

# Pathways And Connections

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

**May 2026**

Resources for  
Diverse and Small  
Businesses

Open Bid  
Opportunities on  
COMMBUYS

SDO and  
Commonwealth  
Training  
Opportunities

Directory of  
Certified  
Businesses

**May is Asian American and Pacific  
Islander Heritage Month!**



The SDO celebrates Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage this month, which pays tribute to generations of Asian and Pacific Islanders who have contributed to American history. [Learn more about it here.](#)

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## **Boston Celebrates Small Business Month**

In addition to celebrating Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage, May also recognizes small businesses!

As part of National Small Business Month, the City of Boston will feature a

slate of events, resources, networking, and social media content grounded in the theme “Exploring Possibilities. Creating Opportunities.”

The city is [running a number of small events](#) and has created a [downloadable bingo card](#) encouraging consumers to shop with small local businesses for a chance to win prizes.

[Click here for all of Boston's news and events around Small Business Month.](#)

Boston has more than 18,000 small businesses that employ 127,000 people and generate close to \$28 billion each year.





# 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

*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).*

**Time:** 3:30pm

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

**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!](#)



# FRAMINGHAM STATE UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITY FAIR

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

**Date:** June 17, 2026

**Time:** 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

**Location:**

Framingham State University  
93 State Street (GPS Address)  
McCarthy Center, level 2,  
Forum

**Register:**



*Parking access off Church Street (see above)*

**Registration required to get the mandatory parking pass for this event.**

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

**Registration is required to get the mandatory parking pass for this event.**

**Details:**

Wednesday, June 17, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.

Framingham State University

93 State Street

McCarthy Center, Level 2

[Register here!](#)

*Other events:*

**8th Annual Western Massachusetts Economic Ecosystem Summit**

This summit brings together regional economic development leaders, municipal executives, industry experts, and ecosystem stakeholders to engage in data-informed conversations and coordinated strategies that support long-term regional prosperity.

**Details:**

Friday, May 15, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.

Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center

100 Bigelow St

Holyoke, MA

[Register here!](#)

## **2026 Berkshire Small Business Resource Expo**

This year's expo features educational workshops, appointments for one-on-one conversation with specific providers (such as legal counsel, insurance, grant preparation, and more), a photographer taking headshots, and more! Translation for speakers of Spanish and Portuguese will be provided.

### **Details:**

Thursday, May 21, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.

Stationery Factory

63 Flansburg Ave

Dalton, MA

[Register here!](#)

## **Boston Small Business Expo**

This event will feature more than 35 free keynotes, workshops, and seminars. You will have the opportunity to market your business, expand your network and connect with 1,500 fellow entrepreneurs.

### **Details:**

Wednesday, May 27, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.

The Westin

425 Summer Street

Boston Seaport District

[Register here!](#)

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## Celebrating your Success Stories!

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

- Creative marketing agency [Castillo-Holliday Films](#), based in Watertown, Massachusetts, announced they secured two new partnerships with Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts and The Catered Affair as preferred media partners. This marks a key milestone as they continue to grow and strengthen their client base.
- [M&J Engineering](#) announced the rehabilitation of the Devon Bridge over the Housatonic River received a Project of the Year Award from the American Society of Highway Engineers (ASHE)

New England chapter. As Construction Engineering & Inspection (CE&I) lead for the Connecticut Department of Transportation, the M&J Engineering team supported the successful rehabilitation of this movable bridge, enhancing safety, reliability, and performance while maintaining traffic throughout construction.

- [Caring Medical Staffing, LLC](#) was awarded a \$50,000 Bridges To College grant through the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education to support our Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) Training Program. Through this funding, they are training 17 students, equipping them with the skills, knowledge, and clinical experience needed to enter the healthcare workforce. This initiative addresses the ongoing staffing shortages in healthcare while creating accessible career pathways for individuals in the local community.

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

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



## **Bids:**

- **ITE002:** Audio, Video, Multimedia Presentation Equipment, Supplies and Services (replacing OFF50). [Link to the bid](#)
- **ITT84:** Cellular Services and Devices. [Link to the Bid](#)
- **ITT85:** Network and Communication Services and Hardware. [Link to the Bid](#)

## **Notices of Intent:**

- **ENE53:** Ultra-Low Sulfur Diesel & Biodiesel. Addition of Category 5 Renewable Diesel (R100) only. [Link to the Notice of Intent](#)
- **ENE58:** No. 2 Heating Oil and APS Liquid Biofuel (replacing ENE52). [Link to the Notice of Intent](#)
- **GRO42:** K-12 School Nutrition Products, Category 3 Locally Sourced Foods. [Link to the Intent to Reopen](#)

***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](#).**



# 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](#).

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***SDO Certification Webcasts - Apply  
for Certification 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!*

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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).



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

The SDO certified 47 businesses in April 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:*

### **Construction Opportunities for Owner Project Managers (OPMs)**

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:

- May 7, 9-10 a.m.
- June 9, 1-2 p.m.
- July 8, 9-10 a.m.
- August 11, 1-2 p.m.
- September 9, 9-10 a.m.

[Link to Register](#)

### **Construction Opportunities for Prime Contractors and Vendors**

Prime Contractors and Vendors will learn how to use the Supplier Diversity Hub to find construction opportunities, indicate interest level, and manage payment details electronically. The training also covers how to review and manage active construction projects.

Upcoming dates:

May 7, 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

June 10, 9 a.m. – 10 a.m.

July 14, 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

August 12, 9 a.m. – 10 a.m.

September 16, 9 a.m. – 10 a.m.

[Link to Register](#)

*Other classes:*

## **Certified Vendor Onboarding - Using Your Certification to Unlock Opportunities**

(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:

- 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:

- 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](#)

### **SDO 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:

- May 14, 9-10 a.m.

- June 23, 9-10 a.m.

[Link to register](#)

## **Goods and Services Reporting for Departmental 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:

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

[Link to register](#)

## **Fulfilling Your SDP Commitment as a POS provider**

(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](#)

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*Follow us on:*



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SDP & SBPP HelpDesk: [sdp@mass.gov](mailto:sdp@mass.gov)

Phone: (617) 502-8843

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