

Pathways & Connections

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



August 2022

Resources for
Diverse and
Small
Businesses

Open Bid
Opportunities
on COMMBUYS

COMMBUYS
Vendor Training
Schedule

Directory of
Certified
Businesses

August is Black Business Month

The SDO celebrates Black Business Month. Started in 2004, Black Business Month encourages us to recognize and support black-owned businesses in our communities.



[Learn more about Black Business Month.](#)

Mass Black Expo - September 23 and 24

The Mass Black Expo (MBE) is the Commonwealth's premier event for showcasing Black businesses, organizations, and allies committed to closing the Massachusetts wealth gap through equity, access, and opportunity.

This year's two-day event provides purchasing opportunities, capacity-building resources, networking, meaningful discussion and fun.

[Click here to learn more and to register!](#)



Introducing The Supplier Diversity Hub!

The SDO is proud to announce the launch of the Supplier Diversity Hub ("The Hub"), a new way for state agencies and prime vendors to manage their supplier diversity efforts and to connect directly with diverse and small businesses.

The Hub allows users to plan individual procurements, track benchmark progress for their department's spending, and manage the supplier diversity efforts of their prime contractors to ensure contract compliance.

There are many advantages to using The Hub: All planning, reporting, spending tracking and notifications are now collected into one portal. The Hub's easy-to-use dashboards and vendor tracking eliminates the guesswork out of agency and vendor SDP performance. The system even eliminates the need to fill out Excel planning and reporting forms!

The Hub will be available this week to agencies who attend the Supplier Diversity Hub Training. To get started, please sign up through MassAchieve. ***Check the story "Supplier Diversity Hub Training Reservations Now Available!" in this newsletter below for more information.***



Supplier Diversity Hub Training Reservations Now Available!

For state agencies, we now offer training for the Supplier Diversity Hub ("The Hub") on [MassAchieve](#)! The Hub enables you to connect with diverse and small businesses and improve the accuracy of tracking, validation, and reporting of spending benchmarks.

In The Hub, each Agency and Secretariat will have a Primary Organization Administrator, which has been assigned to the Supplier Diversity Officer (unless you designate to someone else within your department).

We ask that the Primary Organization Administrator from each agency please do the following:

1. **Sign up for an Organization Administrator training class** through [MassAchieve](#). This 90-minute class will not only give you the opportunity for "hands-on" navigation, but also a chance to ask questions during the live training.
2. **Alert your staff about the classes!** All procurement staff are encouraged to attend the one-hour Buyer Basic training.

We look forward to showing how The Hub will house all your Supplier Diversity activities in one place and make it easier to track your diverse spending!

If you have any questions, please contact Katherine Thomas at Katherine.L.Thomas@mass.gov.

Meet the SDO: Bianca Tavarez, Renewal and Third-Party Coordinator

Each month, Pathways and Connections will feature a different member of the SDO team who will share a little bit about themselves and answer some of the biggest questions about the SDO and the resources we provide to diverse and small businesses. If you have any questions you'd like to have answered, please send them to robert.keane@mass.gov.



Is there a maximum net worth you can have and still qualify to be a certified business?

There is no standard net worth ceiling for the state certification program for Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs), Women Business Enterprises (WBEs), Veteran Business Enterprises (VBEs), Portuguese Business Enterprises (PBEs), Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprises (SDVOBEs), Disability-Owned Business Enterprises (DOBEs), and LGBT Business Enterprises (LGBTBEs).

Is proof of minority eligibility (for certification) first generation or second generation?

Proof of minority can be either first generation, second generation, or both as appropriate. See

Favorite quote: “When I enter a space, I intentionally bring goodness. I change the atmosphere for the better. That’s a real boss, someone who can shift the energy of a room and make things better no matter where she goes.” – Brandi Harvey

Favorite song: "Ain't Nobody" by Chaka Khan

Favorite vacation spot: The Dominican Republic

Favorite food: White rice, beans, fried sweet plantains, and fried fish

Pet peeve: When Starbucks messes up my order and I don't notice until I reach my destination

the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office Code of Mass Regulations ([425 CMR 2.02\(1\)](#)) for more details.

How can a vendor verify that a business is certified?

All certified businesses are in the SDO Directory of Certified Business. There, you can search by certification type, business type (for-profit or non-profit), even a particular NAICS code or town.

[You can find the directory here](#), and your results can be downloaded as a PDF or in an Excel file for easy viewing.

Bianca Tavarez can be reached at bianca.r.tavarez@mass.gov.

Favorite Summer

activity: Kayaking on a lake or pond

Last TV Show seen/binged: *Keep Breathing*

Dog person or cat person?: Dog person

What made you come to work at the SDO?: Being of a minority, I always wanted to be of assistance to people like me looking to grow and finding that assistance through an agency like ours

Something about you that others may not know: I am super-competitive and take any game or challenge very seriously



Diverse Business Certification Updates

SDO certified 48 businesses in July 2022. 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 contact information periodically to ensure that your certification stays up to date.

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.

Registration is now available for webinars through November 2022. Sign up [here](#).

New SDO training now available for registration!

Vendor Onboarding: Using your State Certification to Unlock Opportunities

[Click here to register!](#)

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.

This training will cover:

- Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) programs
- Exploring business opportunities
- Creating Supplier Diversity Program (SDP) partnerships
- No-cost resources to help grow your business

CLASS DETAILS

Dates/Times:

September 27, 2022 9:00 a.m.

October 26, 2022 9:00 a.m.

Format:

Virtual via ZOOM - [Click here to register](#)

Please register in advance (you will need to provide your certification date when you register).

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email you can add to your calendar.

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



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

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