

Pathways & Connections

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



July 2022

Resources for
Diverse and
Small
Businesses

Open Bid
Opportunities
on COMMBUYS

COMMBUYS
Vendor Training
Schedule

Directory of
Certified
Businesses

Disability Independence Day Turns 32

The SDO celebrated Disability Independence Day (July 26), the anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

[Learn about how the ADA prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities.](#)



New Executive Order Strengthens the Push for Equality

The Baker-Polito Administration announced Executive Order No. 599, titled "Reaffirming Programs to Ensure Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Diverse and Small Massachusetts Businesses in State Procurement and Contracting." The order will provide greater opportunities for diverse and small Massachusetts businesses.

The Order consolidates administration and oversight of the state's supplier diversity program and related initiatives under the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO). It also creates a Supplier Diversity Office Diverse and Small Business Advisory Board and calls for the

appointment of an Agency Supplier Diversity Officer in each state department who will be responsible for ensuring that diverse and small business spending benchmarks are met.

“Small and diverse businesses are critical components of the Massachusetts economy, and our Administration has been focused on expanding opportunities for these companies in the public marketplace,” said Governor Charlie Baker while announcing the new Order. “I am proud to sign this Executive Order today and identify steps that will continue our work to ensure greater diversity, transparency and accountability in our state contracting process.”

[Read the full press release here.](#)

[See the full Executive Order here.](#)



Grant Opportunities

Click the links below to learn more about these programs:

- The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the PRF76 Strategic Sourcing Team (SST) are soliciting Bidders for the acquisition of Management Consultants, Program Coordinators and Planners Services. Bids are due on August 4. [Please review the COMMBUYS listing](#) for complete details.
- The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) is seeking to establish contracts with vendors who offer Municipal Waste Combustor, Incinerator services throughout the Commonwealth. [Read the COMMBUYS listing here.](#)



SDO Shows Great Gains in New Annual Report

The SDO released its FY2021 Annual Report, which gives encouraging details on the advancements in the SDO's mission of expanding contracting opportunities with businesses owned by minorities, women, veterans, service-disabled veterans, those with a disability and LGBT individuals, as well as small Massachusetts businesses.

The SDO's report indicates that the Commonwealth spent approximately \$2.85 billion with diverse and small businesses in FY21, a 26.7% increase over the prior year. Furthermore, benchmarks for state department spending for small businesses, minority-owned businesses, and women-owned businesses were exceeded by 33%, 9.8%, and 38.4% respectively.

Other Highlights include:

- Overall Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) spending grew by \$88 million in FY2021 over the prior year.
- The SDO reported growth in all race and ethnicity categories, especially in Black (84%), Hispanic/Latino (23%), Asian American (Pacific) (19%) and Asian American (Subcontinent) (36%) categories.
- State spending with Black businesses grew by nearly \$42 million in FY2021.

[Read the full Annual Report here.](#)

Meet the SDO: Sam Gebremichael, EDP System Analyst

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.



What are some benefits of certification that businesses may not know about?

I think most business owners don't realize that in addition to being certified, their business could receive extra earning power, as they now have a separate validation of their expertise.

Favorite quote: "One of the lessons that I grew up with was to always stay true to yourself and never let what somebody else says distract you from your goals." – Michelle Obama

How can a diverse or small business make the most of a training session or a webinar?

They should do their best to learn the virtual communication platforms such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Even outside of a training or webinar, these businesses can use that knowledge to expand their business by sharing videos and slides to hundreds of potential clients with confidence and accuracy.

Can Virtual networking events be as effective as in-person events?

Absolutely. Virtual events are growing rapidly in both quality and quantity. In-person events will always have their own attraction, but I think what you will see more and more in the future is that they will be augmented with online versions to provide a broader reach.

Sam Gebremichael can be reached at sam.gebremichael@mass.gov.

Favorite song: "One Love" by Bob Marley

Favorite vacation spot: The Caribbean (Cancun)

Favorite food: Italian Food

Pet peeve: Being interrupted while I am talking and people who are late

Last book read: *Long Walk to Freedom* by Nelson Mandela

Last TV Show seen/binged: *Money Heist*

Dog person or cat person?: Dog person

What made you come to work at the SDO?: I wanted the opportunity to work with diverse and small businesses

Something about you that others may not know: I am bilingual; I speak both English and French



Diverse Business Certification Updates

SDO certified 49 businesses in June 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.



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.

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:

Thursday, July 28, 2022 9:00 a.m.

Wednesday, August 24, 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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Certification HelpDesk: Webmaster.SDO@mass.gov

SDP & SBPP HelpDesk: sdp@mass.gov

Phone: (617) 502-8843

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