

Opportunities for Disadvantaged-, Minority-, and Women-Owned Businesses

The City of Raleigh's GoRaleigh transit system and its agencies provide disadvantaged, minority and women-owned businesses with equal access to procurement and contracting opportunities. The City of Raleigh Public Works Transit program administers a program that encourages and assists such firms wishing to do business with us. The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program applies federal guidelines for providing eligible firms with these opportunities.

Frequently Asked Questions about DBE and M/WBE

- **What is the difference between a DBE and an M/WBE?**
- **Does my firm have to be certified as a DBE or M/WBE to do business with the CITY OF RALEIGH?**
- **How does DBE or M/WBE certification help my firm get CITY OF RALEIGH business?**
- **In what other ways does DBE or M/WBE certification help my firm?**
- **What are the criteria for obtaining DBE and M/WBE certification?**
- **What is the first step for a firm interested in becoming certified as a DBE or a M/WBE?**



What is the difference between a DBE and an M/WBE?

DBE certification is governed by federal regulations found at 49 CFR Part 26 (<http://www.fta.dot.gov/civilrights/12326.html>). To be eligible for DBE certification, a firm must be a small business concern that is at least 51% owned and controlled by individuals who are citizens or permanent residents and who are also both socially and economically disadvantaged. Under the governing federal regulations, there is a rebuttable presumption that members of the following groups are socially and economically disadvantaged: Black Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian-Pacific Americans, Subcontinent Americans, Women, and any additional groups whose members are designated as socially and economically disadvantaged by the U. S. Small Business Administration. In order to be economically disadvantaged an individual cannot have a personal net worth that exceeds \$1.32 million.

MBE and WBE certification is governed by Article 15-A of the Executive Law (<https://connect.ncdot.gov/business/SmallBusiness/Pages/MBE%20WBE%20Certification%20Process.aspx>) To be eligible for MBE or WBE certification, a firm must be a small business which is at least 51% owned, operated and controlled by minority group members and/or women who are citizens or permanent residents. The ownership interest must be real, substantial and continuing and the qualifying owners must have and exercise the authority to independently control the day-to-day business decisions of the firm. The firm must also be authorized to do business in North Carolina. Under Article 15-A, the following minority groups are recognized for MBE certification

- Black persons having origins in any of the Black African racial groups;
- Hispanic persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Dominican Cuban, Central or South American descent of either Indian or Hispanic origin, regardless of race;
- Asian and Pacific Islander persons having origins in any of the Far East countries, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent or the Pacific Islands; or
- Native American or Alaskan Native persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North America.



Does my firm have to be certified as a DBE or M/WBE to do business with the Go Raleigh?

No. Any business may compete for any GoRaleigh headquarters or agency contract, either as a prime contractor or as a subcontractor, whether or not they are certified as a DBE, MBE or WBE. However, if a firm is seeking to perform work on a contract as a DBE it must first obtain DBE certification from a Certifying Partner in the North Carolina Unified Certification Program (NCUCP). If a firm is seeking to perform work on a contract as a MBE or WBE it must first obtain the appropriate certification from North Carolina Department of Transportation.



How does DBE or M/WBE certification help my firm get Go Raleigh business?

GoRaleigh reviews certain contracts to determine whether they present opportunities for DBEs or M/WBEs. Based upon the funding source of contracts and the applicable federal regulation or GoRaleigh law, DBE or M/WBE participation goals may be established on GoRaleigh agency contracts. Once DBE or M/WBE contract goals have been established, only certified DBE or M/WBE firms may be used to meet the DBE or M/WBE participation goals.



In what other ways does DBE or M/WBE certification help my firm?

DBE and M/WBE certification provides your business with the opportunity to be listed in an electronic directory of certified firms, which is used by agencies and contractors to identify DBE or M/WBE firms for participation on contracts. Being a certified DBE or M/WBE may also open the door to opportunities for growing your business by making it easier for you to market your firm to GoRaleigh agencies or other government entities.

If your firm is certified as a DBE by Go Raleigh or another Certifying Partner in the NCUCP your DBE certification will be recognized and accepted by all agencies in NCDOT that require DBE certification. Additionally, your firm will be listed in the NCDOT electronic directory

<https://partner.ncdot.gov/VendorDirectory/default.html>).

If your firm is certified as a MBE or WBE by NCDOT your firm's M/WBE certification will be listed in the Directory of Certified Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises

<https://partner.ncdot.gov/VendorDirectory/default.html>) which is used by state agencies and contractors statewide. Because state government has been mandated by the Governor and Legislature to provide greater opportunity for participation by M/WBEs in state contracting, certification provides business owners an advantage when marketing goods and/or services to state agencies and authorities.



What are the criteria for obtaining certification?

The eligibility criteria for DBE certification are specifically outlined in the governing federal regulation at 49 CFR Part 26, Subpart D. In summary, a firm must be a small business concern that is at least 51% owned and controlled by individuals who are citizens or permanent residents and who are also socially and economically disadvantaged. The firm must be an independent business and can only receive certification in the areas in which the socially and economically disadvantaged owners exercise control. Firms located outside of North Carolina must first receive DBE certification from their home state.

Once NCDOT has received the completed documentation, a Certification Officer will contact you to schedule a site review of your business.

If you live in another state and wish to be certified in North Carolina you must first be certified in your home state. North Carolina is not a reciprocal state and therefore will ask the applicant to provide the information required by 49 CFR Part 26.85(c)(1-4) which includes the following:

- A complete copy of the application form and all supporting documents submitted to the home state or any other state related to your firm's certification.
- Affidavits of no change and any notices of changes submitted to your home state.
- Notices or correspondences from states other than your home state relating to your status as an applicant or certified DBE in those states.
- Whether you have filed a certification appeal with USDOT.
- **Affidavit** that affirms that you have submitted all the information required by 49 CFR Part 26.85 (c)(1) and that the facts in the on-site report remain true and correct.
- **Instructions** for Interstate Certification



What is the first step for a firm interested in becoming certified as a DBE or an M/WBE?

The NCDOT is responsible for DBE certification in the state of North Carolina and provides firms with "one-stop" shopping. To apply for DBE certification you may contact any one of the individuals NCDOT administrators listed below.

Marci Wright
Director, Office of Equal Opportunity & Workforce Services
NCDOT
1511 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1511
(919) 508-1808 or (800) 368-2778
[Mlwright4@ncdot.gov](mailto:mlwright4@ncdot.gov)

Kenneth Johnson
BOWD Manager
1511 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1511
(919) 508-1954
1-800-368-2778
Kdjohnson8@ncdot.gov



How to become a Historically Underutilized business (HUB) certified

<http://www.doa.state.nc.us/HUB/default.aspx>

Contact Us

Mailing Address:

Office for Historically Underutilized Businesses
1336 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1336

Physical Address:

116 W. Jones Street, Suite 4109
Raleigh, North Carolina 27603-8002

Phone: 919-807-2330 **Fax:** 919-807-2335 **E-mail:** HUBOffice.DOA@doa.nc.gov

Director's Office

Dennis M. English, Jr.	Director	919-807-2330	dennis.english@doa.nc.gov
<i>(About the Director)</i>			
Bradley L. Hicks	Deputy Director	919-807-2330	bradley.hicks@doa.nc.gov
Vacant	Director's Assistant /Office Manager	919-807-2334	

Supplier Diversity and Certification Team

Traci Fleming	Certification Technician	919-807-2330	traci.fleming@doa.nc.gov
Alicia Lyon	Supplier Diversity Specialist	919-807-2439	alicia.lyon@doa.nc.gov
Trent Rawley	Supplier Diversity Specialist	919-807-2431	trent.rawley@doa.nc.gov

Business Development Team

Carla Daniels	Business Development Specialist	919-807-2332	carla.daniels@doa.nc.gov
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Reporting & Compliance

John Guenther	Compliance Officer	919-807-2436	john.guenther@doa.nc.gov
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