

Pathways & Connections

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



July 2023

Resources for
Diverse and
Small
Businesses

Open Bid
Opportunities
on COMMBUYS

COMMBUYS
Vendor Training
Schedule

Directory of
Certified
Businesses

Disability Independence Day

Please join us at the SDO as we celebrate Pride National Disability Independence Day on July 26! The day celebrates the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990. [Learn more about the ADA and Disability Independence Day here.](#)



Healey-Driscoll Administration Expands State Spending Benchmarks to LGBT and Disability-Owned Businesses

The Healey-Driscoll Administration announced a new initiative aimed at expanding opportunities for diverse and small businesses to provide goods and services to state agencies and local governments.

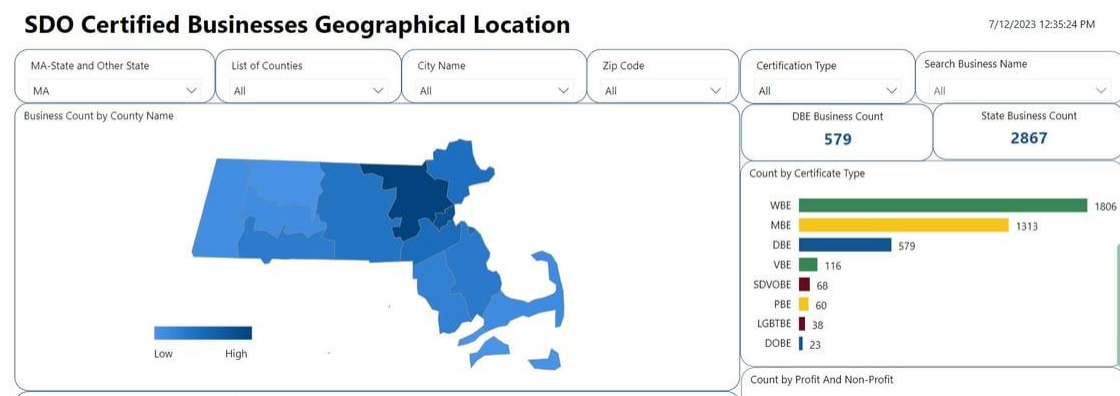
The administration updated the Commonwealth's Supplier Diversity Program (SDP) to include spending benchmarks for LGBT-owned Business Enterprises (LGBTBE) and Disability-owned Business Enterprises (DOBE) in the Commonwealth's Supplier Diversity Program (SDP) for the first time.

Starting July 1 of 2023, state agencies will work towards purchasing \$18 million from LGBT-owned businesses and \$18 million from businesses owned by individuals with disabilities during Fiscal Year 2024. After evaluating purchasing against these benchmarks over the next year, the Administration will set new goals for Fiscal Year 2025.

"Massachusetts is home to so many wonderful diverse and small businesses who are truly the backbone of our communities and our economy. Our administration is committed to increasing opportunities for them to do business with the state, which will not only help their businesses grow but will also support the state's equitable economic development," said **Governor Maura Healey**.

[Click here for the full press release!](#)

SDO Releases New Online Interactive Map



The SDO has released the Massachusetts Certified Business Map, a new interactive online map that will help state agencies, cities, towns, and prime bidders and contractors locate certified diverse business partners based on location as well as other criteria.

Users can search by in-state and out of state, county, city or town, certification type, and by business name. This can be especially helpful for projects needing subcontractors who do business in a certain area of the state. Displayed information includes Federal

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) business count, State business count, and counts by certification type, for-profit and non-profit, and business nature type.

The map is the SDO's latest innovation to increase equity in state purchasing. Since becoming a new agency in 2021, the SDO has introduced the [Supplier Diversity Hub](#), a powerful network that streamlines communication between state agencies, cities, towns, prime contractors, and diverse and small businesses. The SDO has also created the [Resources Webpage for Diverse and Small Businesses](#), the [Municipal Supplier Diversity Playbook](#), and the [SDO Means Business model](#), which provides resources and tools to eliminate barriers and uplift diverse and small businesses.

[Click here to see the new interactive map!](#)

We Want to Hear About Your Success!



The SDO is looking for news about new contracts, business growth, and other milestones for SDO-certified diverse and small businesses. Your story might be featured on our website, the *Pathways & Connections* newsletter, or our social media feeds!

If you have a success story to share, please [fill out this form](#) and hit the "Submit" button. We would love to hear from you!

SDO Means *Business*

Click here for more!

Don't Miss these Upcoming Events!

Check out these upcoming opportunities to network and grow your business:



- July 26 - August 1: 114th NAACP National Convention at the Boston Convention Center. [Learn more and register here.](#)
- August 2: Business Opportunity Webinar for VBE and SDVOBE businesses. [Learn more and register here.](#)
- September 20: SCORE Northeast Massachusetts Women's Business Summit. [Learn more and register here.](#)
- September 27: Veterans Business Outreach Center of New England Veterans Small Business Symposium (webinar). [Register here.](#)
- October 6 - 8: BECMA Black Expo. [Learn more here.](#)

Check Out these Current and Future Bids!

- An RFR for a seed-to-sale electronic tracking system of record (seed-to-sale SOR). This system will serve as the Commonwealth's system of record for the regulated cannabis industry. [Link to the RFR.](#)
- An RFR for Catering Services for MassDOT. [Link to the RFR.](#)

- **FAC122: Landscaping Products, Parks and Recreation Equipment and Related Products, Supplies and Services**, replacing FAC104. [Link to the Intent to Post.](#)
 - **FAC126: Records Management, Storage and Archiving Services**, replacing FAC96. [Link to the Intent to Post.](#)
 - **FAC127: Moving and Storage Services**, replacing FAC96. [Link to the Intent to Post.](#)
 - **TRD04: Tradespersons Installation, Repair, Maintenance Services** to be reopened to add a new category for Biohazardous Site Cleaning and Restoration Services. [Link to the Intent to Post.](#)
 - **FAC119: Maintenance Repair and Operations (MRO) Retail Products and Supplies.** [Link to the bid.](#)
 - **FAC124: Building Maintenance Repair and Operations Project Material and Supplies.** [Link to the Intent to Post.](#)
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Email Phishing Alert: Beware of the Phony "Processing Fee"

The SDO has been alerted to an email scam that references the OSD COMMBUYS platform. The email requests a \$4.99 "processing fee" to process a contract payment with the Commonwealth. Emails may look like this:

This is to confirm that we received your Direct Deposit Form. Kindly consent to the general COMMBUYS Contracts Security Platform Update compulsory debit charge of \$4.99 processing fee using the attached credit card authorization form as part of the agreement to process your contract payment with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Please note the Commonwealth does not charge a processing fee for contract payments. If you receive an email like the one above, do not respond, open any attachments, or click on any links in the email.

For your security, below is a list of email addresses used by the SDO:

Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) - Used for general news, bids, events, and the *Pathways & Connections* newsletter
sdocommunications@notice.anf.mass.gov

Webmaster (SDO) - Used for news and technical inquiries
Webmaster.SDO@mass.gov

SDOCertrak (SDO) - Used for certification news/inquiries
SDOCertrak@mass.gov

No Reply: Supplier Diversity Portal - Used for the Supplier Diversity Hub ("The Hub")
noreply.sdh@ad.autocene.com

Please note: Several of these emails do not accept responses.

If you have any questions about any email you received that looks suspicious, you can contact us at webmaster.sdo@mass.gov.



The Supplier Diversity Hub - an Easy, Free Way to Help Grow Your Business

Diverse and small vendors now have full access to the Supplier Diversity Hub ("The Hub")! Already in use by state agencies, The Hub is a free, new way to help grow your business.

Using The Hub, diverse and small businesses can now receive a number of benefits. Communication between them and prime vendors and contractors as well as public buyers is easier, they can receive immediate notifications about new bidding opportunities, and they have instant access to check the status of their SDO certification.

Diverse and small certified vendors may have received an inquiry from an SDO partner asking about their experiences and questions about The Hub and, if they haven't yet signed up for the Hub, providing information on its many benefits. Your answers will help make The Hub easier and more useful for everyone.

If you are a certified vendor and haven't yet signed into The Hub, please follow the directions below to get started:

1. Visit <https://masdh.autocene.com> to reset your password.

2. Your username (which is also your email address) should be the same one you use to access your certification account.
3. For a video with step-by-step instructions on how to change your password, click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?>
4. Congratulations! You now have access to The Hub!

Once you have signed in, the first thing you need to do is to ensure your information is up-to-date in The Hub so that prime vendors and state agencies can find your business in a search. Follow the instructions below to update your search information:

If you need help, click the “Help” button on the left inside the Hub to see an instructional video.

1. Once signed in, click on your email address in the upper right of your screen.
2. Click on “Edit Profile.”
3. Click on “Company Profile.”
4. You will need to update your NAICS, CSI, and UNSPSC codes. In many cases, NAICS codes for diverse businesses are already entered.
5. Click on the category you want to update (NAICS Code Search, CSI Code Search, or UNSPSC Code Search) on the left. You will need to update each code individually.
6. Once on the NAICS Code Search screen, put your business category in the “Description” field. Click the “Search” button and select the items on the bottom of your screen that are applicable to your business. Then click the button “Select these Codes” on the right.
7. Once on the CSI Code Search screen, enter your business category in the “Sub Title” field. Click the “Search” button and select the items on the

bottom of your screen that are applicable to your business. Then click the button “Select these Codes” on the right.

8. Once on the UNSPSC Code Search screen, put your business category in the “Class Title” field. Click the “Search” button and select the items on the bottom of your screen that are applicable to your business. Then click the button “Select these Codes” on the right.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at webmaster.sdo@mass.gov.

Meet the SDO: Maryellen Osborne, Chief Financial Officer (CFO)/Chief Operating Officer (COO)

Each month, we feature a different member of our team to share a little bit about themselves and discuss useful information and resources the SDO has available for diverse and small businesses. Please send any questions for the SDO team to robert.keane@mass.gov.



What made you want to work at the SDO?

There are several reasons I wanted to work at the SDO. Most importantly, I have been genuinely impressed by the agency's mission, values, and accomplishments. I have been involved with the Supplier Diversity Office through the years, dating back to my first state government job as the Affirmative Market Program (AMP) Coordinator. I was also drawn to the positive reputation the agency has built; particularly the collaborative and inclusive culture it fosters. I believe that working here will provide me with the ideal environment to apply my skills and experience in a meaningful way.

Favorite quote:

"Love the life you live, live the life you love." - Bob Marley

Favorite song:

Try Everything, Shakira

Favorite vacation spot:

St. John USVI

Favorite food:

Chicken (any dish)

Pet peeve:

Bad drivers

Tell us something about your position or responsibilities that an outsider may not know:

When it comes to ordering products or services, as an executive branch agency, we are required to use a statewide contract, if one exists. If the product or service we are seeking is not on a statewide contract, then we can post an RFR in COMMBUYS.

Maryellen Osborne can be reached at Maryellen.Osborne4@mass.gov.

Last TV Show seen/binged:
Schitt's Creek

Last book read:
Bltter is the New Black by Jen Lancaster

Dog person or cat person?
Dog person

Tell us something about you that others may not know:
That I have 2 granddaughters ages 14 and 5.



Diverse Business Certification Updates

SDO certified 39 businesses in June 2023. For a full list of newly-certified businesses, please click [here](#).

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



Pre-Certification Webinars

For businesses wishing to apply for SDO certification, attending a Pre-Certification Webinar is a must. This webinar discusses the different types of SDO and SDO-recognized third-party certifications as well as the State certification process.

contact information periodically to ensure that your certification stays up to date.

Registration is now available for webinars from now through December 2023. Sign up [here](#).



New SDO training now available!

Unlocking opportunities: How to make your State Certification work for you

Congratulations on getting your state certification! You may now have questions on the benefits of certification and how you can use it to help grow your business. This class is designed to help answer those questions and many more.

This class is designed for currently ***certified*** vendors to learn more about using your state certification to access, create, and develop opportunities within the Commonwealth. It will cover SDO programs, exploring business opportunities, creating SDP partnerships, and no-cost resources available to help grow your business.

This class is available on the following dates:

* August 15

* September 13

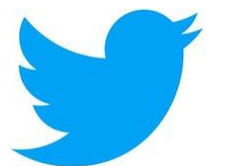
Both sessions take place from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Class size is limited! Please register in advance.

If you are interested in attending this class, [Click Here to register](#). You will need to provide your client ID from the SDO Portal at time of registration. Once registered, you will receive a confirmation email.

If you need special accommodations to fully participate in the training, please email Katherine.L.Thomas@mass.gov for assistance.

Follow us on:



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Certification HelpDesk: Webmaster.SDO@mass.gov
SDP & SBPP HelpDesk: sdp@mass.gov
Phone: (617) 502-8843

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