As the contracting, certification, and compliance authority for the City of Chicago, DPS maintains the highest commitment to diversity, equity, transparency & innovation while continuously expanding the resources and programs that empower citizens to become involved in contracting opportunities. We have an obligation in government to ensure that all firms have an opportunity to participate in contracts that are paid for with taxpayer dollars. DPS manages the certifications of over 3,100 firms throughout the Chicagoland area that are minority, women-owned, veteran-owned, and business enterprises owned or operated by people with disabilities or disadvantaged businesses.

**TYPES OF CERTIFICATIONS**

- Minority-Owned Business Enterprise (MBE)
- Women-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE)
- Business Enterprises Owned or Operated by People with Disabilities (BEPD)
- Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise (VBE)
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)
- Airport Concession Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (ACDBE)

**BASIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- **Ownership:** At least 51% of the business entity must be owned by one or more women or minority groups.
- **Independence:** Must demonstrate the ability to independently perform in the firm’s area of specialty/expertise.
- **Control:** Must exercise control over the firm’s management and daily business operations.
- **Expertise:** Must demonstrate prior experience and expertise in the desired specialty area (i.e., training, licenses, certifications, or academic credentials).
- **Location:** Must be located in the Illinois counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Will, Lake, McHenry for MBE/WBE and VBE/BEPD. Anywhere in Illinois for DBE and ACDBE
- **Size:** The firm’s gross receipts must not exceed the maximum dollar threshold value (as applicable) and must meet other U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) size standards.

**BENEFITS OF CITY OF CHICAGO CERTIFICATION**

- Certifications that do not expire*
- An MBE/WBE Construction Increased Small Business Size Standard*
- Revised Personal Net Worth Calculation*
- Illinois Unified Certification Program (IL-UCP)
- Reciprocity with Cook County
- Participation in contracting opportunities targeted towards MBE and WBE certified firms
- Contract specific goals for participation by certified firms on City contracts
- Listing in the Chicago Certified Firms Director

* Denotes 2021/2022 revision to Certification programmatic criteria

**HOW TO APPLY**

- Visit www.cityofchicago.org/dps
- Certification applications are accepted ONLINE only, www.chicago.mwdbce.com

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Visit us at www.facebook.com/ChicagoDPS • @ChicagoDPS • www.youtube.com/ChicagoDPS
Chicago Certified Firms Directory - ONLINE

CONTACTS
To apply for certification or check the status of a firm’s certification, visit: https://chicago.mwdbe.com

Certification Contacts:
Désirée Otkins, Certification/Compliance Manager 312-744-1909, desiree.otkins@cityofchicago.org, dps.certification@cityofchicago.org

121 North LaSalle, City Hall Room 806, Chicago, IL 60602
312-744-4900 • www.cityofchicago.org/dps
www.facebook.com/ChicagoDPS • @ChicagoDPS • www.youtube.com/ChicagoDPS

ONLINE SEARCHABLE DATABASE
Search for certified firms by a number of criteria, including:
- Name
- Description
- Commodity Code
- Location
- Certification Type
- Ward
- Community Area

Get instant results, export as an Excel of CSV file.

TRAINING
DPS offers free workshops presented quarterly or monthly, to educate citizens and business owners about the fundamentals of procurement and the latest developments in procurement, certification and compliance.

To view the workshop calendar and register, go to www.cityofchicago.org/dpsevents

All workshops available on www.youtube.com/ChicagoDPS

CERTIFICATION/COMPLIANCE WORKSHOPS
How to Become Certified

The Online Certification Application – MBE/WBE/VBE/BEPD

The ABC’s of DBE and ACDBE Certification

Your Business Is Certified: Now What?

Compliance Documentation 101

WEBINARS
Vendors are able to participate in online webinars, which are held multiple times per week, including evening and weekend sessions. Classes include: Online Certification Application and Contract Compliance Reporting.

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