



# CITY OF HOUSTON

OFFICE  
of  
BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

EDUCATE. CONNECT. GROW.

## Minority, Women, Small, and Persons with Disabilities and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises Certification Program

### Pre-Certification Workshop

The Office of Business Opportunity invites you to attend our Pre-Certification workshops to obtain more information on applying for MWSBE/PDBE and DBE certification. The workshop is conducted virtually every first and third Tuesday and in-person every third Tuesday at 611 Walker St., 7<sup>th</sup> Floor Houston, TX 77002 at 2:00 p.m. These workshops are free of charge and REQUIRE registration prior to attendance. Please note: No workshops will be held on holidays or City closure days. For workshop registration, more information, and the application, please visit <http://houstontx.gov/obo/registrations.html>.

### Advantages of Certification

Businesses certified with the City of Houston are provided with programs to educate business owners, connect business owners with the network of certified business owners, and tools to help business owners grow their business. The following is a list of advantages:

- Listing in the City's Online Directory of Certified Vendors, which is accessible on the City's website at [WWW.HOUSTONTX.GOV](http://WWW.HOUSTONTX.GOV) (click Business, then MWSBE/PDBE and DBE Directory)
- Access to workshops, seminars, and newsletter
- Bidding opportunities on City contracts
- Certification is free and valid for a period of three years
- Annual updates are required for ACDBE/DBE certifications
- Three-year updates are required for MWSBE/PDBE certifications
- Our Certification is also accepted by:
  - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
  - Port of Houston Authority
  - METRO
  - Houston Independent School District
  - Houston Community College System
  - Houston Housing Authority
  - Kellogg Brown and Root
  - Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts
  - Harris County

### Certification Requirements

The following is a list of requirements for certification:

- Must be at least 51% owned, managed and controlled by a minority, female, or person with disability.
- Firm must be for profit, independent, and currently functioning.
- Firm must be registered as a Vendor/Supplier with the City of Houston Strategic Procurement Division.
- Maintain a significant presence in Harris, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Liberty, Montgomery, Waller, Austin, or San Jacinto County.
- Meet the Small Business Administration Size Standard(s) for its industry classification(s).
- Owners must have the training/expertise to perform the work, and where required, has a license or certificate issued in his or her name.
- Persons with Disabilities Business Enterprise (PDBE) certification require applicants to submit a Disability Affidavit and an accompanying letter from a State of Texas certified medical doctor. Disabled veterans must provide a disability rating letter from the Department of Veterans Affairs or a disability determination from the Department of Defense demonstrating a service-connected disability.
- For Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) certification, applicant must have a Personal Net Worth of less than \$1,320,000 – excluding value of home and ownership interest in the business. There is no local presence requirement.

### Certification Process

Program participation requires certification. The process includes the following steps from when we receive a complete application packet:

- Pre-Certification Workshop
  - Preliminary Screening of Application
  - Desk Audit
  - Financial Audit
  - Field Audit ♦
  - Committee Review
- ♦ Not required for Small Business Enterprise Certification, only when applicable

**All certification applications are submitted online only**

611 Walker, 7th Floor, Houston, TX 77002 T. 832.393.0600 F. 832.393.0646

Complete your certification application online! Visit [www.houstontx.gov/obo](http://www.houstontx.gov/obo) for details.

07/12/2022



## Ins and Outs of City Contracting

Soliciting business from the City or prime contractors can be a rewarding experience: Understanding the procurement process, marketing your business, and conducting research are key components to success. The following are some suggestions that can help you secure City contracts.

### I. GET A VENDOR NUMBER

All suppliers and contractors interested in bidding on products and services procured by the City of Houston, Strategic Procurement Division, must complete and submit a [Supplier Registration Form](#) to receive a vendor number.

- The Supplier Registration Form can be submitted online through the City's Strategic Procurement Division website at <https://purchasing.houstontx.gov/>, under the Supplier Registration Information section.

### II. LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES

The Strategic Procurement Division's Notice to Bidders is available from the following resources:

- Each Friday, bid advertisements appear in the "Notice to Bidder" section of the [Houston Business Journal](#). Some bid advertisements may be found in the Sunday edition of the [Houston Chronicle](#).
- Bid advertisements appear weekly on the Municipal Access Channel. (TCI and Warner Cable TV).
- [Bids and Requests for Proposals](#) are available online at <https://purchasing.houstontx.gov/>, under the Formal Bids & RFP's section.

For more information about Bids or RFPs, attend Pre-Bid and Pre-Proposal Conferences to meet potential prime contractors:

- Schedule of Pre-Bid and Pre-Proposal Conferences can be found on the City's Strategic Procurement Division's website at <https://purchasing.houstontx.gov/>.
- Contact successful low bidders to show how you can help them meet the MWSBE/PDBE and DBE goals.

For Professional Service Providers:

- Find the City departments that utilize your service. Call the Office of Business Opportunity Department at (832) 393-0600 for further assistance.
- Architects and Engineers (A&E) should obtain Form PWE-100 for inclusion in the City's A&E database. This document can be found online at <http://documents.publicworks.houstontx.gov/documents/a-equals/pwe100in.pdf>.
- Contact the City department to let them know what you do and request to be included on the Request for Proposal (RFP) list.

Please visit the Office of Business Opportunity (OBO) website <http://www.houstontx.gov/obo/>, for additional information about MWSBE/PDBE and DBE participation in the City's procurement process.

### III. SUBMIT A BID OR PROPOSAL

Before submitting a bid or proposal, make sure all specifications are met.

- Read everything and make certain that your goods or services meet City specifications.
- Submit your bid on time. (No exceptions for late responses).
- If you are unsuccessful, keep trying. Go to the City Secretary's Office (City Hall Annex, Public Level, 900 Bagby) to review the successful bidder's submission to be better prepared next time.

### IV. HIRE HOUSTON FIRST

Eligible businesses interested in participating in the *Hire Houston First* program must complete the application. For more information, visit <http://houstontx.gov/obo/hirehoustonfirst.html> or send an email to [HireHoustonFirst@houstontx.gov](mailto:HireHoustonFirst@houstontx.gov).

- Applications are received online only at <https://houston.mwdbe.com/> For assistance call 832-393-0600 Option 1.