

Pathways & Connections

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



December 2024

Resources for
Diverse and
Small
Businesses

Open Bid
Opportunities
on COMMBUYS

SDO and
Commonwealth
Training
Opportunities

Directory of
Certified
Businesses



Bonnie Borch- Rote Appointed to Head the SDO

The Healey-Driscoll Administration announced Bonnie Borch-Rote has been appointed as the new Executive Director of the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office (SDO). The SDO, regarded as the most inclusive state supplier diversity office in the nation, is dedicated to increasing opportunities for small and diverse Massachusetts businesses through robust outreach, certification, and education.

Borch-Rote has 14 years of public service experience, almost 13 of them with the SDO. Before her appointment to the Executive Director role, she was the SDO's Director for Performance and Project Management and served as the agency's General Counsel. She also worked in the SDO's Certification and Outreach units, when the SDO was part of the Operational Services Division (OSD).

"Our administration is proud to announce Bonnie's appointment," said **Governor Maura Healey**. "She has demonstrated her commitment to small and diverse businesses, and she knows that our economy is stronger when we lower barriers to participation. She is exactly who we want leading this important agency."

"The Supplier Diversity Office will be in excellent hands with Bonnie at the helm," said **Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll**. "I look forward to working with her as SDO continues advancing equity in Massachusetts and elevating our small and diverse businesses."

Borch-Rote replaces Bill McAvoy, who is retiring after 36 years in public service. McAvoy helped lead the SDO to become an independent agency and has served as its Executive Director since 2015.

"We are excited for Bonnie to assume leadership of the Supplier Diversity Office, and grateful to Bill for ensuring that the agency is well-positioned for success following his retirement," said

Administration and Finance Secretary Matthew J. Gorzkowicz. “I look forward to seeing Bonnie take SDO to the next level by continuing to expand what the state can do for diverse and small businesses.”

“I’ve worked with Bonnie for all of her career with the state, and I can’t think of anyone better to lead the SDO,” said **former Executive Director Bill McAvoy**. “With her knowledge, commitment, and expertise, I am confident that she will bring even greater success to the SDO in the coming years.”

The SDO certifies diverse (minority, women, veteran, service-disabled veteran, disability, and LGBT-owned) and small businesses, which helps increase their marketability in the state’s bidding process. The SDO also connects these companies with business opportunities and resources and collaborates with Executive Agencies and public organizations to identify and remove barriers for diverse and small businesses.

“I’m honored and humbled at this opportunity,” said **incoming Executive Director Bonnie Borch-Rote**. “Massachusetts has one of the most innovative supplier diversity programs in the country, and I’m excited to continue what Bill McAvoy and the Healey-Driscoll administration have done to connect marginalized businesses with state contracting.”

Borch-Rote will look to continue the SDO's success in increasing the number of diverse and small businesses that do business with the Commonwealth. Since 2015, the number of SDO-certified businesses more than doubled from 2,794 in FY2015 to 5,669 in FY2023, an increase of 103%. Spending from SDO programs rose from \$959 million in FY2015 to \$2.147 billion in FY2023, an increase of 124%.

Happy Holidays from the SDO!



We at the SDO hope your holiday season is filled with happiness, contentment, and peace. We wish you a successful 2025!

SDO meet with Governor Healey



SDO Executive Director Bill McAvoy (4th from left) and SDO staff meet with Governor Maura Healey (5th from left). Other SDO staff are (from left) Buyer Engagement, Training, and Policy Manager Katherine Thomas, Senior Financial and Operations Analyst Pat Ghannam, Director of Diverse and Small Business Certification Wanda Colon-D'Angelo, Director of Marketing, Communications, and Training Robert Keane, Director of Programs and Engagement Amanda LaCroix, Director of SDO Systems and Data Analytics Nani Assefa, and Interim General Counsel & Director of Performance & Project Manager Bonnie Borch-Rote (before she was named as SDO Executive Director - see above).

Before he retired, SDO Executive Director Bill McAvoy and some SDO staff were able to meet with Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey at the Statehouse! Governor Healey had some encouraging words for the SDO staff and expressed gratitude for Bill's decades of public service.

The empty frame on Governor Healey's wall in the photo above typically features a former Governor that inspires the current administration. The Healey Administration left the frame empty, as a reminder of those who remain underrepresented--people the SDO is

dedicated to helping. For more information on the significance of the frame, [click here](#).

Check Out these Current and Upcoming Bids!



- CLT09: Clothing, Uniforms, Footwear, Accessories, Personal Care Products. [Link to the bid](#).
- ITT85: Network and Communication Services and Hardware. [Link to the Intent to Bid](#).
- GRO42: School Nutrition Products. [Link to the bid](#).
- PRF85: Enterprise Temporary Help Services. [Link to the Intent to Bid](#).
- The Massachusetts Human Resources Division (HRD) has posted a solicitation for Arbitrators. [Please review the COMMBUYS listing](#) for the bid announcement.

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

- **Catering Conference** - [Link to the bid](#)
- **Emergency Assistance Food Services** - [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](#).

Eligibility Changes for SDO Certification

The SDO recently changed its regulations to help us promote diversity in state contracting and increase opportunities for diverse and small businesses.

The SDO expanded our definition of eligibility to include non-citizens permanently residing in the U.S. under the color of law. Specifically, the language governing who is an “eligible person” to receive SDO certification now includes individuals permanently residing under the color of law in the United States (commonly referred to as PRUCOL). This designation is given to any non-citizen permanently living in the United States when the individual is known to the Department of Homeland Security and there is no evidence that the DHS is engaged in deportation proceedings against the noncitizen.

The citizenship requirement for SDO certification had become a roadblock for many companies that are locally-owned and have been fixtures in their communities for years. This change in our regulations ensures the benefits of SDO certification will be more accessible,

equitable, and inclusive of businesses that have been historically underserved.

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 FY2023, the Commonwealth spent \$3.38 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!](#)



New Updates to the Supplier Diversity Hub

The Supplier Diversity Hub ("The Hub"), a networking tool used to connect diverse and small businesses with interested parties, recently made a number of updates to make the system even more essential.

Now, with these updates, vendors using the Hub will be able to receive important notifications on bids, update their profiles, and upload brochures for their businesses. Agencies and prime vendors will be able to search vendors by departmental contracts and by ethnicity (MBEs only).

"The idea behind The Hub is to make it easier for vendors, agencies, and prime vendors to find each other and communicate," said SDO Executive Director Bill McAvoy. "With these updates, The Hub is a stronger tool than ever before."

If you are a vendor or agency who has yet to use The Hub, [please click here to get started](#); if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at webmaster.sdo@mass.gov.



Supplier Diversity Office

Supplier Diversity Hub

Welcome to the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Hub (The Hub).
This online portal facilitates connections between diverse and small businesses, Commonwealth public buyers, prime bidders, contractors, and resource providers.

New Users

To see if you qualify to use the Hub, diverse and small businesses, Commonwealth public buyers, prime bidders, contractors, and resource providers should click here:

[Start Registration](#)

Existing Users

[Reset Password](#)

[Sign In](#)

[Supplier Diversity Office \(SDO\) Home](#)
[Help and Questions](#)

Notice: Emails from The Hub come from the address noreply.sdh@macgovolutions.com. Please add this email to your safe senders list as they may end up in your spam folder. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us at webmaster.sdh@state.ma.us

The new Hub log-in screen



Diverse Business Certification Updates

The SDO certified 51 businesses in November 2024. For the latest list of newly-



Pre-Certification Webinars

For businesses wishing to apply for SDO certification, attending a Pre-Certification Webinar is a

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.

must. This webinar covers the different types of SDO and SDO-recognized third-party certifications as well as the State certification process.

Registration is now available for webinars in March and April 2025. Sign up [here](#).



New SDO training now available!

Hub Vendor Reporting- for Prime Contractors

Are you a Prime Contractor on a Departmental Contract? As part of contract terms and conditions, vendors are required to spend with certified diverse businesses.

Supplier diversity spending needs to be entered in the Supplier

Diversity Hub (the Hub), the online system used by the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO). *Learn how to do this in our upcoming training!*

Topics to be covered include how to:

- Register in the Hub
- Report SDP spend
- View payments in the dashboard

Upcoming webinar dates (you only need to attend one):

- **January 9, from 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.**
- **April 22, from 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.**

[Click Here to Register](#). Once registered, you will receive a confirmation email.

Class size is limited! Please register in advance

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

Follow us on:



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