

Expanding Opportunity for Small Businesses in Transportation

Federal Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program & OMWBE Certification

The Federal Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program helps small businesses compete for and participate in federally funded transportation contracts administered by the Washington State Department of Transportation.

Certification for SBEs is administered by the Washington State Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE), which verifies that businesses meet federal eligibility requirements.

Together, these programs increase access to contracting opportunities for small firms on highway, bridge, transit, and infrastructure projects.

What is the Federal SBE Program?

The Federal Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program was established under U.S. Department of Transportation regulations to:

- ▶ Increase participation of small businesses in federally funded transportation projects
- ▶ Ensure fair competition and equal access to contracting opportunities
- ▶ Remove barriers that historically limit small firm participation

The program operates alongside the federal U.S. Department of Transportation Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program, which focuses specifically on businesses owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.

SBEs may include businesses that do not qualify as DBEs but still meet federal small business size standards.

Who Qualifies as a Small Business Enterprise?

To qualify for Federal SBE certification, a business must:

- ▶ Be a for-profit small business
- ▶ Be independently owned and operated
- ▶ Meet the U.S. Small Business Administration size standards for its industry
- ▶ Have average annual gross receipts below federal DBE/SBE thresholds
- ▶ Perform a commercially useful function in contracts

SBE certification can apply to companies working in areas such as:

- ▶ Construction
- ▶ Engineering and design
- ▶ Environmental services
- ▶ Trucking and materials supply
- ▶ Professional services
- ▶ Specialty construction trades

Why Become Certified?

Certification helps small businesses:

- ▶ Be listed in the state's certified business directory used by prime contractors
- ▶ Increase visibility to agencies and major contractors
- ▶ Access training, outreach, and technical assistance programs

Many prime contractors actively seek certified firms to help meet participation goals on transportation projects.

How to Apply

Businesses apply for certification through the Washington State Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises.

The process typically includes:

- ▶ Online application submission
- ▶ Uploading business documentation
- ▶ Eligibility review
- ▶ Possible interview or site visit
- ▶ Certification determination

Approved businesses are added to the OMWBE Certified Business Directory, which is used by state agencies and contractors.





OMWBE Certification Programs

OMWBE administers several certification programs that may support transportation contracting opportunities.

Firms regardless of which state across the U.S. their business is located, including Oregon, are eligible to apply through the OMWBE process.

Federal Certifications

- ▶ Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)
- ▶ Airport Concessions DBE (ACDBE)
- ▶ Small Business Enterprise (SBE)

State Certifications

- ▶ Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)
- ▶ Women Business Enterprise (WBE)
- ▶ Small Business Enterprise (State program)
- ▶ MWBE (Minority-Woman-Owned Business Enterprise)
- ▶ CBE (Combination Business Enterprise)
- ▶ SEDBE (Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Business Enterprise)
- ▶ PWSBE (Public Works Small Business Enterprise)
- ▶ LGBTQBE (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Business Enterprise)

Each program has slightly different eligibility requirements depending on the funding source.

Where Can I Learn About Upcoming Opportunities?

Opportunities may be posted through:

- ▶ WSDOT contracting opportunities
- ▶ State procurement portals
- ▶ Prime contractor outreach events
- ▶ Industry networking sessions

The OMWBE directory is also used by prime contractors searching for certified firms.

Get Started Today!

Oregon and Washington's small businesses play a vital role in building our region's transportation system.

Learn more or apply for certification through the:



Washington State Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises

omwbe.wa.gov/certification/certification-eligibility



Washington State Department of Transportation

wsdot.wa.gov/business-wsdot

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference between DBE and SBE?

A DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise) must be at least 51% owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.

An SBE (Small Business Enterprise) is based primarily on business size standards and does not require disadvantaged ownership.

Many businesses qualify for both programs.

Do I need to be certified to work on WSDOT projects?

Certification is not required to work on transportation contracts, but it can:

- ▶ Increase your visibility to prime contractors
- ▶ Allow participation in contract goals or small business initiatives
- ▶ Provide access to additional resources and training

How long does certification take?

Most applications are reviewed within 60–90 days, depending on completeness and complexity.

Submitting all required documents helps avoid delays.

What documents are required?

Typical documentation includes:

- ▶ Business formation documents
- ▶ Tax returns
- ▶ Financial statements
- ▶ Ownership documentation
- ▶ Resumes of key personnel
- ▶ Equipment lists
- ▶ Bank signature cards

Additional documents may be requested during review.

Is certification free?

Yes. OMWBE certification is free.

How long does certification last?

Certification remains valid as long as businesses:

- ▶ Submit annual updates
- ▶ Report ownership or operational changes
- ▶ Continue meeting eligibility requirements

OREGON

For ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) or Civil Rights Title VI accommodations, translation/interpretation services, or more information call 503-731-4128, TTY 800-735-2900 or Oregon Relay Service 7-1-1.



WASHINGTON

For Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) information or accommodations, contact WSDOT's Office of Equity and Civil Rights (OECR) at wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov or call toll-free at 855-362-4ADA (4232). Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may make a request by calling Washington State Relay at 711. For Title VI non-discrimination information, language assistance, or to file a complaint, contact OECR's Title VI Coordinator at (360) 705-7090.

