CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

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 3,400 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
* **Denotes 2021/2022 revision to Certification programmatic criteria**

✓ 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 Directory

HOW TO APPLY

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

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

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