

# **Certified Economic Development Organization**



ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
**NEW MEXICO**

## **POLICY MANUAL Fiscal Year 2027**

**(July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027)**

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## **Introduction**

Economic Development New Mexico (ED NM) recognizes its partner Economic Development Organizations (EDOs) that provide a high level of professional service to their communities. Through the Certified Economic Development Organization (CEDO) Program, ED NM supports local EDOs in building organizational capacity so they can effectively deliver economic development services.

The program incentivizes strong, well-rounded, and well-prepared organizations at the community level.

## **Program Objectives**

Funding provided through the Certified EDO Program is intended to build capacity and create wealth in New Mexico. Communities that are prepared to execute economic development projects strengthen the tax base through business retention and expansion, capital investment, and job creation. Local EDOs are essential to this work.

The Certified EDO Program aims to:

- Recognize excellence in local economic development organizations.
- Increase visibility of economic development efforts in New Mexico.
- Strengthening organizational capacity for economic development.
- Support professional development for economic developers.
- Facilitate business recruitment, retention, expansion, and creation.
- Promote a stable and diversified economy that improves quality of life for New Mexicans.

## **Benefits of Recognition**

Recognition as a Certified EDO provides feedback on organizational operations, structure, and procedures, helping EDOs improve programs and enhance community support. Certification serves as independent acknowledgment of professional standards.

## **Recognition Period**

The Certified EDO designation is valid for one year. An abbreviated annual recertification may be completed for up to nine years following initial certification, depending on funding availability.

## **Eligibility**

Non-profit, public-private partnership organizations in New Mexico with a primary purpose of developing the local economic base may apply. Applicants must have:

- A current strategic plan
  - A marketing plan
  - A business retention/expansion program
  - A Potential Recruitment Opportunity (PRO) response process
  - A website featuring:
    - A community profile
    - Available real estate listings
    - State and local incentive information
  - At least one paid full-time economic development staff member
  - Publicly accessible permanent office space
  - A training plan for employees, board members, and volunteers
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## **Program Administration**

The EDO Certification Program is managed by ED NM's Community, Business & Rural Development (CB&RD or Regional Representative) team. Regional Representatives will assist EDOs with eligibility determination and grant application support.

Applications are submitted online. Regional Representatives can be found at:

<https://www.edd.newmexico.gov/programs-and-services/community-development>

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## **Application Process**

EDOs interested in certification will schedule an eligibility review with their CB&RD Representative. After reviewing eligibility criteria, the Representative will issue an invitation to apply.

Organizations not initially eligible will receive assistance to meet eligibility requirements.

The application includes two equally weighted components:

1. Documentation Review
2. Site Visit

Applications are submitted electronically through ED NM's online portal. Instructions and guidelines are provided within the portal, and technical support is available.

**Application Window:**

- Opens: July 6, 2026
- Deadline: 5:00 PM, July 31, 2026

**Required Documentation**

Applicants must submit:

- Mission and goals statement
- Most recent annual report
- Strategic plan
- Marketing plan
- Business retention program
- Recruitment response program
- Summary of 3–5 successful projects from the past two years
- Articles of incorporation and bylaws
- Proof of non-profit status
- Organizational chart and employee job descriptions
- Board of Directors roster and role descriptions
- Minutes from the last four board meetings
- Current and previous annual budgets
- Most recent audited financial statement or equivalent
- Executive staff résumés
- Membership list and criteria

Additional materials:

- Samples of current marketing materials
- Newsletters from the past year
- Press releases issued within the past year

### **Documentation Review Criteria**

Reviewers will evaluate whether the organization:

- Has adequate professional leadership and staffing
  - Maintains sufficient budget and resources
  - Advances economic development goals in attraction, retention, expansion, and start-up activities
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### **Site Visit**

A site visit will be scheduled after acceptance of the application. The visit is conducted by at least three ED NM staff members, including the CB&RD Team Leader.

The visit assesses how effectively the EDO implements strategies and engages with the community.

### **Stakeholder Interviews**

Organizations must arrange interviews with at least five community stakeholders, which may include:

- Recently assisted businesses
- Development allies
- Industrial/commercial real estate professionals
- Financial institutions
- Local elected officials
- Local government administrators
- Utility representatives

### **Key Review Areas**

- Business Environment: Professional appearance, access, equipment, security

- Staffing: Experience/credentials, responsibilities, development, turnover, continued professional development
- Leadership: Volunteers, orientation, meetings, structure, commitment to strategic plan
- Direction and Vision: Goal setting, budgeting, commitment to strategic plan
- Community: Relationships, Partnerships, Participation within community
- Financial Resources: Budgeting resources and budgeting

### **Critical Issues for Site Visit**

ED NM will take the following into consideration when conducting the site visit:

- Does the organization possess and properly utilize resources?
- Does the organization have community/business support with active commitment and participation appropriate to its mission?
- Does the organization work toward and achieve economic development goals of attraction, retention, expansion, and start-up of economic base activity?

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### **Funding and Recognition**

Applicants will be notified of award decisions by Regional Representatives.

Organizations not earning certification will receive guidance to improve and reapply.

Certified EDOs will be recognized at the annual Governor's Conference on Economic Development in September.

Certified EDOs may receive up to \$40,000 annually (based on availability). Funds may be used for:

- Marketing events such as trade shows or sales missions
  - Booth rental, travel expenses
- Additional staffing beyond one full-time position
- Advertising expenses (ad placement/time only)

EDOs achieving IEDC Certification may receive a one-time award of up to \$25,000.

## **NEW Certified EDO Logo**

Beginning in FY27, ED NM introduced an official Certified EDO logo. Certified organizations may use this logo on printed materials, websites, marketing collateral, presentations, and other public-facing documents. The logo represents that the organization has met ED NM professional standards for certification and maintains active status.

### **Logo Usage Guidelines**

- The logo may be displayed only during the organization's active certification period.
- The logo must not be altered, stretched, recolored, or modified in any way.
- Organizations are encouraged to incorporate the logo into outreach and promotional materials to highlight their status.
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### **Grant Agreement**

- ED NM prepares the grant agreement and sends it electronically.
- Electronic signatures are accepted.
- Funding is provided upon invoice submission.
- The agreement is effective as of the date signed by ED NM's Cabinet Secretary.
- Fully executed copy of the Agreement will be delivered to the applicant electronically

Note: The EDO Certification grant funding is provided upon receipt of invoice and is not a reimbursement.

### **Grant Award**

Grantees may request payment by submitting an invoice after fully executed agreement but before June 30, 2027.

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### **Recertification**

EDOs with no major organizational changes may request abbreviated recertification.

Recertification requires participation in at least **five** professional development events, including:

- IEDC events or conferences
- NMIDEA events or conferences
- ED NM webinars
- OU EDI courses
- Other state or national economic development programs

Recertification may continue for up to nine additional years if:

- No changes to organizational structure
  - No staffing reductions
  - Website remains current
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### **Success Stories & Reporting**

Certified EDOs must submit annual success stories and documentation, including:

- Eligible expenses for the grant period
- Professional development activities attended
- Number of PRO responses
- Number of prospect site visits
- BRE visits

- Business expansions or locations
- Incentives received by companies
- Jobs created
- Leads generated through marketing
- Trade shows/sales missions and resulting leads
- Additional notable achievements

**Recertification window:** July 6 –31, 2026. Regional Representatives will contact awardees directly with instructions.

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### **Key Dates**

- **July 6, 2026:** Online applications open
- **July 31, 2026:** Online applications due
- **Week of August 17, 2026:** Site visit period begins
- **September 1, 2026:** Award notifications issued