



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Diverse and Small Business Program Policies for Goods and Services Procurements



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# General SDO Program Policy

## Background

Executive Order No. 565, Reaffirming and Expanding the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Program (SDP), renewed the Commonwealth's commitment to the Supplier Diversity Program with the goal "to promote equity of opportunity in state government."

Executive Order No. 523, Establishing the Massachusetts Small Business Purchasing Program (SBPP), created the program "to support the existence and growth of small businesses [...] by providing them with special consideration within the Commonwealth's procurement process for goods and services required by state agencies."

Consistent with the directives of the Executive Orders, the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) has established the following Policies. The sections immediately below provide an overview of the Policy which compares SDP and SBPP, which are then followed by specific descriptions of each program.

## General SDO Program Applicability

This policy applies to the acquisition of commodities and services by all Executive Departments (hereinafter "departments") pursuant to MGL Chapter 7, Section 22; MGL Chapter 30, Sections 51 and 52; and 801 CMR 21.00. A separate policy is focused on the application of the SDP to the acquisition of client health and human services, also referred to as the Purchase of Service (POS). The effective date of this policy is July 1, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

## The Supplier Diversity Office and Departmental Responsibilities

The Supplier Diversity Office (SDO), in partnership with the Governor's Office for Access and Opportunity, provides overall coordination and oversight of the Commonwealth's Executive Branch diverse and small business programs. This includes, but is not limited to, the certification of diverse and small businesses, issuing policies and guidance, calculating benchmarks, providing program resources, informing departments on their benchmark progress, ensuring compliance with program requirements and publishing the annual report with final program results for all departments.

Each department is responsible for the implementation of this policy and ensuring that departmental staff and contractors comply with its provisions. Each secretariat and department shall appoint a liaison, known as either a Secretary Supplier Diversity Officer (SSDO) or an Agency Supplier Diversity Officer (ASDO) who shall be the central point of contact for questions regarding the department's diverse and small business programs. Should a department fail to explicitly designate an SSDO/ASDO, the position shall default to the department's Chief Procurement Officer (CPO). Departments may designate a different SSDO/ASDO by informing the SDO at [sdp@mass.gov](mailto:sdp@mass.gov).

## Annual Departmental Benchmarks

Annual benchmarks for departmental supplier diversity and small business spending are set by the SDO after consultation with the Operational Services Division (OSD) and subject to approval by the Secretary for Administration and Finance and the Governor's Office for Access and Opportunity. The benchmark spending amounts are based on applying the following current benchmark percentages to each department's discretionary

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<sup>1</sup> Sections of this document related to the SDP and SBPP include additional information on the applicability of this revised policy to procurements issued prior to July 1, 2021.

budget and, at the end of each fiscal year, to its discretionary spending<sup>2</sup>:

| <b>Program</b>                    | <b>Certification Type</b>   | <b>Benchmark Percentage</b> |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Small Business Purchasing Program | Massachusetts-based Small Business  | 3.3%                        |
| Supplier Diversity Program        | Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)  | 8%                          |
|                                   | Woman Business Enterprise (WBE)   | 14%                         |
|                                   | Veteran Business, including Veteran Business Enterprise (VBE) and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise (SDVOBE) | 3%                          |
|                                   | Disability-owned Business Enterprise (DOBE)   | No benchmark <sup>3</sup>   |
|                                   | LGBT Business Enterprise (LGBTBE)   | No benchmark                |

## Annual Procurement Plans

At the start of each fiscal year, each department must complete a draft Annual Procurement/Purchasing Plan using a planning template provided by the SDO. Subsequently, no later than August 30, departments must finalize their plans, making updates based on the issuance of the Commonwealth’s Budget for the given fiscal year.

In the process of developing their procurement/purchasing plans for the SDO, departments are encouraged to identify purchasing, procurement, and contracting opportunities that will be most effective in achieving the following planning goals in the order of importance:

- Meet or exceed all SDO benchmarks for the upcoming fiscal year;
- Increase total spending with diverse and small companies compared to the previous fiscal year; and
- Increase the number of diverse and small firms the department does business with compared to the previous fiscal year.

The inclusion of goals beyond meeting departmental spending benchmarks recognizes the success of many departments and encourages them to continue to expand their efforts engaging diverse and small businesses.

## Meeting Benchmarks

Departments are required to make a good faith effort to meet all diverse and small business spending benchmarks. They may accomplish this in the following ways:

| <b>Program</b>                    | <b>Creditable Spending</b>   |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Small Business Purchasing Program | <b>Direct</b> spending with Massachusetts-based Small Businesses   |
| Supplier Diversity Program        | <b>Direct and indirect</b> spending with all applicable certification types listed in the table above and described in greater detail below <sup>4</sup> |

**Whenever a contract allows direct vendor selection**, departments shall utilize diverse and small businesses to the extent possible based on contract terms, SDO and departmental policies, laws, and regulations. Additionally,

<sup>2</sup> The SDO estimates each department’s discretionary budget at the beginning of each fiscal year, based on prior spending in a set of discretionary object codes. At the end of each fiscal year, the SDO uses actual spending in those object codes to calculate the department’s actual benchmarks. Discretionary object codes for the year are published on the SDO’s [SDP Webpage](#).

<sup>3</sup> While no DOBE and LGBTBE spending benchmarks have been set, the SDO monitors spending in these categories and intends to establish benchmarks in the future.

<sup>4</sup> Note that to count toward SBPP or SDP spending, spending must be with firms registered as SBPP members within the COMMBUYS system or included in either the SDO’s Directory of Certified Businesses or in another directory accepted by the SDO, respectively.

departments shall make a preference for contractors with higher SDP commitments and/or performance whenever such a preference is feasible.

**Whenever a contract requires the solicitation of multiple quotes**, departments shall, at a minimum, notify at least **two** diverse and/or small businesses capable of providing the product or service of the opportunity, if available.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, departments shall apply SBPP policy as articulated below and shall follow SBPP implementation guidance issued by OSD.

**Whenever a department conducts a new open-market procurement**, the provisions of at least one program, SDP or SBPP, shall apply to all departmental and statewide procurements of commodities and services. The SDP shall serve as the default program in cases where the department is unable to reliably estimate the procurement size. See below for additional policy concerning new procurements and purchasing.

## **Removing Barriers for Diverse and Small Business Engagement**

When planning and conducting procurements, departments must identify and, whenever feasible, remove barriers to diverse and small business engagement. Departmental efforts may include, but may not be limited to:

- Researching the diverse and small vendor availability and capacity to meet procurement needs;
- Identifying potential diverse and small bidders and directing them to register in COMMBUYS, apply for SBPP status and applicable SDO certification, and receive training on doing business with the Commonwealth;
- Analyzing upcoming procurement for opportunities for diverse and small business participation, including regional and category awards;
- Removal or revision of terms and conditions that affect the ability of diverse and small businesses to participate in a procurement;
- Collaborating with the SDO to promote departmental business opportunities to diverse and small vendors;
- Utilizing clarification, Best and Final Offer (BAFO) and negotiation; and
- Conducting debriefings and providing other types of feedback to diverse and small bidders, in accordance with OSD policy.

Once a procurement has been completed, departments shall document the award by issuing a PO in COMMBUYS.

## **The Small Business Purchasing Program (SBPP) Policy**

### **Summary of Policy Requirements**

#### **Applicability**

The revised policy applies to all new commodities and services procurements and RFQs from existing statewide and departmental contracts for commodities and services posted on or after July 1, 2021.

There shall be a transition period of 30 days from the effective date of this policy (or through July 31, 2021) to allow departments to incorporate new contract language, forms, and processes into upcoming procurements. During the transition period, departments may use previously issued contract language, forms, and processes for procurements nearing publication of this policy.

#### **Program Goal**

The SBPP promotes the utilization of small businesses in the Commonwealth's goods and services contracting through direct purchasing from, and contracting with, small businesses.

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<sup>5</sup> On contracts that have one small or diverse vendor, this vendor must be notified. Contracts that have no small or diverse vendors are exempt from this requirement.

## **Eligible Businesses Included in the SBPP**

COMMBUYS, the Commonwealth's online procurement marketplace, is the system of record for the SBPP. SBPP participating small businesses are identified in COMMBUYS with a "Certified" SBR tag.

## **Purchasing from Small Businesses**

As stated above, whenever a contract allows direct vendor selection, departments shall utilize diverse and small businesses to the extent possible based on contract terms, SDO and departmental policies, laws, and regulations.

## **SBPP Requirements for Competitive Solicitations**

**Small Business Award Preference and its Inclusion in the Solicitation:** All Small Procurements (estimated annual value equal to or less than \$250,000) must include SBPP Contract Language, which shall be provided by OSD in consultation with the SDO, stating that the department intends to award a contract to a Massachusetts-based Small Business if a response from an eligible SBPP participant is received and meets the department's best value criteria. Such language must be prominent within the main part of the solicitation document, and not only as part of an attachment or appendix. SBPP contract language shall be provided by OSD in consultation with SDO. For guidance regarding best value, consult with OSD.

**Participation of Large Businesses:** While all businesses interested in bidding on Small Procurements may do so, it is the intention of the SBPP to only evaluate bids received from, and to award a contract to, an SBPP-participating bidder that meets the Department's best value criteria. An award may be made to a non-SBPP eligible bidder if no responses are received from an eligible small business or if responses received from an eligible small business do not meet the requirements of the Small Procurement. Responses received from an SBPP participant shall not be disqualified based on price or desirable criteria unless the Department conducts a clarification, Best and Final Offer (BAFO) and/or negotiation, and these efforts are unsuccessful.

## **Inclusion of Small Businesses in Large Procurements**

While the SBPP preference does not apply to Large Procurements (estimated annual value greater than \$250,000), departments are encouraged to engage in the following best practices:

- Set small business award goals for procurements.
- Provide an evaluation preference for SBPP-participating bidders.
- Promote the procurement to possible SBPP-participating bidders.

## **Compliance and Quality Assurance Reviews of SBPP Procurements**

The SDO's Compliance Unit shall review and enforce department compliance with SDO programs, policies, and benchmarks and take appropriate compliance, enforcement, and corrective action measures. The OSD's Quality Assurance (QA) Unit shall continue to include SBPP information in its procurement reviews and shall refer non-compliance with language and evaluation requirements to the SDO. For more information regarding OSD's QA program, consult the [Conducting Best Value Procurements Handbook](#).

# The Supplier Diversity Program (SDP) Policy

## Summary of Policy Requirements

### Applicability

The revised policy applies to all new commodities and services procurements posted on or after July 1, 2021. It does not apply to rolling enrollment procurements issued prior to that date or re-openings of existing open enrollment procurements originally posted prior to that date.

There shall be a transition period of 30 days from the effective date of this policy (or through July 31, 2021) to allow departments to incorporate new contract language, forms, and processes into upcoming procurements. During the transition period, departments may use previously issued contract language, forms, and processes for procurements nearing publication of this policy.

### Program Goal

The Supplier Diversity Program (SDP) promotes the utilization of diverse businesses in the Commonwealth's goods and services contracting through:

- **Direct purchasing from and contracting with diverse businesses:** This type of contracting results in direct spending with diverse businesses.
- **Business-to-business partnerships between the Commonwealth's prime contractors and diverse businesses:** Such partnerships result in indirect spending with diverse businesses and may consist of ancillary or subcontracting relationships.

### Eligible Businesses Included in the SDP

The diverse business categories included in the SDP are:

- Minority-Owned Business Enterprise or Nonprofit Organization (MBE or M/NPO);
- Women-Owned Business Enterprise or Nonprofit Organization (WBE or W/NPO);
- Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise (VBE);
- Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise (SDVOBE);
- Disability-Owned Business Enterprise (DOBE);
- LGBT-Owned Business Enterprise (LGBTBE).

To be considered valid SDP partners, companies in the above categories must be listed in one of the following directories of certified businesses:<sup>6</sup>

- [SDO Directory of Certified Businesses](#)
- [U.S. Veterans Administration VetBiz Vendor Information Pages \(VIP\)](#)

## Purchasing from Diverse Businesses

As stated above, whenever a contract allows direct vendor selection, departments shall utilize diverse and small businesses to the extent possible based on contract terms, SDO and departmental policies, laws, and regulations. Additionally, departments shall make a preference for contractors with higher SDP commitments and/or performance whenever such a preference is feasible.

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<sup>6</sup> The SDO has partnerships with several third-party certification organizations, whereby the SDO recognizes their certifications for inclusion in specific diverse business categories in the SDO Directory of Certified Businesses or an additional directory(ies) (e.g. U.S. Veterans Administration VetBiz VIP). Therefore, the list of businesses participating in SDO programs is expected to grow. Please contact the SDO at [sdp@mass.gov](mailto:sdp@mass.gov) for assistance in finding additional diverse businesses if you do not find sufficient capacity in a specific industry or supplier base for the product or service being sought.

## Supporting Direct Contracting with Diverse Businesses

While departments cannot provide preferential treatment to diverse businesses based on their certification, they may take the following actions to encourage diverse businesses to respond to business opportunities:

- Identify potential diverse bidders using the directories mentioned above;
- Notify potential diverse bidders of the upcoming opportunity, either directly or through the SDO;
- Recommend training available from OSD, SDO, or other departments; and
- Refer the potential diverse bidders to the SDO for information regarding certification and other available resources.

## Planning for Diverse Business Participation in a New Procurement<sup>7</sup>

During the planning stages of a Large Procurement (estimated annual value greater than \$250,000), departments must strive to tailor the supplier diversity measures to the industry and supplier base for the product or service being sought. Such supplier diversity measures may focus on direct spending with diverse businesses and/or fostering business-to-business partnerships between prime contractors and diverse businesses. The following planning steps should be taken:

- Identify potential direct and indirect business diverse engagement opportunities associated with the procurement;
- Plan for diverse vendor notification of the business opportunity, including seeking SDO assistance;
- Determine how the SDP Plan Form will be evaluated (at least 25% of the total available evaluation points must be allocated for the SDP Plan);
- Define compliance and reporting methodologies and incorporate language into the RFR, including the decision as to whether to use the SDP Spending Report Form or the department's own reporting method.

## SDP Requirements for Competitive Solicitations

**Promoting Program Awareness Prior to Bidding:** Departments must take steps to help bidders understand the SDP requirements prior to submitting their bids. Investing time to this proactive measure reduces the need for compliance, enforcement, and corrective action measures. At a minimum, the SDP section of the solicitation must be prominent within the main part of the solicitation document, and not only as part of an attachment or appendix. SDP contract language shall be provided by OSD in consultation with the SDO.

Additionally, the following measures are strongly recommended:

- **Pre-bid conferences and trainings:** Strategic Sourcing Teams (SSTs) are encouraged to include a summary of the SDP requirements and a review of the SDP Plan form in the pre-bid conference. This information may be delivered by the contract manager or by the SDO. To request SDO presence at the pre-bid conference, please email [sdp@mass.gov](mailto:sdp@mass.gov). In addition, the SDO will make SDP presentation slides available to department contract managers who opt to deliver the SDP information themselves at their pre-bid conferences.
- **Written Bid Q&A:** Posting SDP-related questions and answers under the Bid Q&A tab of the solicitation in COMMBUYS. To request sample questions and answers, please email [sdp@mass.gov](mailto:sdp@mass.gov).

**SDP Commitment:** The following provisions apply to SDP Commitments made by Bidders and Contractors:

- Bidders responding to a bid solicitation requiring an SDP Plan must provide an SDP commitment in the form of a specific percentage of sales under the resulting contract to be spent with Certified Partner(s). This percentage commitment will extend for the life of any resulting contract.
- Fixed dollar-amount commitments are not allowed. This ensures fair bid evaluations and allows for SDP spending expectations to adjust based on the overall value of the resulting contract.

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<sup>7</sup> While the focus of the SDP is on diverse businesses, SDO data shows that more than 90% of diverse businesses are also small. As a result, planning for diverse business participation should include business size considerations particular to the industry of the procurement.



- No contract requiring SDP shall be awarded without an SDP commitment, and bidders are required to offer at least a 1% SDP commitment.

**Use of SDP Plan Form and SDP Reporting Form:** Departments must use the SDP Plan Form in their bids and may not alter it without prior written approval from the SDO. To request approval, contact the SDO via email at [sdp@mass.gov](mailto:sdp@mass.gov). Departments shall include the SDP Reporting Form with their bids unless another form or manner of SDP Reporting is to be used. Such other form or manner shall be consistent with the SDP Reporting Form in data collected.

**Meaningful evaluation:** Submitted SDP plans must be evaluated in a meaningful way, taking into account the value of the SDP commitment made by the contractor. SDP plan evaluations must account for a minimum of 25% of the total evaluation score. The majority of the SDP evaluation score should be dedicated to the bidder's SDP commitment. Additional guidance is available from OSD on the evaluation of SDP Plan Form submissions.

**Subcontracting vs. Ancillary Relationships:** While the SDP Plan Form separates subcontracting and ancillary business-to-business relationships, this does not imply that one is more inherently valuable than the other. The total SDP commitment shall be used as a measure of each contractor's compliance with contract terms. Unless the RFR includes a specific desirable criterion for subcontracting or ancillary partnership spending, separate partnership types should not be assigned separate scores.<sup>8</sup>

**Additional SDP Commitments on RFQs:** When soliciting quotes from existing statewide or departmental contracts, the department may ask the prime contractor for an additional SDP commitment specifically related to the department's purchase or engagement. SDP spending for such a purchase or engagement must be reported by the contractor using the SDP Reporting Form directly to the department and may not be included in any other SDP reporting filed by the contractor.

**Clarification, Best and Final Offer (BAFO) and Negotiation:** Departments are encouraged to include the SDP commitment into contract clarification, BAFO and negotiation procedures, if used. Consult the OSD [Conducting Best Value Procurements Handbook](#) for more information about conducting clarifications, BAFOs and negotiations.

## Implementing, Monitoring and Enforcing Compliance of the SDP Plan

**Contractor Awareness after Award:** Departments must ensure that contractors understand the SDP requirements that apply to them after award. Continued focus on contractor awareness reduces the need for subsequent compliance, enforcement, and corrective action measures. The following measures are recommended:

- **Contractor on-boarding:** SSTs are encouraged to include a summary of the SDP requirements and review of the SDP reporting form(s) and process(es) into any contractor meetings at the start of the contract. This information may be delivered by the contract manager or by the SDO. To request SDO presence at a contractor on-boarding or another contractor meeting, please email [sdp@mass.gov](mailto:sdp@mass.gov).
- **Distribution of the program summary document:** SSTs also are encouraged to distribute the "Contract Vendor Responsibilities" document, which is available at [www.mass.gov/sdp](http://www.mass.gov/sdp).

**Compliance Monitoring:** Departments are required to monitor departmental contractor compliance with their SDP commitments as follows:

- Obtain regular SDP spending reports using SDP Reporting Form (available on the [SDO Forms](#) page) or another form. The SDO recommends quarterly reporting, but SDP spending information must be collected at least annually.

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<sup>8</sup> While the SDP allows subcontracting, some contracts may prohibit or have other conditions applicable to subcontracting (e.g. buyer approval prior to the use of subcontracting). Please consult contract RFR specifications and other terms to ensure that the SDP contract language is consistent with those terms.

- Review reports, to the extent possible, to ensure that the SDP partners listed on them meet the program certification criteria (i.e. were certified or recognized by the SDO during the reporting fiscal year).
- Take action if the contractor does not submit an SDP spending report, if the report is blank or incomplete, or if there are doubts or questions as to the validity of the information submitted on the report.
- Set timelines and targets for contractors to reach compliance with the annual spending commitments (e.g. six months into the contract, the contractor must demonstrate meeting at least 50% of its year-to-date SDP commitment). Conduct regular performance reviews to identify issues or problems in a timely, proactive manner.
- On an annual basis (contract anniversary or fiscal year) review contractor performance to ensure compliance with the spending commitment for the year.
- On at least a fiscal year basis, submit contractor SDP reports to the SDO for validation and inclusion in the SDO Annual Report. The SDO shall provide a template for report submission.

**Resolving Compliance Issues:** The SDP provisions of a contract are considered material terms, and a bidder's SDP commitment is a material obligation required by the contract. As a result, consequences of non-compliance are governed by the Suspension or Termination language of the [Commonwealth Terms & Conditions](#), which are signed by the contractor:

*The Department [...] may terminate or suspend a Contract if the Contractor breaches any material term or condition or fails to perform or fulfill any material obligation required by a Contract.*

In some cases, rather than suspend or terminate the contract, the SST may use the following tools:

- Suspend the non-compliant contractor from entering new engagements (while completing existing ones).
- Renew the contract with a non-compliant contractor for a term that is significantly shorter than the renewal term for contractors in good standing.
- Choose not to renew the contract for an additional term.

It is understood that suspension, termination, and non-renewal are measures of last resort and, as such, parties may negotiate to avoid these measures. Tools that are used to ensure contract performance in these cases include:

- Performance improvement/corrective action plans with a timeline for reaching contract compliance,
- Restatement of the SDP commitment using SDP Plan Form with specific partners named and which will result in at least equal or better value than the original SDP commitment, and
- Renewing the contract for a shorter time period (e.g. six months to a year for non-compliant vendors vs. two years for vendors in compliance) with further renewals being contingent on SDP compliance.

The SDO provides assistance to non-compliant vendors by identifying SDP partners, and vendors may reach out to the SDP Help Desk at [sdp@mass.gov](mailto:sdp@mass.gov).

**Performance Improvement/Corrective Action Plans:** An effective SDP corrective action plan must include the following components:

- A clear measurement of the gap in contract compliance: the contractor's SDP commitment, total contract spending over the period of non-compliance, total SDP spending reported by the contractor, and the difference between the total SDP spending reported and the total SDP spending expected.
- Specific steps the contractor commits to taking to come into compliance with deadlines for each step. Steps may include, but may not be limited to:
  - Identification of specific individuals within the company responsible for the implementation of the corrective action plan,
  - Meeting with the SST/SDO to improve understanding of the SDP,
  - Analysis of current suppliers to identify firms that currently are certified by the SDO or SDO-recognized third-party certifying organizations,
  - Outreach to current suppliers to identify suppliers that may be certified (followed by efforts to

- ensure that such suppliers apply for SDO certification<sup>9</sup>),
- Analysis of current and upcoming projects/engagements to identify potential new diverse subcontractors, and
- Analysis of current and upcoming business needs to identify potential new diverse ancillary partners.
- Specific deadlines/milestones for completing the steps above.
- The expected date of resolving the documented contract non-compliance.

**Documentation:** The SST should maintain sufficient documentation of all written or verbal communication to support the actions taken to resolve any non-compliance issues with the SDP Plan.

## **Compliance and Quality Assurance Reviews of SDP Plans and Reports**

The SDO's Compliance Unit shall review and enforce department compliance with SDO programs, policies, and benchmarks and take appropriate compliance, enforcement, and corrective action measures. OSD's QA Unit shall continue to include SDP information in its reviews of statewide and departmental procurements. Such reviews shall utilize the appropriate SDP policy for the time the procurement was issued. The Unit shall refer non-compliance with contract language, SDP Plan Form requirements, and evaluation criterion requirements to the SDO.

## **Procurements and Contracts Exempt from this Policy**

**Procurement Exceptions:** The following procurement exceptions contemplated by 801 CMR 21.00 are not required, but are encouraged to include applicable SDP and/or SBPP provisions to the extent possible:

- Legislative exemptions or legal restrictions due to a general or special law or other existing legal obligation;
- Emergency situations that require the immediate acquisition of a commodity or service to eliminate the emergency; and
- Incidental purchases.

**Non-discretionary Expenditures and Other Special Situations:** Additionally, unless directed otherwise, departments are not required but are encouraged to include applicable SDP and/or SBPP provisions to the extent possible in procurements or solicitations related to:

- Pensions and insurance;
- Awards, grants, and subsidies;
- Entitlement programs, loans, and special payments;
- Transactions outside of the Massachusetts Management Accounting and Reporting System (MMARS);
- Revenue-generating contracts;
- Products and services acquired from public entities (municipalities, public schools, etc.); and
- Products and services acquired through an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA).

This policy, and its SDP Plan approach specifically, was designed to allow prime contractors the freedom to meet their SDP commitments by pursuing business relationships with SDP Partners that meet the goods and services needs of their company. While this flexibility should eliminate the need for other exemptions from the SDP Plan requirement, exemptions may be considered by the SDO on a case-by-case basis. To request an exemption from applying SDP or SBPP requirements or to suggest an alternative means of achieving program goals on a specific procurement or a contract, departments must send the request with supporting documentation to [sdp@mass.gov](mailto:sdp@mass.gov). The SDP office will respond to all waiver requests within 10 business days.

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<sup>9</sup> The SDO does not guarantee that all certification applicants will receive certification.

## References and Related Materials

- [Learn about the Supplier Diversity Program \(SDP\)](#)
- [Learn about the Small Business Purchasing Program \(SBPP\)](#)
- Executive Order 565, [Reaffirming and Expanding the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Program](#)
- Executive Order No. 523, [Establishing the Massachusetts Small Business Purchasing Program](#)
- The [Conducting Best Value Procurements Handbook](#)
- [Best Value Evaluation of SDP Plan Forms: A Guide for Strategic Sourcing Teams](#)
- [Best Value Evaluation of Responses to Small Procurements: A Guide for Strategic Sourcing Teams](#)
- Supplier Diversity Program Plan Forms are located on the [SDO Forms](#) webpage.

## Revision History

| <b>Version Number</b> | <b>Date</b> | <b>Brief Description</b> |
|-----------------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| 1.0                   | 06/28/2021  | Initial release          |
|                       |             |                          |
|                       |             |                          |