

Request for Technical Assistance Proposals: Advancing State Food Waste Policy Pilot

Introduction and Purpose

The Zero Food Waste Coalition works to end food waste in the United States through policy advocacy, capacity-building, and community engagement. Our coalition brings together nonprofits, government agencies, advocates, and industry leaders building a future where food is valued and waste is eliminated.

The Zero Food Waste Coalition is piloting a new program to assist food waste champions in advancing state policy. The Steering Committee is seeking proposals from organizations, businesses, government agencies, or a coalition or group of such entities, interested in advancing impactful food waste policy at the state level. Selected applicants will receive tailored, pro bono technical assistance (TA) from Steering Committee members and the Zero Food Waste Coalition network to catalyze food loss and waste policy change in line with the Wasted Food Scale.

Why This Matters

Every year, nearly 40% of food produced in the U.S. is wasted, creating significant economic, environmental, and social costs. Food waste is the number one product filling landfills today, straining municipal resources. It also drives climate change and undermines efforts to address food security. Robust, well-crafted policies can accelerate reductions in food waste and generate wide-reaching community benefit. For example, Massachusetts' [food waste diversion requirements](#) have generated jobs, increased the amount of food waste diverted from landfills and incinerators, and spurred growth in the food recovery and rescue sectors. Our goal with this offer of technical assistance is to advance nonpartisan, scalable food waste policy at the state level, leveraging our [State Policy Toolkit](#) and policy expertise.

Technical Assistance Offered

The Zero Food Waste Coalition will provide up to one year of tailored, in-depth technical assistance (TA) to chosen partner(s) for the coming year. A TA partner can be a community organization, business, coalition, or local, state, or tribal government agency ready to advance food waste legislation or regulations. Our TA will support capacity building, research, policy drafting, coalition building, communications, and implementation planning. Services may include:

- Strategic planning and facilitation for coalition-building and stakeholder engagement
- Legal and policy research specific to the relevant food loss and waste policy
- Drafting and reviewing legislative or regulatory language and model policies
- Training and capacity building workshops for partners and advocates
- Development of educational and advocacy materials for diverse audiences
- Guidance on messaging, communications, and public campaigns
- Support navigating political or structural barriers to policy passage and implementation
- Support for implementation planning including data collection and outreach campaigns

We welcome proposals from applicants who are seeking support to launch, strengthen, or implement policies in any stage—whether you are exploring feasibility, building support, drafting language, or developing strategies for implementation after passage.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants include:

- Community-based organizations, nonprofits, or coalitions
- Businesses
- Local, state, or tribal government agencies
- Academic institutions or public authority entities working with the above
- Groups of two or more eligible applicants that share a strong commitment to a food waste policy goal

Applications are particularly encouraged from organizations working in regions with significant food waste challenges, where statewide or local food waste policy interventions are limited, or where new leadership or coalitions seek to drive change.

Expectations of Selected TA Partners

The TA partner(s) will lead the state policy effort while Zero Food Waste Coalition staff and experts provide tailored support. The TA partner(s) should have demonstrated experience or commitment to inclusive, community-centered policy development. If the applicant consists of two or more partners, the group will designate a lead TA partner to oversee the project. The lead TA partner will designate a primary point of contact, participate in regular check-ins, collaborate on a tailored work plan, and connect coalition staff to local stakeholders and key audiences.

Anticipated Timeline

- **Applications due:** September 30, 2025
- **Selection and notification:** October 2025
- **TA engagement begins:** November 2025 (or by mutual agreement)
- **TA engagement concludes:** approximately one year from start date

Application Instructions

Please submit your answers to the questions below to [this Google Form](#). We have included sentence or word limits for each response below and encourage applicants to be brief in their responses. We will follow up with applicants for more information if needed.

A. Applicant Information and Desired TA

- Organization or agency name
- Organization city and state
- Project Title
- Type of entity (nonprofit, business, government, coalition, etc.). If you are a coalition of organizations, please specify the lead TA partner that will oversee the project.
- Primary contact name, title, phone, and email
- Desired TA services. Refer to the description of TA offered above.
- Desired TA timeline, starting no later than February 15, 2026.
- Project timeline (bulleted answers welcome)
 - If you are planning to run a bill, describe whether you plan to run a bill in the 2026 legislative cycle or whether you plan to use 2026 to prepare for the 2027 legislative cycle. If you are planning on working with an agency on an administrative policy, describe the expected timeline for passing this policy through relevant processes.
- Brief description of your mission, goals, focus, and population/geography served (200 words)

B. Current Engagement, Expertise, and Partnerships

- Provide a brief overview of work to date on food waste or related policy issues and a brief description of the expertise each applicant organization will bring to this project (e.g., lobbying and grassroots campaigning expertise). (300 words or less)
 - If your project goal is to pass a piece of legislation, please describe your previous experience moving legislation in your state. If your project goal is to pass an administrative policy, please describe your previous experience working with agency partners to implement administrative policies in your state and in the relevant department.
- Describe your partnerships and stakeholder engagement in the food waste policy space in your state, including government agency partnerships, legislative relationships, nonprofit partners, industry engagement, and other relevant stakeholder relationships. (200 words or less)

C. Policy Priorities and Challenges

- Describe the specific food waste policy(ies) you seek to develop or implement. We are accepting applications for any policies in line with the Wasted Food Scale, though we will prioritize transformational waste management policies. These policies include organic waste diversion requirements, food donation requirements, and other policies that promote prevention, donation, and diversion (e.g., increased tipping fees, pay as you throw policies, etc.). (150 words or less)
- Briefly describe any anticipated challenges to the policy's passage including third-party pushback and logistical hurdles. (150 words or less)

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated according to the following factors, in order of importance:

- **Policy Strength and Feasibility.** We will prioritize projects that seek to pass strong, transformational food waste policies that promote prevention, donation, and diversion and have a high potential for impact. We will also prioritize projects that have a greater chance of passing.
- **Project and Applicant Readiness.** We will prioritize projects where the applicant and partners are well positioned to move the chosen policy, meaning the project has lobbying and campaigning capacity, the applicant is well-connected to local stakeholders, and the applicant has experience with passing policy in their state. If the project seeks to pass/implement a policy in 2026, we will prioritize projects where a legislative or administrative champion is already secured.
- **ZFWC Role.** We will prioritize projects where the ZFWC has an additive role in line with the TA offerings outlined above.
- **Geographic Diversity.** We will prioritize projects located in states with limited existing food waste policies and a high potential to influence food waste policy action in other states.

We will prioritize applicants that are current or pending ([member application](#) submitted) Zero Food Waste Coalition members. However, we recognize coalition membership may be difficult for governmental entities, and we still encourage such applicants to apply.

Questions? Contact zfwcoalition@gmail.com.