

Pathways & Connections

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



June 2024

Resources for
Diverse and
Small
Businesses

Open Bid
Opportunities
on COMMBUYS

SDO and
Commonwealth
Training
Opportunities

Directory of
Certified
Businesses

SDO Annual Report Shows Progress for Diverse and Small Businesses

The SDO's FY23 Annual Report gave encouraging news in fulfilling our 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 report, which was [announced by Governor Maura Healey](#) in June, said the Commonwealth spent approximately \$3.38 billion with diverse and small businesses in FY23, a 7.56% increase over the prior year. Furthermore, benchmarks for state department spending for small businesses, minority-owned businesses, and women-owned businesses were exceeded by 46%, 8.14%, and 43.03% respectively.

Other Highlights include:

- Spending benchmarks in the SDO's Supplier Diversity Program (SDP) were created for LGBT and Disability-Owned Businesses effective in FY2024, further building on Massachusetts having the most inclusive state supplier diversity program in the nation.
- In FY2023, the state had direct expenditures with 1,584 diverse and small companies, an 8 percent increase compared to FY2022. The number of diverse businesses listed as supplier diversity partners by Massachusetts contractors reached 1,238, an increase of 4 percent over the prior year.
- In FY2023, MBE spending by executive departments and other agencies participating in the Supplier Diversity Program grew by \$3.3 million, despite a dramatic shift in purchasing after the end of the COVID pandemic.
- Spending with Asian American (Pacific), Cape Verdean, and Hispanic/Latino owned businesses increased by 5.97 percent, 20.37 percent, and 14.22 percent respectively.
- The SDO added 1,149 new diverse businesses to its directory (a 25 percent increase over FY2022), including 202 new MBEs, 178 new WBEs, 28 new disability-owned businesses, 25 new veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses, and 801 new LGBT-owned businesses.

[To see the complete SDO FY23 Annual Report, click here.](#)

The SDO Celebrates Supplier Diversity Excellence

In June, the SDO recognized the state departments who represented the best in supplier diversity in FY2023 with an award ceremony at UMass Boston.

Awards were given for promoting the SDO's mission of fairness and equity in the state bidding process and recognized more than 30 organizations. Speaking at the event were the Governor's Chief Secretary April English, Deputy Chief of Staff for Access and Opportunity Marcony Almeida-Barros, and Executive Office for Administration and Finance's Assistant Secretary Mark Fine.

The SDO congratulates the award winners:

Supplier Diversity Excellence Award for the Executive department who met all benchmarks for businesses owned by Minorities, Women, and Veterans and Small Businesses:

- **Soldiers Home in Holyoke**

Exceptional Performance Award for achieving three out of four benchmarks - Women, Minority, and Small Business - for five years in a row:

- **Executive Office of Public Safety & Security**
- **Department of Early Education & Care**

High Five Award, for the agency who has met its Veteran benchmark five years in a row:

- **Executive Office of Education**

Standing Ovation Award, for the agency that achieved three out of four benchmarks - Women, Minority, and Small Business - for three years in a row:

- **Executive Office of Technology Services and Security**

Three Cheers Award for agencies who met three out of four benchmarks:

- **Department of Public Health**
- **Department of Public Utilities**
- **Department of Telecommunications and Cable**
- **Division of Insurance**
- **Executive Office of Economic Development**
- **Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities**
- **Executive Office of Veterans Services**
- **Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council**
- **Military Division**
- **Office of the Chief Medical Examiner**
- **Department of Agricultural Resources**
- **Commission against Discrimination**
- **Veterans' Home in Chelsea**
- **Department of Capital Asset Management & Maintenance**
- **Department of Conservation and Recreation**

- **Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs**
- **Mass Gaming Commission**
- **Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission**
- **Massachusetts State Police**
- **Sex Offender Registry Board**

Key Contributor award for departments who helped increase diverse spend and purchased from the most diverse vendors in each category:

Purchasing from the Most Minority Owned Businesses:

- **Executive Office of Health and Human Services**

Purchasing from the Most LGBT and Veteran Owned Businesses:

- **Department of Mental Health**

Purchasing from the Most Women-Owned and Small Businesses:

- **Department of Public Health**

Purchasing from the Most Disability Owned Businesses:

- **Department of Conservation and Recreation**

Spotlight award for providing leadership and collaboration with the SDO on using and improving the Supplier Diversity Hub:

- **Massachusetts State Police**

Spotlight Award for launching their own certification program:

- **City of Springfield**

Scenes from this year's award celebration



SDO Executive Director Bill McAvoy receives a surprise citation from the Governor's Deputy Chief of Staff for Access and Opportunity Marcony Almeida-Barros.



McAvoy and Director of SDO Systems and Data Analytics Nani Assefa (far right) give the Spotlight Award to the State Police.



the Governor's Chief Secretary April English speaks at the Award Ceremony.



Robert Boncore (left) from the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) with Richard Currier from the state's Human Resources Division (HRD).



The SDO team after the awards were finished. See you next year!

Trade Bids Deadline in Mid July

To all tradespeople: There is still time to apply for a number of recently re-opened contracts ranging from plumbing to welding to elevator repair.

Last month, the Operational Services Division (OSD) reopened and posted bids for two tradespersons contracts. Vendors can now review and submit bids for contracts [TRD01](#) and [TRD03](#). **Bids for these contracts are due by July 17, 2024.**

Earlier this year, Governor Maura Healey announced these contracts would be reopened to provide greater opportunity to diverse and small businesses and expand options for state agencies and cities and

towns.

The Operational Services Division (OSD) and the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) are working together to uphold the Administration's commitment to equity by creating opportunities for local businesses to sell their goods and services to the state and its municipalities.

The specific trades involved in TRD01 and TRD03 include: Boilers; Drains; Electrical; Fencing; General Contracting; Generator/Turbine; Glass/Window/Doors; HVAC/Sheet Metal; Painting; Plumbing, Solar Array Inspection; Elevator; Exhaust Services; Fire Detection; Fire Suppression; Overhead Doors; Signage; and Welding.

Two other tradespersons contracts, TRD02 and TRD04, will reopen in late summer/ early fall 2024.

For more information, [read about the contracts](#) on the Mass.gov web page, and see the [official flyer](#) for the reopened contracts. If interested, [click here](#) to find out about next steps in the bidding process.



PRIDE MONTH

June = Pride Month!

To celebrate Pride Month, please check out success stories of these LGBT-owned businesses!

Sarah A. Scala Consulting - This company was ranked #51 by the *Boston Business Journal* as one of the biggest LGBT businesses in Massachusetts. Scala was also recently awarded by *Great Companies International* for the "Women Entrepreneur Award 2024" in the category of "Human Resources and Consulting."

LN Westgate - According to owner Lisa Westgate, the company had a fantastic experience with their first booth at the Institute for Supply Management (ISM) conference in Las Vegas. This event led to two

upcoming speaking engagements for Westgate, one at the ISM Arizona charter, followed by another engagement in New Jersey in July. She is scheduled to speak about the benefits of software-aided supplier diversity management. Westgate said, "These opportunities allow us to share the significant advantages of leveraging software to enhance supplier diversity, showcase our expertise, and expand our network in the industry."



Juneteenth - June 19

The SDO celebrated the Juneteenth holiday, which commemorates when enslaved people of African descent in Galveston, Texas, finally learned of their freedom through the Emancipation Proclamation-- which was issued more than two years prior. [Click here to learn about the historical legacy of Juneteenth.](#)

SDO Means *Business*

Click here for more!

SDO at Mass Save

We were thrilled to have a table at the Mass Save Supplier Diversity Summit at Bristol Community College in Fall River in June. Picture are the SDO's Construction Program Coordinator Meghan Costa (right) with Intern Aidan Ellis.



Check Out these Current and Upcoming Bids!

Featured Bid - Various Trades - TRD01 and TRD03 (just posted) and TRD02 and TRD04 (Intents to Bid)

As mentioned earlier in this newsletter, the Operational Services Division (OSD) has reopened the bid response deadline for a series of tradesperson contracts. The specific trades involved in the first round of bidding for TRD01 and TRD03 include: Boilers; Drains; Electrical; Fencing; General Contracting; Generator/Turbine; Glass/Window/Doors; HVAC/Sheet Metal; Painting; Plumbing, Solar Array Inspection; Elevator; Exhaust Services; Fire Detection; Fire Suppression; Overhead Doors; Signage; and Welding.

Review the Bids:

The following Trades contracts have just reopened to add additional vendors:

[TRD01](#)

[TRD03](#)

The following Trades Contracts will reopen in late summer/early fall 2024 to add additional vendors:

[TRD02](#)

[TRD04](#)

Other Bidding opportunities:

- **FAC119: Maintenance Repair and Operations (MRO) Retail Products and Supplies.** [Link to the Bid.](#)

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](#).

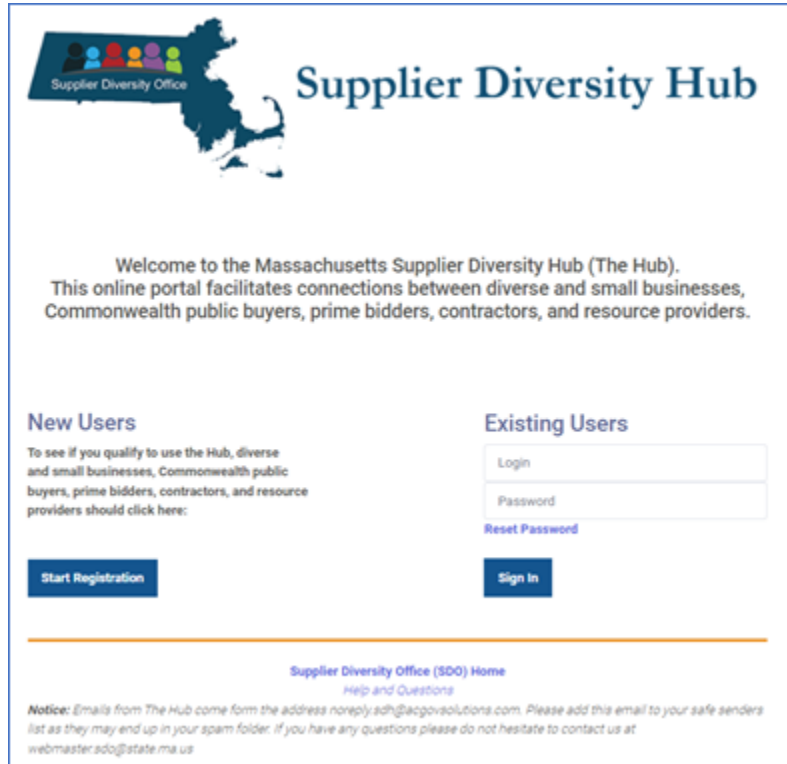


The Supplier Diversity Hub - an Easy, Free Way to Help Grow Your Business

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 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.

[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

Login

Password

[Reset Password](#)

[Sign In](#)

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

Notice: Emails from The Hub come from the address noreply.sdh@acgovsolutions.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.sdo@state.ma.us

The new Hub log-in screen

Meet the SDO: Bonnie Borch-Rote, Interim General Counsel and Director of Performance and Project Management

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.



Favorite quote:

What made you want to work at the SDO?

I started my first job with the SDO as a Certification Investigator in 2010 after learning about the office through a staffing firm. I was very excited to work at an agency with an important and fulfilling mission--supporting diverse and small businesses. More than 13 years later, through several career roles and seeing the SDO become an independent agency, I am excited to again be a part of such a fantastic and important agency. I am so thankful for the team we have and applaud their hard work!

What do you see as some of the biggest challenges ahead for diverse and small businesses?

Today's rapidly changing technology, AI, and data availability. These and related areas are evolving so quickly, business owners must adjust faster and faster every day to keep up with the changes that may impact their industry! They must constantly adjust how to best market and compete in the digital world, all while still balancing the day-to-day management of their businesses. This must be very challenging, especially for small and diverse businesses that may have less staff and fewer resources than larger, more established firms.

[The SDO's Resource Page](#) offers a list of organizations in various industries that can help support business owners as they grow their firms.

"Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you."

- Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Favorite song:

Light of a Clear Blue Morning (1977 original version), by Dolly Parton

Favorite vacation spot:

There are too many wonderful places in the world to choose just one! Morocco, Greece, and London are in my top five for sure.

Favorite food:

Chicken and sausage gumbo

Pet peeve:

Food waste

Last TV Show seen/binged:

Jeopardy!

Last book read:

Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury

Dog person or cat person?

Dogs, especially scruffy ones like my little pooch, Audrey (in photo).

Tell us something about you that others may not know:

I have traveled to all seven continents!

Bonnie Borch-Rote can be reached at:

bonnie.borch-rote@mass.gov



Diverse Business Certification Updates

SDO certified 43 businesses in May 2024. For the latest 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 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 from now through December 2024. 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 the contract terms and conditions for large contracts (with an annual value of \$250,000 or more), **vendors are required to spend a percentage of contract sales with certified diverse businesses and report spending in the Supplier Diversity Hub** (“the Hub”), the new, online tool used to record spend and connect with vendors and agencies.

The Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) has a class designed to help navigate the Hub. In this class, you will learn how to:

- Register in the Hub
- Add and manage users
- Complete and submit SDP spend reports
- View spend in the dashboard

(PRE-REQUISITE: This class is for prime contractors currently on a Departmental contract).

There are three classes available: July 10, August 21, and September 18, from 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Class size is limited to 25 participants! Please register in advance.

If you are interested in attending this class, [Click Here to register](#). Once registered, you will receive a confirmation email and you can add the event to your calendar.

If you need special accommodations to fully participate in the training, please email [Julie.A.Kearnan](#) for assistance.

Follow us on:



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