

# Pathways & Connections



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

**December 2025**

**Resources for  
Diverse and  
Small  
Businesses**

**Open Bid  
Opportunities  
on COMMBUYS**

**SDO and  
Commonwealth  
Training  
Opportunities**

**Directory of  
Certified  
Businesses**

*happy holidays*



We at the SDO hope your holiday season is filled with happiness, contentment, and peace. We wish you a successful 2026!

# Governor's YouTube Highlights More SDO-Certified Businesses



***D'Anthony Lorenzo (left) and Hansy Luz Better Barraza talk about their SDO-certified businesses***

Last month, we told you about how the [MassGovernor YouTube account](#) posted stories of two businesses who found success after becoming SDO certified. Now, two more certified businesses have been featured!

The latest videos feature Hansy Luz Better Barraza, owner of Studio Luz Architects and D'Anthony Lorenzo, a director at Caring Medical Center.

They talk about the unique services their companies provide and how they have found success!

*Click the links to see the videos!*

- [Studio Luz Architects](#)
- [Caring Medical Center](#)

Read below for more SDO success stories!

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## SDO at Needham's Meeting the Moment initiative



*The SDO's EACE Program Coordinator Emily Maguire (top left) attended Needham's Meeting the Moment event which brought together individuals with a disability, families, allies, and advocates to discuss ongoing work and connect with state and local organizations.*

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## **Celebrating your Success Stories!**

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

- [\*\*Soltrix Technology Solutions, Inc.\*\*](#) announced they were awarded a contract to support ServiceNow by Executive Office of Technology Services and Security (EOTSS). The company has been a premier ServiceNow partner since 2007, providing value-based consulting, implementation, integration, and support

services. Their commitment to value and customer satisfaction has resulted in a 90% repeat and 60% referral customer base. Soltrix Technology Solutions is an ITS81 and ITS74 state-wide contract holder.

- [Frank Higgins & Co., Inc.](#), a Commercial Flooring Specialist since 1952, announced the successful completion of ceramic tile installation for the new Dr. William R. Peck Middle school in Holyoke, Massachusetts. Under the leadership of Project Manager Tim Cloud and their skilled team of tile installers, this project was delivered on schedule and showcases the quality craftsmanship that defines the company's work.
- [Sorella Contracting, Inc.](#), which specializes in Construction Services as well as business support services for contractors, said they were approached by a general contracting company that had hit some hard financial times. Sorella's "turn around management team" scrutinized all bookkeeping records, identified an unprofitable division, sold off assets, restructured personnel, implemented strict cash controls, eliminated all unnecessary spending, renegotiated terms with vendors and creditors, and reviewed and renegotiated all insurance policies. Sorella's relentless focus on cash

flow and deep-cost cutting enabled their client to regain their footing and helped them get on their way to profitability once again.

- [Love Life Now Foundation](#) said a connection through SDO led to a new opportunity for the company. Love Life Now Foundation owner Lovern Gordon connected with Sheridan Wachtel from The Issues Management Group (IMG) at one of the Partners in Progress events back in March. Lovern shared that the Love Life Now Foundation promotes year-round awareness around domestic violence and is brought in by companies to facilitate domestic violence workshops. Earlier this month, the foundation was hired by IMG to present to staff!
- [Kascade](#), a Massachusetts-based certified CBE IT managed services company, was selected to deliver comprehensive IT managed services and cybersecurity programs for Quincy College, ensuring compliance, resilience, and 24/7 operational uptime across its multi-campus environment. Building on that success, Kascade expanded its footprint throughout the North Shore, securing contracts to provide managed IT and cybersecurity support for the municipal offices of Marblehead, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Middleton, Danvers, and Topsfield.

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

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## SDO Hosts Veterans Event in Worcester!



*We were thrilled to see everyone who came to our Veteran-Owned Business Info Session in Worcester last month! In addition to giving*

*business owners information on SDO services, the session featured statewide resource partners serving businesses owned by veterans and service-disabled veterans. Pictured are SDO Director of Programs and Engagement Michelle Mendes (right) with Tyrone Williams, Administrative Officer/Business Opportunity Specialist at the U.S. Small Business Administration.*

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***Check Out these Current and Upcoming Bids!***



**Bids:**

- **ITS86:** Software and Service. [Link to the Bid](#)

## Reopened:

- **ITC73:** Information Technology Hardware and Services - reopened for Category 3 (resellers). [Link to the reopened Bid](#)

## Intents to Bid:

- **ITT84:** Cellular Services and Devices. [Link to the Intent to Bid](#)
- **ITT85:** Network and Communication Services and Hardware. [Link to the Intent to Bid](#)
- **PRF88:** Foreign Language Interpretation and Translation Services. [Link to the Intent to Bid](#)

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

- Catering Conference - [Link to the bid](#)
- MassAbility Catering, Conference Space, and Accommodations - [Link to the bid](#)
- Department of Elementary and Secondary Education - Conference Space, General Catering Services, and Hotel 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](#).

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## SDO at the Haitian American Business Summit



*SDO Director of Programs and Engagement Michelle Mendes presented at the inaugural Haitian American Business Summit in Boston last month, discussing the benefits of certification and explaining how it can help grow small and diverse businesses. Here, Michelle answers a question from an attendee*



*Michelle facilitated a presentation titled "Doing Business with the Commonwealth."*

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## **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.](#)**

## ***New SDO Certification Webcasts***



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!

Massachusetts-based businesses click

here: <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-diversity-certification-as-a-massachusetts-based-business>

Out-of-state-based businesses click here:

<https://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-diversity-certification-as-an-out-of-state-business>

# SDO Means *Business*

*Click here for more!*

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## 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!](#)

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## ***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](mailto:webmaster.SDO@mass.gov).

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## ***Diverse Business Certification Updates***

The SDO certified 63 businesses in November 2025!

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.



## **Winter Vendor 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:

- December 16, 9 a.m.
- January 27, 9 a.m.
- February 24, 9 a.m.
- March 24, 9 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:

- January 6, 9 a.m.
- February 3, 9 a.m.
- March 3, 9 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:

- January 13, 9 a.m.
- February 10, 9 a.m.
- March 4, 9 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:

- December 18, 9 a.m.
- January 14, 9 a.m.
- February 11, 9 a.m.
- March 11, 9 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:

- January 20, 9 a.m.
- February 25, 9 a.m.
- March 25, 9 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:

- December 17, 9 a.m.
- March 17, 9 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:

- March 18, 9 a.m.

[Link to register](#)

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*Follow us on:*



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