

# Buy the Way

The Official Newsletter of the Operational Services Division



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## The City of Everett Adopts COMMBUYS

The COMMBUYS Enablement Team (CET) had a busy September. While the entire team is dedicated to helping municipal organizations access competitive Statewide Contract pricing through COMMBUYS, Jackie Abbott is the Account Manager responsible for outreach to Gateway Cities. These 26 communities across the Commonwealth have populations between 35,000 and 250,000, and an average household income and educational attainment rate below the state average. As part of the Gateway Cities adoption effort, Abbott contacts municipal procurement departments to schedule informational sessions about the benefits of COMMBUYS and buying from Statewide Contracts. Among the interested communities was the City of Everett – a 3.5 square mile community north of Boston, along the Mystic River.

91 City employees over the course of eight, three-hour training classes, with a “go live” target date of October 1. The Purchasing department mandated that, after this date, available items must be purchased through Statewide Contract. The impact of this policy cannot be underestimated, as it completely re-shapes purchasing patterns throughout the City. Wehbe was adamant that COMMBUYS be adopted and incorporated, noting “COMMBUYS will help the City of Everett save both time and money. When soliciting quotes, we will have easy access to a larger and more diverse audience to obtain competitive pricing. In addition, employees can save time by searching for and purchasing items right off the COMMBUYS website as opposed to searching multiple vendor websites.”

*(continued on next page)*

## Stay in Touch!



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Lara Wehbe, Assistant City Solicitor for the City of Everett, needed information. More specifically, Wehbe wanted a uniform procurement process and access to a database of detailed purchasing information. Additionally, Wehbe looked to increase staff awareness and knowledge of buying from Statewide Contracts. Wehbe heard about COMMBUYS and the potential for huge savings from discussions with other procurement agents. Coupled with Abbott’s timely outreach, it was clear that the COMMBUYS advantages naturally aligned with the City of Everett’s needs.

Wehbe decided upfront that the COMMBUYS implementation would be a quick process. Beginning in early September, the OSD Training team, working in concert with CET, trained

*“We had a wonderful experience working with the COMMBUYS Enablement Team. Jackie Abbott reached out, followed up, and streamlined the whole process for us. Our employees were very receptive to the enthusiasm and helpfulness of the CET. They came in with handouts, hands-on training sessions, and solutions to everyday issues that we run into while purchasing for the City.”*

Lara Wehbe  
Assistant City Solicitor  
City of Everett

## Upcoming Training

To register for Buyer training courses, please see the full Training calendar. To register for Seller training courses, click on the link noted. Dates are subject to change as courses are added or removed.

### BUYER TRAINING

**Release RPAs for Statewide Contract Purchases (Webinar)**  
October 20

**COMMBUYS Organization Administrator Training**  
October 21

**COMMBUYS Purchasing Training**  
November 9

**COMMBUYS Procurement Training**  
October 27

**How to Create a Departmental MBPO**  
October 22

**How to Use MBPOs Webinar**  
November 16

**Essentials of State Procurement**  
October 23 (Stow)

**How to Use Statewide Contracts/MBPOs**  
October 30

### SELLER TRAINING

**Connecting Your Business to the Commonwealth**  
October 26 (Brockton)  
*Click to register*

**COMMBUYS How to Locate and Respond to Bids (Webinar)**  
October 19  
*Click to register*

**Basic Supplier Diversity Plan Overview (Webinar)**  
October 16  
November 12  
*Click to register*

**SDO Pre-Certification Session**  
November 9 (Brockton)  
November 10 (Lawrence)  
*Click to register*

**Small Business Purchasing Program Overview (Webinar)**  
October 21  
*Click to register*

## Everett (cont.)

On October 6, Abbott returned to Everett to gather feedback and was met with a positive response. City employees are using the process and tips that they learned during training. They also are accessing resources like the Help Desk for additional reinforcement. Monthly training classes will be available for new employees and those changing job roles. Wehbe is excited about the response, stating “we have received positive feedback from many employees. I know that people are using and responding to COMMBUYS in a positive way because I have had their coworkers come in and ask to be



registered for the make-up classes because they want to learn how to use the system.” Abbott says “thus far, the data that’s being captured is meeting the needs of the City. I expect that Everett will be even more enthusiastic once it realizes a greater cost savings over time.” She attributes the City’s COMMBUYS success to their complete commitment to the COMMBUYS system and a quick adoption plan. As for CET, they continue to refine their framework for implementation, using what they learn from each city and town to improve the COMMBUYS adoption process for future municipalities adopting COMMBUYS across the Commonwealth.

*Photo by The City of Everett.*

## Our Shared Responsibility



National Cyber Security Awareness Month

## Changing Your Password in COMMBUYS

Unless prompted to do so by the program they are working in, most people rarely change their login passwords. Changing passwords on a regular basis helps protect your email, social media, shopping, and other accounts from unauthorized access. Security experts recommend using strong, long, and unique passwords for each account and vehemently discourage the practice of using of the same password for every account, which creates vulnerabilities in all of your accounts if one of the services you use is compromised. Since October is Cybersecurity Month, now is a good time to change your passwords, including your COMMBUYS account password.

- 1 To change your password in COMMBUYS, go to [www.COMMBUYS.com](http://www.COMMBUYS.com) and login with your current credentials.
- 2 On the top bar, click on the “My Account” tab and then click on “edit.” It may take 15-20 seconds to load the next screen.
- 3 Go to “change password” and enter and then confirm your new password.
- 4 Finally, you will need to enter your old/previous password in the “Current Password” field and then save and Exit. Your new password will now be saved.

If you forgot your user name or password, go to [www.COMMBUYS.com](http://www.COMMBUYS.com) and click the Login Assistance link below the login field. Next, check the appropriate box (forgot user ID or forgot password). A login security question will pop up. Once this process has been completed, a new password will be auto-generated and emailed to you.

Now that you’ve updated your COMMBUYS login, think about changing other passwords, especially if they relate to your personal financial information such as online banking and your investment portfolio. For additional questions or assistance, email the COMMBUYS Help desk at: [COMMBUYS@state.ma.us](mailto:COMMBUYS@state.ma.us) or 888-627-8283.

# Supplier Diversity Program & Small Business Purchasing Program Benchmarks Increased

Established in 2010, the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Program (SDP) and Small Business Purchasing Program (SBPP) aim to promote access to public contracting for service-disabled veteran-owned, minority-owned, and women-owned business enterprises, and small firms.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, both programs contain policies to encourage the award of state contracts to participant businesses, including spending benchmarks established for State Departments.

In collaboration with Governor Baker's Office of Access and Opportunity (OAO), OSD recently announced that the benchmarks for the SDP and SBPP will increase for Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16).

## SDP Benchmarks

The SDP applies to all Large Procurements (total value of \$150,000 or more) of non-construction goods and services.

Business Type	FY2011-2015 Benchmark	FY2016 Benchmark
Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) <b>Revised</b>	6%	<b>7%</b>
Women Business Enterprises (WBE) <b>Revised</b>	12%	<b>13%</b>
Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprises (SDVOBE) <b>No Change</b>	3%	3%

## SBPP Benchmark

The SBPP specifically applies to Small Procurements (total value of less than \$150,000) of non-construction goods and services.

Business Type	FY2011-2015 Benchmark	FY2016 Benchmark
COMMBUYS-verified Small Business <b>Revised</b>	2.5%	<b>3.3%</b>

In addition to the increased benchmarks, OSD outlined revised reporting methodologies for both programs. Executive departments are required to submit partnership spending data (spending by a prime vendor with an SDP partner) to the SDO on a semi-annual basis. Furthermore, departments are reminded to include all types of partnership spend in the reports, not only sub-contracting relationships. In FY16, partnership spending reported by departments will be applied to the SDP benchmarks. Full information regarding the benchmark increases and reporting methodologies may be found in the Supplier Diversity Program (SDP) Policy and Implementation Guidelines document.

Briefing meetings with all Secretariat Chief Procurement Officers (SCPOs), Agency Chief Procurement Officers (ACPOs), and Agency Chief Financial Officers (CFOs) have been established to provide further information regarding these policy and procedural changes. The SDO also will introduce an improved, more user-friendly, SDP reporting form. Contact John Fitzpatrick, Director of SDO Programs, at John.B.Fitzpatrick@state.ma.us with any questions.

<sup>1</sup>Firms must be certified by the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) to participate in the SDP as minority- and/or women- owned firms. Service-disabled veteran-owned businesses must be certified by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. Small Business Purchasing Program participants must be located in Massachusetts and be properly verified through registration in COMMBUYS.



**Strategic Sourcing Certificate Program (SSCP) in Stow**  
OSD Training can accommodate five additional participants in the SSCP beginning November 6th in Stow. Express interest by completing the application and forwarding to Christine Tello-Lorenz.

## Upcoming CONTRACT CHANGES

OSD has issued an RFR for **Light-Duty Vehicles - Passenger Cars, SUVs, Trucks, Vans, Special Service Vehicles and Police Pursuit Vehicles under Statewide Contract VEH98**. The bid document is available in COMMBUYS under the following UNSPSC commodity codes:

92-12-00-00 Security and Personal Safety  
92-12-15-04 Security Guard Services  
92-12-16-00 Detective Services

OSD has issued an RFR for **Management Consultants, Program Coordinators, and Planners Services under Statewide Contract PRF61**. The bid document is available in COMMBUYS under the following UNSPSC commodity codes:

80-10-00 Management Advisory Services  
86-10-18 In-Service Training/Manpower Dev.  
86-13-00 Specialized Educational Services  
77-10-00 Environmental Management

[Click here for instructions on finding these opportunities in COMMBUYS.](#)

### New Vendors on Statewide Contract ENE34

Two new vendors are available on the ENE34 Statewide Contract for No. 2 Heating Oil. Dennis K. Burke, Inc. and Peterson Oil Service, Inc. will service Zones 1 and 3 respectively, replacing East Coast Petroleum. [Click here for more details.](#)

### Extension of Statewide Contract LAW14

The Statewide Contract providing supply and delivery of Body Armor Vests (LAW14), due to expire on September 30, 2015, will be extended through February 29, 2016. [Click here for more details.](#)

### Amendment to Statewide Contract ENE40

Statewide Contract ENE40 has been amended to include Biodiesel. Biodiesel is a new category under this contract and is now open until October 27th for responses. [Click here to access the bid.](#)

### Statewide Contract for Catering Services, Conference Space, and Hotel Accommodations (GRO27) to be Discontinued

Effective October 31, 2015, the Statewide Contract for Catering Services, Conference Space, and Hotel Room Accommodations (GRO27) will expire and will not be rebid. OSD's decision to retire GRO27 is based on low spend against the contract. Following the expiration of the contract, Departments will be responsible for conducting their own procurements and establishing contracts, in accordance with regulation 801 CMR 21, for services previously offered under GRO27.

# MA Supplier Diversity Regional Series



Join us for a morning of networking and workshops designed to provide capacity building and expanded procurement opportunities for the small and diverse enterprises currently conducting or interested in pursuing supply-chain engagements with state, municipal, or private buyers in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Developed through a collaborative effort by Governor Baker's Office of Access and Opportunity, the Massachusetts Office of Business Development, OSD, and the OSD Supplier Diversity Office, The Series aims to develop a partnership between the Commonwealth, local municipalities, and private buyers that will assist small and diverse businesses by:

- Convening procurement representatives from state, municipal, and private organizations with small and diverse business owners;
- Promoting networking between small and diverse businesses with buyers and key procurement decision makers; and
- Providing small and diverse businesses with access to capacity-building resources.

To register to attend, click on the appropriate event location link below to access the registration form. For Statewide Contract vendors who would like to exhibit, click here for the exhibitor flyer.

For additional information, email [osd-events@state.ma.us](mailto:osd-events@state.ma.us).

## Agenda

8:30- 9:00 am	Registration
9:00- 9:15 am	Introduction
9:15- 10:45 am	Business Development Networking
10:45- 11:30 am	Optional Workshops



**LAWRENCE**  
RELIEF'S IN  
FUNCTION HALL  
OCTOBER 27



**WORCESTER**  
COLLEGE OF  
THE HOLY CROSS  
NOVEMBER 3



**ROXBURY**  
REGGIE LEWIS CENTER  
NOVEMBER 5



**NEW BEDFORD**  
FORT TABER  
COMMUNITY CENTER  
November 13



**SPRINGFIELD**  
UMASS CENTER  
AT SPRINGFIELD  
NOVEMBER 18



Follow the conversation on Twitter at [#TheSeriesMA](https://twitter.com/TheSeriesMA)



# COMMBUYS

## Help Desk Assistance

Questions about COMMBUYS?

Contact us for help.

**1-888-627-8283**

**COMMBUYS@state.ma.us**

Staff are available

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday.



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**Gary Lambert**  
*Assistant Secretary for  
Operational Services*



## Upcoming Outreach Events



**October 19**  
Providers' Council  
40th Annual Convention & Expo  
*Boston*

**October 20**  
Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce  
20th Annual Business Expo &  
Showcase  
*Chelmsford*

**October 23**  
Center for Women and Enterprise  
Women Business Leaders Conference  
*Framingham*

**November 6**  
Mass. Association of Councils on Aging  
Government Day Training  
*Northampton*

### About OSD

The Operational Services Division (OSD) administers the procurement process for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Executive Agencies by establishing Statewide Contracts for commonly purchased goods and services. OSD's mission is to help our government and business customers succeed in meeting their goals by providing outstanding customer service, competent advice and guidance, objectivity in our work, and to make available to our customers high quality products and services that exceed the expectations of those whom we serve.