



Development
Services Agency



Department of Administrative Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Oct. 9, 2015

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State invites small and minority-owned businesses to *Business Expo*

Oct. 27 at Ohio History Center

COLUMBUS – To support the effort to expand access to state contracts for small and minority-owned businesses, the State of Ohio is hosting *MBE/EDGE Business Expo*, an outreach event, on Tuesday, Oct. 27 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. This free networking event will be held at the Ohio History Center, located at 800 E. 17th Ave., Columbus, 43211.

“State procurement professionals are interested in meeting Ohio minority-business owners one-on-one to discuss how we can work together to provide the goods and services the state requires,” said Robert Blair, director of the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS), which is sponsoring this event in partnership with the Ohio Development Services Agency.

Gregory L. Williams, deputy director of the DAS Equal Opportunity Division, said, “This outreach event will connect business owners with state agency purchasing professionals seeking to continue to increase the business the state conducts with companies certified through our Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Encouraging Diversity, Growth and Equity (EDGE) programs. Agency representatives will be present to discuss upcoming contracting opportunities, including timelines and points of contact.”

During Fiscal Year 2015, the State of Ohio reached the goals of its MBE program for the first time in history by purchasing a record 19 percent of eligible goods and services through minority-owned businesses while spending a record \$228.5 million. Ohio’s MBE program, established in 1980, mandates that state agencies set aside 15 percent of their annual purchases for goods and services for certified minority-owned businesses.

The EDGE program helps facilitate access to state government contracts and business services for socially and economically disadvantaged businesses.

“The State of Ohio has spent more money with certified minority-owned businesses than ever before,” said Jeffrey Johnson, chief of the Minority Business Development Division at the Ohio Development Services Agency. “We will continue to make progress as we encourage even more minority-owned businesses to get MBE-certified to increase the amount of minority businesses doing work with the state.”

In addition to networking opportunities and “matchmaking” appointments with purchasing officials, free workshops will be held on a variety of topics, including:

- Available Financing Programs;
- Essentials of True Business Development: Zero plus Zero Equals Zero;
- How Did We Do It? Lessons Learned – Panel Discussion;
- How to Form a Successful Joint Venture;
- How to Register to Do Business with the State of Ohio and Receive Bid Notifications;
- How to Use MBE Spending Plans; and
- How to Respond to a State Bid Request.

An on-site computer lab will be available for attendees wishing to begin completing applications for MBE and/or EDGE certification, recertification and cross certification. Participants will be able to begin completing the required forms for eSupplier registration with Ohio Shared Services to do business with the State of Ohio and receive bid notifications. Staff also will be available to provide assistance with navigating the website of the Ohio Department of Administrative Services’ Office of Procurement Services.

The state is seeking MBE-certified businesses to provide products and services in the following categories: Agricultural equipment and supplies, ammunition, building maintenance supplies, cold storage and delivery, court reporters, educational equipment, electronic security equipment, equipment leasing, fire/security systems, funeral services, hearing officers, heavy equipment, inmate patient supplies, laboratory chemicals and supplies, laboratory testing, landscaping, medical professional services, medical specimen courier, medical supplies, medical transcription services, new vehicles, pest control, physicians, printing, police and fire safety supplies, program analysis and evaluation, property management, psychiatrists, psychologists, refuse pickup and disposal, security guards, small engine repair services, vehicle parts and accessories, vehicle repairs and service, timber harvesting, watercraft equipment and supplies, and window washing.

Admission and parking are free.

Online registration for the expo by Oct. 22 is encouraged, but walk-ins are welcome. To register or learn more about this event or the state’s MBE and EDGE programs, visit the Ohio Department of Administrative Services website at das.ohio.gov/eod or call 614-466-8380. For information about the Minority Business Assistance Centers operated by the Ohio Development Services Agency, visit minority.ohio.gov or call 614-466-5700.