

Pathways Supplier Diversity Office And Connections

*News and events from the Massachusetts
Supplier Diversity Office (SDO)*

April 2026

Resources for
Diverse and Small
Businesses

Open Bid
Opportunities on
COMMBUYS

SDO and
Commonwealth
Training
Opportunities

Directory of
Certified
Businesses

April is Celebrate Diversity Month!



April is Celebrate Diversity Month, which has a special meaning to us at the SDO. We are proud to remove barriers to help bring diversity to the Commonwealth's bidding process and offer support to businesses that have been traditionally underserved.

To help celebrate, here are a few success stories from our certified businesses!

- [Malcolm Contracting Services LLC](#) (MCS) successfully completed multiple facility repair and improvement projects that helped improve the safety, functionality, and livability of several residential and community properties in the Greater Boston area. The contract strengthened MCS' relationships with local organizations, expanded their portfolio of community-based construction projects, and reinforced their reputation as a reliable, locally owned

small business capable of supporting ongoing facilities maintenance and construction needs throughout Boston.

- Through the Fellowes Atheneum Trust Fund, [Reldren](#) successfully completed two cohorts of the program: “Community Guide to Using A.I.: Rooted in Black Traditions of Innovation” at the Shaw–Roxbury Branch Library.

Across six sessions, Reldren engaged more than 120 Boston residents (including walk-ins), with strong return attendance and participation across generations—from young adults to seniors. The program focused on practical, hands-on AI use grounded in cultural context, helping participants move from curiosity to real-world application. The program reinforced that there is real demand in the Roxbury community and greater Boston for accessible, community-based AI education that meets people where they are and builds forward.

- [Guardian Capital Security](#) provided security services under a two-year contract for a residential housing location on Huntington Avenue in Boston. Following the completion of that contract, their reputation and prior performance continued to support new opportunities. In a recent engagement, Guardian was brought in on short notice to assist another business facing immediate security needs. Their ability to respond quickly and effectively reinforced the value of their services.

Guardian owner Filipe Monteiro said, "Our certification with the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) further strengthened our position by providing additional credibility and recognition as a qualified diverse business. This played a role in building trust and supporting continued business relationships."

- In the recent months, the recruiting firm [Tier4 Group](#) has been awarded major contracts with Commonwealth of Massachusetts (ITS87), Arvest Bank (AI deployment), The Atlanta Braves, and MagMutual Insurance. They reported their average growth rate since 2022 is 20% each year.

Check out more success stories below!

Partners in Progress



We were excited to work with the Operational Services Division (OSD) at the Partners in Progress event last month!

Hosted by the Metro South Chamber of Commerce and taking place at the Garner Hotel in Brockton, the in-person networking event helped to pair small and diverse vendors with statewide contract prime contractors. Attendees said they were able to make some new connections!

In photo: SDO Director of Programs and Engagement Michelle Mendes (second from right) at the Partners in Progress event with OSD associates (from left) Senior Category Manager Amanda Ferdinand, Category Manager Tina Sang, and Director of Vendor Development, Support & Strategic Initiatives Christopher Olive.

Contract Opportunities with the 2026 World Cup in Boston



The FIFA World Cup™ Boston 2026 Committee has organized a [Local Impact Supplier Program](#) which will identify ready-to-work local suppliers that will be able to participate in FIFA World Cup™ Boston 2026 events. Suppliers needed will include:

- Event Management
- Catering
- Transportation
- Security
- Sanitation
- Event Production

Interested businesses can fill out FIFA's Business Opportunities Form to get started and receive updates and information as opportunities become available.

[Get more information and access the form here.](#)

Don't forget to review more bidding opportunities below!

UPCOMING EVENTS



OPPORTUNITY FAIR IN EVERETT!

Meet with the City of Everett, the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office (SDO), and resource partners to find out about local contracts and opportunities!

Date: Tuesday, April 28, 2026

Time: 3:30pm

Location: Samuel Gentile
Recreation Center, 47 Elm
Street, Everett

*Parking is available on Elm
Street, at Glendale Park,
and at the Rec Center (to
access, turn into the police
station and take an
immediate left).*

Register:



Join the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office (SDO), the City of Everett, and resource partners on Tuesday, April 28 at 3:30p.m. for an opportunity fair in Everett! Learn about local contracts and opportunities!

Details:

Tuesday, April 28, 2026 at 3:30 p.m.

Samuel Gentile Recreation Center

47 Elm Street in Everett, MA

[Register here!](#)

More events for April and May:

BizGrow Conference

Tuesday, April 14, 2026 from 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Worcester Public Library

3 Salem St, Worcester, MA

[Learn more and register here.](#)

AAPI Business Leadership Breakfast

Wednesday, April 15, 2026 from 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

HarbourVest Partners

One Lincoln St., 7th Floor

Boston, MA

[Learn more and register here.](#)

Massachusetts Small Business Resource Forum

Monday, May 4, 2026 from 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Stoughton Public Library

84 Park St, Stoughton, MA

[Learn more and register here.](#)

EACE Goals Updated

Recently, the SDO, working with the Operational Services Division (OSD), expanded our Empowering Abilities in Contracting and Employment (EACE) program from a pilot to a full program. As a result, EACE has issued a new policy, which is applicable to all new statewide contracts posted on or after July 1, 2025.

According to the Massachusetts bylaws, the SDO collaborates and coordinates with the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) every two years to establish goals for participation of individuals with disabilities in all areas of state procurement contracting. Goals may be met by contracting or subcontracting with businesses owned by persons with disabilities or that hire (or recruit with the intent to hire) qualified applicants with disabilities.

The SDO met with MOD Executive Director Allan Motenko and several members of his team in late 2025 to collaborate on proposed goals, which are below:

EACE Goals

Goal 1:

Begin accepting reporting on newly established EACE Program by 1) monitoring

compliance with vendors obligated to report under the EACE program and 2) reaching a 40% voluntary reporting rate for vendors who are not obligated to report under EACE program.

If they receive sales, vendors awarded SWCs advertised on or after July 1, 2025 are now subject to an annual reporting requirement. Under this requirement the vendors must, prior to the end of each fiscal year, report on their efforts to recruit, interview, hire, promote, and retain individuals with disabilities in their workforce.

Goal 2:

Create enhanced resource list of state agencies and non-profits that work with employers to bring individuals with disabilities into their workforce and periodically promote opportunities for EACE participating prime contractors to engage with individuals with disabilities.

This proposed goal is meant to not only provide enhanced resources to SWC prime vendors, but also to serve as a reporting incentive, as this list will be available within our reporting system, the Hub. Furthermore, SWC vendors will receive information regarding job fairs for the disability community, free seminars and training sessions for employers, and other pertinent event information to provide them ample opportunity to show concerted effort of interviewing/hiring individuals with disabilities. While participation and attendance are not required, the show of effort is asked about in the annual employment data.

Goal 3:

Expand inclusion of Disability-Owned Business Enterprises (DOBE) and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprises (SDVOBE).

The SDO will support this goal by continued outreach efforts to recruit more businesses owned by individuals with disabilities into our certified business network. Furthermore, the SDO will continue to provide resources to help these firms succeed in public

contracting, such as SDO training sessions, networking events, and connections to other organizations like the OSD and Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) certification.



Celebrating your Success Stories!

This month, the SDO celebrates these successes from certified businesses:

- [Innovative Psychological Services, Inc.](#) was successfully awarded a contract with the City of Boston Fire Department to conduct pre-employment psychological screenings and fitness-for-duty evaluations. This is the company's largest contract to date, and owner Charmain Jackman said "it has strengthened our operational capacity, increased

revenue, and positioned us for sustained profitability in the future. Additionally, securing this contract has enhanced our credibility and visibility within the public sector." Jackman also said "Beyond financial impact, this engagement has expanded our confidence and readiness to pursue similar municipal and government contracts in other cities. It has also allowed us to contribute meaningfully to public safety by supporting the mental health and readiness of first responders."

- [Sterling Printing](#) announced they are on two state contracts; OFF48 for printing, mailing and promotional products and CLT09, primarily an apparel and uniform contract. Since then, the company has reportedly added more equipment and brought embroidery in-house and now offers fast turnaround on t/shirts and uniforms.

Want to tell us about your recent success? [Click here](#) and fill out the online form!

Check Out these Current and Upcoming Bids!



Bids:

- **ITT84:** Cellular Services and Devices. [Link to the Intent to Bid](#)
- **ITT85:** Network and Communication Services and Hardware. [Link to the Bid](#)
- **PRF89:** Commuter Benefits. [Link to the Bid](#)

There are a number of catering bids, many of which have rolling enrollments:

- Conference Space & Catering Services RFR for DCF - [Link to the bid](#).
- Catering Conference - [Link to the bid](#)
- MassAbility Catering, Conference Space, and Accommodations - [Link to the bid](#)
- MassDOT RFR Catering Services - [Link to the bid](#)
- EA Hotel Motel Provider Services - [Link to the bid](#)
- Event Services - [Link to the bid](#)
- RFR 232128 Catering Services, Conference Space, Hotel Room - [Link to the bid](#)
- Restaurant Food Take-out/Delivery Services - [Link to the bid](#)
- Restaurant Food Take-out/Delivery Services - [Link to the bid](#)
- Event and Emergency Services Contracts - [Link to the bid](#)

- MDAR- Conference Service Vendors - [Link to the bid](#)
- Conference Space, General Catering Services, and Hotel Accommodations - [Link to the bid](#)
- DCF Meetings16-Conference Space and Catering Services - [Link to the bid](#)

You can also check out all the newly posted bids on COMMBUYS each week by [visiting this link](#).

Compliments From the SDO Kudos Corner!



Kudos Corner is a new feature at Pathways and Connections which features compliments received by SDO staff.

This month, we have a compliment from a training attendee to our Training Coordinator Julie Kearnan! Here is what we received in a follow-up survey:

"Great session, positive energy, very personable! Well, done Julie and team! I wish all contract related program calls were like this, I was engaged the entire time, thank you!"

Want to send someone at the SDO a shout-out? Let us know [here!](#) And if you want to see first-hand what these participants are raving about, sign up for one of our training sessions below!



MassDevelopment Offering Microloans for Small Massachusetts- Based Businesses

For nearly 30 years, MassDevelopment has used economic development tools, creative financing strategies, and experienced staff to stimulate business, drive economic growth, and help communities thrive across the Commonwealth.

MassDevelopment now offers microloans for Massachusetts small businesses of \$5,000 to \$100,000 to assist with working capital or the purchase of furniture, fixtures, supplies, materials, and/or equipment. To qualify, businesses need to be in operation for at least 12 months and be a for-profit company.

For more information on the microloan program, [click here](#).

SDO Certification Webcasts - Get Certified on Your Schedule!



With the Massachusetts SDO's new pre-recorded webcast, for-profit diverse and small businesses no longer need to schedule an online webinar to apply for certification. With the webcast, you can now learn about certification and apply on your own timeline!

SDO certification enables traditionally underserved businesses to market themselves and participate in the state's bidding process. Certified businesses are listed in the database used by state buyers and prime vendors, receive news about upcoming bid opportunities, and learn about upcoming networking events.

Simply click the appropriate link below and click on the "Job Aid" link to get started!

[Apply as a Massachusetts-based businesses](#)

[Apply as an out-of-state-based businesses](#)

SDO Means *Business*

Click here for more!



Are you SDO Certified?

If you have a business owned by minorities, women, veterans, those with a disability, members of the LGBT community, and/or you own a small Massachusetts-based business, you are eligible for a vital source of support: SDO Certification.

Once you are certified, you will get updates on upcoming state contracts, have access to hours of free training, be given access to the Supplier Diversity Hub, and you will be added to the SDO's diverse and small vendor database, which is used by Prime Vendors,

state departments, cities and towns, and private businesses looking to spend with diverse and small businesses.

SDO certification is free and can provide your business with new opportunities and prospects.

In FY2024, the Commonwealth spent \$3.78 billion with diverse and small businesses. Many Massachusetts businesses say certification not only helped them stay in business during the pandemic but thrive because of new prospects.

Please note that if you are already certified with one of our partner organizations (such as Center for Women & Enterprise (CWE), Greater New England Minority Supplier Development Council (GNEMSDC), City of Boston, etc.), the steps to becoming SDO certified are simple and straightforward.

[To learn more about SDO Certification please click here!](#)

Reminder - Race/Ethnicity

Information for MBEs

Currently, the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) makes public the race and ethnicity of our certified Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs).

This change is in response to many buyers looking to make purchases from Black, Latino/Hispanic, Asian, and Native American/Indigenous Persons-Owned Businesses. These businesses are still classified as MBEs, but the additional racial makeup is publicly available in our search engine.

While this information is public, it does not affect any vendor's diversity status as an MBE, their ability to bid on and win bids, and their benefits with the SDO.

If any MBE would prefer to make their race and ethnicity information private, please contact us at webmaster.SDO@mass.gov.



Diverse Business Certification Updates

The SDO certified 57 businesses in March 2026!

As a reminder, SDO certification **expires three years after the date of issue** and renewal notices are sent via email to the primary contact on file.

SDO-certified businesses should [log in](#) and review your contact information periodically to ensure that your certification stays up to date.



New Spring Schedule!

The Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) now offers the Supplier Diversity Hub (the Hub), a centralized portal to facilitate construction project management through the entire lifecycle.

The Hub is a virtual platform designed to enhance transparency, strengthen industry engagement, and support fair participation across all state-assisted design and construction building projects.

The SDO has developed classes for Owner Project Managers and Prime Contractors:

Owner Project Managers (OPMs) Hub Construction Opportunity Class

OPMs will learn how to use the Supplier Diversity Hub to create, manage, and award construction project opportunities. The training covers the entire project lifecycle which includes creating a new project, selecting vendors, submitting for SDO review, and awarding to a prime vendor.

Upcoming dates:

- April 9, 9-10 a.m.
- April 21, 1-2 p.m.
- May 7, 9-10 a.m.
- June 9, 1-2 a.m.

[Link to Register](#)

Hub Construction Opportunity Class for Prime Contractors and Vendors

Prime Contractors and Vendors will learn how to use the Supplier Diversity Hub to manage construction projects, submit payments, resolve disputes, view opportunities, and run reports.

Upcoming dates:

- April 9, 1-2 p.m.
- May 7, 1-2 p.m.
- June 10, 9-10 a.m.

[Link to Register](#)

Other classes:

Unlocking Opportunities - How to Make Your State Certification Work for You

(PRE-REQUISITE: for Certified Diverse Businesses)

Learn more about using your certification to identify opportunities in public procurement and develop business-to-business relationships with other vendors. This training covers SDO programs, exploring business opportunities, creating SDP partnerships, and introducing free resources available to help grow your business.

Upcoming dates:

- April 22, 9-11 a.m.
- May 12, 9-11 a.m.
- June 30, 9-11 a.m.

[Link to register](#)

Finding Business Opportunities for Certified Vendors

This session is a follow-up to Certified Vendor Onboarding and is designed specifically for certified vendors who want to expand their knowledge of how to identify and pursue Commonwealth opportunities that align with their business.

In this training, you will learn:

- How to determine whether to pursue contracts as a Prime Contractor or as an SDP Partner
- How to navigate the public procurement process
- Strategies for marketing your business effectively to government buyers
- No-cost resources available to help your business succeed

Limited Class Size! Please register in advance

Upcoming dates:

- April 23, 9-10 a.m.
- May 13, 9-10 a.m.
- June 2, 9-10 a.m.

[Link to register](#)

Small Business Purchasing Program (SBPP) for Vendors

Vendors will learn the qualifications to participate in the Commonwealth's Small Business Purchasing Program, how to apply, and the advantages of certification.

Upcoming dates:

- May 19, 9-10 a.m.
- June 4, 9-10 a.m.

[Link to register](#)

Prime Contractor Onboarding

(PRE-REQUISITE: This class is for Prime Contractors currently on Statewide and/or Departmental contracts).

Prime Contractors will learn how to meet the Supplier Diversity Plan (SDP) requirement. This class gives an overview of SDP, where to find eligible partners, and how to report SDP spend.

Upcoming dates:

- April 21, 9-10 a.m.
- May 14, 9-10 a.m.
- June 23, 9-10 a.m.

[Link to register](#)

Vendor Hub Reporting - for Prime Contractors

(PRE-REQUISITE: for Prime Contractors currently on Departmental contracts)

Prime Contractors will learn more about the Supplier Diversity Office Hub. The training covers the *new easier SDP reporting*, how to register in the Hub, add and manage users, complete and view spend in the dashboard.

Upcoming dates:

- April 7, 9-10 a.m.
- May 6, 9-10 a.m.
- June 16, 9-10 a.m

[Link to register](#)

Don't Miss Out! Responding to RFQs

(PRE-REQUISITE: for Small Business Purchasing Program participants currently on Statewide and/or Departmental contracts)

SBPP vendors will learn the mechanics of a Request for Quotes (RFQ). The training covers the benefits of the SBPP, how to identify and respond to an RFQ, and how RFQ's are evaluated.

Upcoming dates:

- April 30, 9-10 a.m.

[Link to register](#)

Supplier Diversity Program for Health and Human Service Providers

(PRE-REQUISITE: This class is for Service Providers currently on Purchase of Service contracts)

Service providers on state contracts will learn about the Supplier Diversity Program (SDP), where to find eligible partners, and how to report SDP spend in the UFR.

Upcoming dates:

- May 5, 9-10 a.m.

[Link to register](#)

Follow us on:



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