

CHAPTER 72  
INTERNATIONAL TRADE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

[Prior to 11/15/89, see 261—Ch 56]

[Prior to 7/19/95, see 261—Ch 61]

[Prior to 9/6/00, see 261—Ch 68]

[Prior to 7/4/07, see 261—Ch 132]

Chapter rescission date pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.7: 12/3/30

**261—72.1(15) Definitions.** For purposes of this chapter unless the context otherwise requires:

“*Authority*” means the economic development authority established in Iowa Code section 15.105.

“*Domestic trade assistance*” means financial assistance for participation in a trade show in the United States with documented significant international attendance.

“*Eligible applicant*” means an exporter meeting the requirements of rule 261—72.2(15).

“*Exporter*” means a business that sells a manufactured project, a value-added product, an agricultural product, or a service outside of the United States.

“*Export trade assistance*” means financial assistance provided for participation in a trade show or trade mission outside the United States.

“*Marketing services*” means third-party services, identified as eligible expenses in subrule 72.3(3), that support international trade.

“*Market trade assistance*” means financial assistance provided for marketing services.

“*Program*” means domestic trade assistance, export trade assistance, and market trade assistance provided pursuant to this chapter.

“*Sales representative*” means a contracted representative of an exporter with authority to consummate a sales transaction.

“*Trade mission*” means a mission event led by the authority or designated representative that includes advanced operational and logistical planning, scheduled individualized appointments with prequalified prospects interested in exporters’ products or services, and background information on such prospects.

“*Trade show*” means an event attended by an employee or sales representative of an exporter for the purposes of exhibiting the exporter’s products or services to increase international sales opportunities.

[ARC 9653C, IAB 10/29/25, effective 12/3/25]

**261—72.2(15) Eligible applicants.**

**72.2(1)** Financial assistance in the form of grants is available to exporters that meet all of the following criteria:

*a.* The exporter employs fewer than 500 individuals, 75 percent or more of whom are employed within the state of Iowa,

*b.* The exporter is new to exporting, targeting a new international market, or promoting a new product,

*c.* The exporter does not have a history of noncompliance with agreements with the authority, and

*d.* The exporter does not have a record of violations of the law that over a period of time tends to show a consistent pattern or that establishes intentional, criminal, or reckless conduct in violation of such laws.

**72.2(2)** To be eligible for domestic trade assistance or export trade assistance, exporters must meet the following additional criteria:

*a.* The exporter has at least one full-time employee or sales representative who will participate in a trade show or trade mission, and

*b.* The exporter provides proof of deposit or an executed payment agreement for a trade show or payment of a trade mission participation fee.

**72.2(3)** To be eligible for market trade assistance, an exporter must document intent to procure marketing services.

[ARC 9653C, IAB 10/29/25, effective 12/3/25]

**261—72.3(15) Eligible and ineligible expenses.** Only eligible expenses identified in this rule will be reimbursed with financial assistance provided through the program.

**72.3(1) Trade shows.** The following trade show expenses are eligible for domestic trade assistance and export trade assistance:

- a. Space rental.
- b. Booth construction at show site.
- c. Booth equipment or furniture rental.
- d. Shipping costs associated with shipment of equipment or exhibit materials.
- e. Booth utility costs.
- f. Interpreter fees during the trade show.

**72.3(2) Trade missions.** The following trade mission expenses are eligible for domestic trade assistance and export trade assistance:

- a. Mission participation fee.
- b. Shipping costs associated with shipment of equipment or exhibit materials.
- c. Interpreter fees, if not included in the participation fee, and as needed during the trade mission.

**72.3(3) Marketing services.** The following expenses are eligible for market trade assistance:

a. Design, translation, and localization of brochures or other product information.

b. Design, translation, and localization of international advertisement for a specific country/region.

c. Required compliance testing of an existing product for entry into an export market.

d. Website design and translation, search engine optimization, and localization for a specific international market or markets.

e. Oversight, maintenance, or monitoring fee for search engine optimization (limited to the funding period during which financial assistance is provided).

- f. Development of an e-commerce platform to accept international payments.
- g. International attorney fees for distributor contracts.
- h. Costs for preparing an export readiness report, conducted by a contractor selected by the authority.

**72.3(4) Ineligible expenses.** The following expenses are not eligible for reimbursement through the program:

- a. Travel expenses, including airfare.
- b. Printing.
- c. Purchased equipment.
- d. Memberships or sponsorships.
- e. Costs associated with attendance at conferences or virtual events.
- f. Tabletop displays.
- g. Materials or exhibits that are not intended to increase international sales.

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**261—72.4(15) Application and approval.**

**72.4(1)** An eligible applicant shall submit an application in the form and content required by the authority. Information on submitting an application is available on the authority's website. For domestic trade assistance and export trade assistance, an eligible applicant must apply prior to trade mission participation or trade show participation. For market trade assistance, an eligible applicant must apply prior to work beginning for marketing services.

**72.4(2)** Complete applications will be reviewed in the order received by the authority. Eligible applicants will be funded on a first-come, first-served basis to the extent funds are available. The authority may deny applications that exceed available funds or may defer approval of an application until additional funds become available.

**72.4(3)** The authority will not approve financial assistance for an eligible applicant under the following circumstances:

- a. More than three times total in the same fiscal year for domestic trade assistance or export trade assistance.
- b. More than once in the same fiscal year for market trade assistance.
- c. More than once for the same marketing services.

*d.* For participation in the same trade show more than two times after January 1, 2023.  
[ARC 9653C, IAB 10/29/25, effective 12/3/25]

**261—72.5(15) Administration.**

**72.5(1)** Eligible applicants approved for financial assistance must enter into a contract with the authority prior to participating in a trade show or trade mission or prior to incurring expenses for marketing services.

**72.5(2)** Payments will be made by the authority on a reimbursement basis. An exporter shall submit documentation acceptable to the authority of paid expenses. A complete report of activities the financial assistance supported shall be submitted before final reimbursement. Reimbursement shall not exceed 75 percent of eligible expenses. Total reimbursement shall not exceed \$8,000 per event or marketing services project.

**72.5(3)** An eligible applicant that receives financial assistance shall submit any information reasonably requested by the authority in sufficient detail to verify compliance with the agreement entered pursuant to subrule 72.5(1) or to permit the authority to prepare any reports required by the authority, the general assembly, or the governor's office.

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These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 15.108(2) and 15.108(4).

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