

MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM (MBE)

WHAT IS MBE?

The State of Ohio Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) program is designed to assist minority-owned businesses to obtain state government contracts through a set-aside procurement program for goods and services.

The State of Ohio developed the MBE program because of its commitment to making all state contracts, services, benefits and opportunities available without discriminating on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age or ancestry.

The state recognizes the need to encourage, nurture and support the growth of minority businesses to foster their development and increase the number of qualified competitors in the marketplace.

The MBE program establishes a 15 percent set-aside for state agencies, boards and commissions in awarding contracts to certified MBE businesses. The MBE program applies only to the procurement of goods and services.

The MBE program is for an individual, partnership, corporation or joint venture of any kind that is owned and controlled by U.S. citizens and residents of Ohio who are Black, American Indian, Hispanic or Asian.

5 STEPS TO MBE CERTIFICATION

1. Complete an online application at: mbe.ohio.gov.
2. Provide supporting documentation based on your business structure, including tax records, proof of race for all minorities, articles of incorporation, corporate by-laws, stock certificates, partnership agreements, resumes, etc.
3. Only complete applications will be reviewed; inquiries will be returned.
4. Applications are subject to on-site review by state compliance officers.
5. Upon application approval, the company receives an MBE certification notification via email.

Applications take an average of 19 days to process. A new "fast track" system reduces priority applications to five days.

For help with certification, including access to the "fast track" process, applicants are encouraged to visit a regional Minority Business Assistance Center operated by the Ohio Development Services Agency.

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

To be certified as an MBE:

- The business must be at least 51 percent owned and controlled by an individual(s) belonging to at least one of the following groups: Blacks, American Indians, Hispanics or Asians;
- The business must be a for-profit business entity;
- The business must have been in operation at least one year prior to applying for certification. This requirement does not apply to joint venture applicants;
- The minority individual(s) must possess requisite knowledge of the business and industry;
- The minority individual(s) must have day-to-day control over the business and must exercise final authority over all aspects of the daily operation of the business including operations, financials, business management, policy decisions and human resources;
- The business must have demonstrated capability and/or expertise within the identified classifications for a period of one year prior to certification;
- The minority individual(s) must have possession of all licenses, permits and authorities required by law to perform the scope of work within the classifications requested.

AFTER CERTIFICATION:

In addition to the requirements for MBE certification, any MBE-certified business bidding on a contract awarded by any state agency other than the Ohio Department of Administrative Services must meet any pre-qualification requirements.



Ohio Department of Administrative Services
Equal Opportunity Division
Minority Business Enterprise Program

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