revitalization in the area the applicant intends to become a RISE Zone;
- Have a demonstrated history of community involvement and economic development within the communities the applicant serves, by providing examples of the institution's involvement in the community or communities and with economic development.
- Meet the minimum financial qualifications established by the Secretary; and
- If the applicant is a non-profit that is not an institution of higher education, the applicant shall demonstrate an affiliation with a federal agency.

Application Instructions

General Instructions

Applications should be submitted to:
Caroline Kimani, Tax Specialist
Maryland Department of Commerce
401 East Pratt Street, 17th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202

Applications must be submitted electronically to **taxincentives.commerce@maryland.gov**

Review Process

Staff Review: applications will initially be reviewed for completion and adherence to stated requirements.

Secretary Review and Approval: Within ninety (90) days after submission of a complete application, the Secretary will notify applicants of their status in writing. All decisions made by the Secretary are final.

At least thirty (30) days before approval or rejection of an application, the Secretary will notify the Legislative Policy Committee which may provide advice on the approval or rejection of an applicant as a Qualified Institution.

Application Requirements

All applications and cover sheets must be typed. The application must be complete, meet all stated requirements, and be properly signed by the institution's Chief Executive or authorized designee.

If the political subdivision in which the proposed RISE Zone is to be located supports the application, the applicant should include a letter of support from the chief executive or governing body of the political subdivision. If the intended RISE Zone is located in a county and a municipality, if both subdivisions support the intended RISE Zone, then both subdivisions should provide a letter of support.

Application Cover Sheet

A cover page should accompany the application and include the following:

- Name of Applicant Institution:
 - Address
- Name and Title of Contact Person
 - Direct Office Phone
 - Fax
 - Email Address
- Name of Chief Executive Officer of Institution
 - Address
 - Direct Office Phone
 - Fax
 - Email
- RISE Zone Location
 - City
 - County
 - Name of Proposed Zone
 - Location: (Provide both a hard copy and a digital map)
 - Approximate acreage of the proposed RISE Zone

Supporting Documentation

For non-profit applicants, provide a written description of the affiliation between the non-profit and the federal agency.

Provide a written narrative that includes the following:

- The applicant should provide evidence of its intention to:
 - Make a significant financial investment or commitment in an area of the State that the applicant intends to become a RISE Zone, including:
 - Describe the projected amount and type of financial investment or commitment the qualified institution intends to make in the area intended to become a RISE Zone.
 - Explain why the financial investment or commitment is significant to the area.
 - Explain where the financial investment or commitment will be made and for what purpose.
 - Use its resources and expertise to spur economic development and community revitalization in the area the applicant intends to become a RISE Zone, including:
 - List the resources and expertise the applicant has in economic development and community revitalization.
 - Explain how the applicant plans to apply its resources and expertise in the area it intends to become a RISE Zone.
 - Create a significant number of new jobs within the area it intends to become a RISE Zone, including:
 - Explain how the designation of the intended RISE Zone will create new jobs.
 - Discuss how many jobs and the types of jobs that will be created as a result of the designation of the RISE Zone.
 - Describe the geographic region and the business sectors located within that region.

- The applicant should demonstrate a history of community involvement and economic development within the communities that the applicant serves, by providing examples of the institution's involvement in the community or communities and with economic development. This should include the following:
 - Description of the community or communities in which the applicant is involved.
 - The applicant's involvement in the community including the time committed and financial resources committed by the applicant and the outcomes of that involvement, including any job creation.
 - The community programs or community outreach undertaken by the institution.
- The applicant should provide the following information necessary for the Department to determine if the applicant has the financial qualifications to accomplish its commitments as set forth in its application:
 - Demonstrate that the applicant has sufficient financial resources to make a significant financial investment or commitment in the proposed Rise Zone.
 - Provide copies of the applicant's balance sheet and any financial plans or proposed budgets.
 - If the applicant plans to rely in whole or in part on fund raising, provide evidence of previous fund raising ability.
- The applicant shall provide any other information requested by the Secretary.