



## Ohio Revised Code

### Section 5501.91 Ohio maritime assistance program.

Effective: September 30, 2025

Legislation: House Bill 96

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(A) As used in this section, "port authority" means a port authority created under Chapter 4582. of the Revised Code.

(B) There is hereby established the Ohio maritime assistance program, which the department of transportation shall administer. Under the program, a port authority may apply to the department for a grant to be used as prescribed in division (D) of this section. In order to be eligible for a grant under this section, a port authority is required to meet either of the following requirements:

(1) At the time of application for a grant, the port authority owns or is the co-applicant with the owner of an active marine cargo terminal located on one of the following:

(a) The shore of Lake Erie or the Ohio river;

(b) On a Lake Erie tributary;

(c) On an Ohio river tributary.

(2) At the time of application for a grant, the port authority is located in, or has jurisdiction within, a federally qualified opportunity zone and the federally qualified opportunity zone has an active marine cargo terminal with a stevedoring operation that is located on the shore of Lake Erie or the Ohio river.

(C)(1) Every applicant for a grant shall submit with its application a written business justification for the investment that indicates the operational and market need for the project in a form the director of transportation shall prescribe.

(2) The department shall evaluate all grant applications according to the following criteria:



(a) The degree to which the proposed project will increase the efficiency or capacity of maritime cargo terminal operations;

(b) Whether the project will result in the handling of new types of cargo or an increase in cargo volume;

(c) Whether the project will meet an identified supply chain need or benefit Ohio firms that export goods to foreign markets, or import goods to Ohio for use in manufacturing or for value-added distribution;

(d) Any other criteria the director determines to be appropriate.

(3) If a grant application does not meet the criteria specified in divisions (C)(2)(b) and (c) of this section, an applicant is not eligible for a grant under this section.

(D) A port authority shall use a grant awarded under this section only for any of the following purposes:

(1) Land acquisition and site development for marine cargo terminal and associated uses, including demolition and environmental remediation;

(2) Construction of wharves, quay walls, bulkheads, jetties, revetments, breakwaters, shipping channels, dredge disposal facilities, projects for the beneficial use of dredge material, and other structures and improvements directly related to maritime commerce and harbor infrastructure;

(3) Construction and repair of warehouses, transit sheds, railroad tracks, roadways, gates and gatehouses, fencing, bridges, offices, shipyards, and other improvements needed for marine cargo terminal and associated uses, including shipyards;

(4) Acquisition of cargo handling equipment, including mobile shore cranes, stationary cranes, tow motors, fork lifts, yard tractors, craneways, conveyor and bulk material handling equipment, and all types of ship loading and unloading equipment;



(5) Planning and design services and other services associated with construction.

(E) A port authority shall pay a matching amount of at least one dollar for each grant dollar received for the proposed project.

(F) The director of transportation shall govern the program established under this section, including the grant application, evaluation, award processes, and how the grant money may be spent by a port authority.