

DISADVANTAGED
BUSINESS
ENTERPRISE
PROGRAM
FFY 2021-2023

CITY OF CORONA

City of Corona Transit Service

Program Update: August 2020

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City of Corona Transit Service

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Objectives and Policy Statement

The City of Corona, City of Corona Transit Service (CCTS) has established a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program in accordance with regulations of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), 49 Code of Federal Regulation Part 26. The City of Corona Transit Service will receive Federal financial assistance from the Department of Transportation, and as a condition of receiving this assistance, the City of Corona will sign an assurance that it will comply with 49 CFR Part 26.

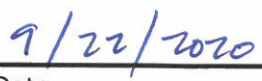
The City of Corona assures equal opportunity in the award and performance of any contract to all persons without regard to race, color, national origin or sex. The intent of the DBE Program is to eliminate discriminatory practices, ensure discrimination is not occurring, increase participation of DBEs in all contracting activities to the maximum extent feasible, and meet the overall annual DBE participation goal, in compliance with 49 CFR Part 26. Adhering to this policy will ensure a level playing field and foster equal opportunity to receive and participate in DOT-assisted contracts. It is also our policy:

1. To ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of DOT - assisted contracts;
2. To create a level playing field on which DBEs can compete fairly for DOT-assisted contracts;
3. To ensure that the DBE Program is narrowly tailored in accordance with applicable law;
4. To ensure that only firms that fully meet 49 CFR Part 26 eligibility standards are permitted to participate as DBEs;
5. To help remove barriers to the participation of DBEs in DOT assisted contracts;
6. To assist the development of firms that can compete successfully in the market place outside the DBE Program.
7. Facilitate the implementation of the DBE Program using race-neutral measures to the maximum extent feasible.

This policy applies to all City of Corona employees in administering 49 CFR Part 26, and to contractors, bidders/offerors and subcontractors.



Jacob Ellis, City Manager



Date

SUBPART A – GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

DBE Program Objectives/Policy Statement (§ 26.1, 26.23)

The objectives are found in the policy statement on the first page of this program.

Applicability (§ 26.3)

The City of Corona, City of Corona Transit System (CCTS) is the recipient of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds authorized by Federal transit laws in Title 49, U.S. Code. Under Title 49 CFR Part 26 the City of Corona is required to establish a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program. This document sets forth the policies and procedures to be implemented by the City of Corona to ensure that DBEs have an equitable opportunity to participate in the City's U.S. DOT-assisted contracting opportunities

Definitions (§ 26.5)

The City of Corona will adopt the definitions contained in 49 CFR Section 26.5 for this program.

Non-discrimination Requirements (§ 26.7)

The City of Corona will never exclude any person from participation in, deny any person the benefits of, or otherwise discriminate against anyone in connection with the award and performance of any contract covered by 49 CFR part 26 on the basis of race, color, sex, or national origin.

In administering its DBE program, the City of Corona will not, directly or through contractual or other arrangements, use criteria or methods of administration that have the effect of defeating or substantially impairing accomplishment of the objectives of the DBE program with respect to individuals of a particular race, color, sex, or national origin.

Record Keeping, Reporting and Bidder's List Requirements (§ 26.11 (b)(c))

Reporting § 26.11 (b)

The City of Corona will report DBE participation to DOT as follows:

Report DBE participation to the relevant operating administration at Federal Transit Administration using the Uniform Report of DBE Awards or Commitments and Payments, found in the DBE regulation. The report due June 1 will cover data from October 1 to March 31 and the report due December 1 will cover data from April 1 to September 30. All dollar amounts reported

will reflect the federal share of such contracts. The report will separate the dollar amount awarded to certified DBEs through the use of race conscious methods and race neutral methods.

Bidder's List § 26.11 (c)

City of Corona will create a bidders list, consisting of information about all DBE and non-DBE firms that bid or quote on DOT-assisted contracts. The purpose of this requirement is to allow use of the bidders list approach to calculating overall goals. The bidder list will include the name, address, DBE non-DBE status, age, and annual gross receipts of firms.

We will collect this information in the following ways:

- City of Corona Transit Service will require all bidders and proposers to identify their DBE status and identify all DBE subcontractors. See Attachment B – Bidders List Form.

Federal Financial Assistance Agreement and Contract Assurance (§ 26.13 (a)(b))

Federal Financial Assistance Agreement Assurance § 26.13 (a)

City of Corona will provide the following assurances statement verbatim on each federal finance assistance agreement it obtains:

City of Corona shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in the award and performance of any DOT assisted contract or in the administration of its DBE Program or the requirements of 49 CFR part 26. The recipient shall take all necessary and reasonable steps under 49 CFR part 26 to ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of DOT assisted contracts. The recipient's DBE Program, as required by 49 CFR part 26 and as approved by DOT, is incorporated by reference in this agreement. Implementation of this program is a legal obligation and failure to carry out its terms shall be treated as a violation of this agreement. Upon notification to the City of Corona its failure to carry out its approved program, the Department may impose sanction as provided for under Part 26 and may, in appropriate cases, refer the matter for enforcement under 18 U.S.C. 1001 and/or the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act of 1986 (31 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.).

Contract Assurance § 26.13 (b)

City of Corona will ensure that the following assurance clause is placed verbatim in every federally-assisted contracts and subcontract:

The contractor, sub-recipient, or subcontractor shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in the performance of this contract. The contractor shall carry out applicable requirements of 49 CFR part 26 in the award and administration of DOT assisted contracts. Failure by the contractor to carry out these requirements is a material breach of this contract, which may result in the termination of this contract or such other remedy as the recipient deems appropriate, which may include, but not limited to, (1) withholding monthly progress payments, (2) assessing sanctions, (3) liquidated damages, and/or (4) disqualifying the contractor from future bidding as non-responsive.

SUBPART B - ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

DBE Program Updates (§ 26.21)

Since the City of Corona Transit Service expects to receive a grant of \$250,000 or more in FTA planning capital, and or operating assistance in a federal fiscal year, City of Corona will carry out the program until all funds from DOT financial assistance have been expended. City of Corona will provide to DOT updates representing significant changes in the program.

Policy Statement (§ 26.23)

The Policy Statement is elaborated on the first page of this program.

DBE Liaison Officer (DBELO) (§ 26.25)

The City of Corona has designated the following individual as the DBE Liaison Officer:

Sudesh Paul, Transportation Planning Supervisor

Sudesh.paul@coronaca.gov Phone: (951) 279-3763

In this capacity, the DBELO is responsible for implementing all aspects of the DBE program and ensuring that City of Corona Transit Service complies with all provision of 49 CFR Part 26. The DBELO reports to the Public Works Director concerning DBE program matters. An organization chart displaying the DBELO's position in the organization is found in Attachment A to this program.

The DBELO is responsible for developing, implementing and monitoring the DBE program, in coordination with other appropriate officials. The DBELO has a staff of one (1) to assist in the administration of the program. The duties and responsibilities include the following:

1. Gathers and reports statistical data and other information as required by DOT.
2. Reviews third party contracts and purchase requisitions for compliance with this program.
3. Works with all departments to set overall annual goals.
4. Ensures that bid notices and requests for proposals are available to DBEs in a timely manner.
5. Identifies contracts and procurements so that DBE goals are included in solicitations (both race-neutral methods and contract specific goals attainment and identifies ways to improve progress.
6. Analyzes City of Corona Transit Service's progress toward attainment and identifies ways to improve progress.
7. Participates in pre-bid meetings.
8. Advises the CEO\governing body on DBE matters and achievement.
9. Participates with the legal counsel and project director to determine contractor compliance with good faith efforts.
10. Provides DBEs with information and assistance in preparing bids, obtaining bonding and insurance.
11. Plans and participates in DBE training seminars.
12. Provides outreach to DBEs and community organizations to advise them of opportunities.
13. Maintains the City of Corona Transit Service's updated directory on certified DBEs.

DBE Financial Institutions (§ 26.27)

City of Corona will investigate the full extent of services offered by financial institutions owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals in the community, to make reasonable efforts to use these institutions, and to encourage prime contractors on DOT-assisted contract to make use of these institutions. We will make the following efforts to identify and use such institutions:

- The DBELO will periodically review the availability of such financial institutions from the US DOT, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization website at:
<https://www.state.gov/s/dmr/sdbu/index.htm>

Prompt Payment Mechanisms (§ 26.29 (a)(b))

Prompt Payment §26.29(a)

The City of Corona will include the following clauses in each DOT-assisted prime contract:

The prime contractor agrees to pay each subcontractor under this prime contract for satisfactory performance of its contract no later than 30 days from the receipt of each payment the prime contract receives from the City of Corona. Any delay or postponement of payment from the above referenced time frame may occur only for good cause following written approval of City of Corona. This clause applies to both DBE and non-DBE subcontracts. For Public Works projects the payment shall occur no later than 7 days after payment to the prime contractor.

Retainage §26.29(b)

The prime contractor agrees further to return retainage payments to each subcontractor within 30 days after the subcontractors work is satisfactorily completed. Any delay or postponement of payment from the above referenced time frame may occur only for good cause following written approval of City of Corona. This clause applies to both DBE and non-DBE subcontracts.

Monitoring and Enforcement §26.29(d)

City of Corona Transit Service may perform interim audits of contract payments to DBEs. The audit will review payments to DBEs to ensure that the actual amount paid to DBEs equals or exceeds the dollar amounts stated in the schedule of DBE participation.

Evidence of payment made to subcontractors must be provided to verify compliance. Credit toward overall or individual contract goals will only be given upon satisfactory evidence that payments were actually made to DBEs. Such evidence shall be provided by the prime contractor through the submission of a progress report on DBE utilization to the City of Corona Transit Service directed by the City of Corona Transit Service staff. The information collected includes:

1. Name of each DBE and Subcontractor.
2. Type of work assignment for each DBE or Subcontractor.
3. The dollars committed to each firm.
4. The dollars paid to each firm during the reporting period.
5. The dollars paid to the firm as a result of a change order or other cost modification.
6. Contractor signature under penalty of perjury that it has complied with all prompt payment requirements per State laws and 49 CFR 26.29.

If City of Corona determines that the prime contractor has failed to comply with the prompt payment provisions set forth, City of Corona may give written notice to the prime contractor and the prime contractor's surety that, if the default is not remedied within a specified period of time (at least 10 days), the contract may be terminated. The contract may be terminated for cause in accordance with the contract terms and conditions for failing to meet the prompt payment provisions.

Directory (§ 26.31)

City of Corona will utilize the California Unified Certification Program (CUCP) DBE Directory to identify certified DBEs eligible to participate as DBEs on federal assisted projects. City of Corona will make certain it identifies in the contract specification the availability of the CUCP DBE Directory for prime contractors to use in soliciting DBE subbids. The CUCP DBE Directory can be found at <http://californiaucp.org/> or via www.dot.ca.gov/hq/bep. The CUCP directory lists the firm's name, address, phone number, fax number, on-site visit date, North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code, ethnicity and gender of ownership, and the type of work the firm has been certified to perform as a DBE under which the firm has been certified to perform as a DBE. A listing in the DBE directory does not in any way pre-qualify the identified DBE firms with respect to licensing, bondability, competence or financial responsibility.

Overconcentration (§ 26.33)

City of Corona will monitor and analyze the type of contracts/subcontracts awarded to DBE's to determine if there is an overconcentration in particular fields. If overconcentration is found to exist, City of Corona will inform the FTA. The City will also take measures to encourage DBEs within the area of overconcentration to expand into other fields, and enhance its communication with its prime contractors and its outreach within the network of DBE vendors to address the overconcentration.

Business Development Programs (§ 26.35)

City of Corona has not established a business development program. However, if City of Corona identifies the need for such a program in the future, the rationale for adopting such a program and a comprehensive description of the program, will be submitted as a significant update to the DBE Program Plan.

Monitoring and Enforcement Mechanisms (§ 26.37)

City of Corona will implement appropriate mechanisms, including sanctions, suspension, debarment, and application of legal and contractual remedies available under Federal, state, and local laws, as deemed appropriate and necessary, to ensure compliance with the requirements

by all program participants. Specifically, City of Corona will take the following monitoring and enforcement steps to ensure compliance with 49 CFR Part 26:

- Bring to the attention of the Department of Transportation any false, fraudulent, or dishonest conduct in connection with the program, so that DOT can take the steps (e.g., referral to the Department of Justice for criminal prosecution, referral to the DOT Inspector General, action under suspension and debarment or Program Fraud and Civil Penalties rules) provided in 26.109. Consider similar action under our own legal authorities, including responsibility determinations in future contracts.
- Implement enforcement and monitoring processes/procedures outlined in DBE Contract Provisions contained in all engineering design/professional services, construction, transit and DOT-assisted contracts and this DBE Program Plan. This includes processes for Good Faith Efforts review and approval, counting DBE participation, monitoring and enforcing prompt payment, review and approval of substitutions and termination of DBEs on projects, requiring payment certifications from DBEs and Prime contractors attesting to total amounts paid to DBE firms, and contract closeout procedures that evaluate whether DBE goals have been met on each contract.
- Implement procedures to verify that work committed to DBEs at contract award is actually performed by the DBEs. This will be accomplished by document reviews of contracting records, project onsite visits and interviews conducted by CCTS staff and construction inspectors, review of payroll records for public work activity and a thorough review of invoices provided for services, as applicable. This will occur for each contract/project on which DBE's are participating.
- Compile and maintain a report of awards/commitments and attainment, which is reported semi-annually to FTA.
- Keep a running tally of DBE utilization/attainment, including race-neutral DBE participation, as well as payments to DBE firms for work committed to them at the time of contract award. See Attachment D – DBE Utilization Attainment Report.
- Track and delineate state/federal funding split to ensure that only the federal share is reported on Uniform Reports to US. DOT. This information is tracked in Excel spreadsheet and compared to City of Corona's OneSolution System.
- Compare DBE commitment submitted at the beginning of each project with Written Certification at the end of the project to determine if DBE goal was met.

Written Certification

The mechanism includes a written certification that City of Corona has reviewed contracting records and monitored work sites for DBE participation. The City of Corona Transit Staff will monitor every contract with DBE requirements, on paper and in the field and will include a

written certification that this compliance monitoring effort took place in accordance with the Contract Close-Out Report. Refer to Attachment C – Self Certification Statement of Compliance. The mechanisms include comparing the DBE commitments to actual DBE attainments.

Procedures to Monitor Compliance

Monitoring will occur after contract award and will be assigned to the City of Corona Transit Staff to monitor actual DBE participation through contractor and subcontractor reports. After the contract award, City of Corona Transit Staff will review the award documents for the portion of work each DBE and/or subcontractor will be performing and the dollar value of that work. With these documents, City of Corona Transit Staff will be able to determine the work to be performed by the listed DBE's or subcontractors.

Construction Contract On-Site Monitoring

City of Corona will ensure that City of Corona Transit Staff and inspectors know what items of work each DBE is responsible for performing. Inspectors will notify City of Corona Transit Staff immediately of apparent violations. When a firm other than the listed DBE subcontractor is found performing the work, the City of Corona Transit Staff will notify the Contractor of the apparent discrepancy and potential loss of payment. Based on the Contractor's response, City of Corona will take appropriate action. If the Contractor fails to adequately explain why there is a discrepancy, payment for the work will be withheld and a letter will be sent to the contractor referencing the applicable specification violation and the required withholding of payment.

This monitoring effort is fully incorporated into DBE On-site Monitoring process. The observed work will be reconciled against the DBE commitment.

Record Keeping and Final Utilization Report of DBE

The Contractor shall maintain records showing each listed DBE and first-tier subcontractor. These records will be made available for inspection upon request by any authorized representative of City of Corona, or FTA. The records shall include:

1. Contract number, DBE goal commitment and brief description of the work.
2. Name and address of each DBE listed and certifications held.
3. The dollar amount of each subcontract, including supplies and services.
4. Reports from Contractor with an accounting of actual expenditures to DBEs and the progress to date in meeting the DBE participation commitment.
5. Evidence to support subcontractor substitution requests, where appropriate.
6. Evidence to support prompt payments made, with date of payment and total dollar figure paid to each DBE, subcontractor and suppliers.
7. The DBE prime contractor shall also show the date of work performed by their own forces along with the corresponding dollar value of the work claimed toward DBE goals.

Contract Close-Out Report

When a contract has been completed, the Contractor will provide a summary of the records stated above. The DBE utilization information will be documented on the form "Final Report-Utilization of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE), First-Tier Subcontractors" will be submitted to City of Corona. City of Corona Transit Staff will compare the completed form to the contractor's completed "Designation of Subcontractors". The DBE's shown on the completed "Final Report-Utilization of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE), First-Tier Subcontractors" form should be the same as those originally listed unless an authorized substitution was allowed, or the contractor used more DBE's and they were added. The dollar amount should reflect any changes made in planned work done by the DBE. The Contractor will be required to explain in writing why the names of the subcontractors, the work items or dollar figures are different from what was originally shown on the completed "Designation of Subcontractors" form when:

- There have been no changes made by the RE.
- The Contractor has not provided a sufficient explanation in the comments section of the completed "Final Report-Utilization of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE), First-Tier Subcontractors" form.

The explanation will be attached to the completed "Final Report-Utilization of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE), First-Tier Subcontractors" form for submittal. The City of Corona staff will file this report in the project records. The "Final Report-Utilization of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE), First-Tier Subcontractors" form is available on the California Department of Transportation, Local Agency Program Manual Forms, Chapter 17 website at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/lam/forms/lapmforms.htm>.

Administrative Remedies for Non-Compliance

A Contractor deemed to be in non-compliance shall be informed in writing, by certified mail, by the DBELO or designee, that administrative remedies shall be imposed for failure to meet DBE committed goal and/or submit evidence of good faith efforts to the satisfaction of the City of Corona. The Contractor shall be given five (5) working days from the date of the notice to file a written appeal to the DBELO. Failure to respond within the five (5) day period shall constitute a waiver of appeal. The notice shall state the specific administrative remedy to be imposed.

The City of Corona may schedule an informal hearing to gather additional facts and evidence and shall issue a final determination on the matter within five (5) working days of receipt of the written appeal. The written decision of the CITY OF CORONA TRANSIT SERVICE or designee is final and there is no further appeal.

The CITY OF CORONA TRANSIT SERVICE reserves the right to initiate Administrative Remedies, which may include but are not limited to:

- Withholding of payments due equivalent to the difference between the actual DBE attainment and the overall project and/or contract specific DBE goal.
- Suspension of payment to the Contractor of any other monies held by the City of Corona; and
- Termination of the Contract in part or in whole.

The Administrative Remedies shall not apply if the Contractor is able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the City of Corona that it exercised good faith efforts in an attempt to meet the contract-specific DBE goal, where applicable.

The City of Corona will bring to the attention of the FTA any false, fraudulent, or dishonest conduct in connection with the program, so that FTA can take the steps (e.g., referral to the U.S. Department of Justice for criminal prosecution, referral to the USDOT Inspector General, action under suspension and debarment or Program Fraud and Civil Penalties rules) provided in §26.109.

The City of Corona will also consider similar action under its own legal authorities, including responsibility determinations in future contracts.

The requirements of this section equally apply to a DBE operating as a prime contractor.

Small Business Participation (§ 26.39)

City of Corona will incorporate the following non-discriminatory element to its DBE program, in order to facilitate competition on DOT-assisted public works projects by small business concerns (both DBEs and non-DBE small businesses):

- Breaking out procurements or unbundling procurement actions to provide greater opportunities for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), small and minority firms, and women's business enterprises to participate.
- For procurements that require competition, City of Corona will seek out small businesses to compete for these procurement actions by actively including DBE and non-DBE small business firms on the solicitation lists.
- For micro purchases that do not require competition, seeking out DBE and non-DBE small business firms to satisfy these requirements.

SUBPART C - GOALS, GOOD FAITH EFFORTS, AND COUNTING

Set-asides or Quotas (§ 26.43)

City of Corona does not use quotas in any way in the administration of this DBE program. City of Corona may consider establishing a Small Business set-aside program as allowed in §26.39 – *Foster Small Business Participation*. If City of Corona selects to implement a small business set-aside program, it will follow the requirements under §26.21 - *DBE Program Updates*.

Overall Goals (§ 26.45)

A description of the methodology to calculate the overall goal and the goal calculations can be found in Attachment E – Overall DBE Goal and Methodology, to this program. In accordance with Section 26.45(f), City of Corona will submit its Triennial DBE overall goal by August 1 at three (3) year intervals, based on FTA schedule. City of Corona will express the overall contract goal as a percentage of the total amount of the federal assistance received.

The process generally used to establish overall DBE goal is as follows:

1. The City established a reasonable estimate of FTA funded contracting activities for the covered federal fiscal years.
2. The City categorized these contracting opportunities by NAICS Code.
3. The City reviewed its contracting database and established the Counties of Riverside, San Bernardino & Orange as its market area, where the majority of contracting occurs.
4. The City then developed an estimate of ready, willing, and able DBE's based on the State of California Unified Contracting Database for the Market Area.
5. The City developed the number of overall firms ready, willing, and available, by NAICS Code, utilizing US Census Data.
6. When necessary, the City evaluated both DBE's and Non-DBE's to ensure the accuracy of the NAICS code area, and the firms ready, willing, and able, to satisfy the City's requirements.
7. The City then multiplied the dollar value of the opportunities by the result of dividing the number of DBE firms by the number of total firms.
8. The City then totaled these amounts to arrive at the step one goal.

Before establishing the overall goal, City of Corona will consult with the various organizations in the market area, such as Chamber of Commerce, minority, women-owned and small business groups, to obtain information concerning the availability of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged businesses, the effects of discrimination on opportunities for DBEs, and City of Corona's efforts to establish a level playing field for the participation of DBEs.

Following this consultation, City of Corona will publish a notice of the proposed overall goal, informing the public that the proposed goal and its rationale are available for inspection for 30 days following the date of the notice. The notice will be posted on City's official Internet Website. If the proposed goal changes following review, the revised goal will be posted on the City's official Internet Web site.

City of Corona's overall goal submission to DOT will include: the goal (including the breakout of estimated race-neutral and race-conscious participation, as appropriate); a copy of the methodology, worksheets, etc., used to develop the goal; a summary of information and comments received during the consultation period and proof of publication of the goal on the City's website.

City of Corona will begin using the overall goal on October 1 of each year, unless we have received other instructions from DOT. If a project based goal is established, then the goal will be utilized by the time of the first solicitation for a DOT-assisted contract for the project. The overall DBE goal will remain effective for the duration of the three-year period established and approved by the FTA.

Goal Setting and Accountability (§ 26.47)

If the awards and commitments shown on the City's Uniform Report of Awards or Commitments and Payments at the end of any fiscal year are less than the overall applicable to that fiscal year, City of Corona staff will:

1. Analyze in detail the reason for the difference between the overall goal and the actual awards/commitments;
2. Establish specific steps and milestones to correct the problems identified in the analysis; and
3. Establish and implement a corrective action plan, and maintain information/records regarding the analysis and efforts made.

Transit Vehicle Manufacturers Goals (§ 26.49)

City of Corona will require each transit vehicle manufacturer, as a condition of being authorized to bid or propose on FTA-assisted transit vehicle procurements, to certify that it has complied with the requirements of this section. Alternatively, City of Corona may, at its discretion and with FTA approval, establish project-specific goals for DBE participation in the procurement of transit vehicles in lieu of the TVM complying with this element of the program.

Breakout of Estimated Race-Neutral & Race-Conscious Participation (§ 26.51(a-c))

City of Corona will make efforts to meet the maximum feasible portion of the overall goal by using race-neutral means of facilitating DBE participation. Race-neutral DBE participation includes any time a DBE wins a prime contract through customary competitive procurement procedures, is awarded a subcontract on a prime contract that does not carry a DBE goal, or even if there is a DBE goal, wins a subcontract from a prime contractor that did not consider its DBE status in making the award (e.g., a prime contractor that uses a strict low bid system to award subcontracts).

Race-neutral measures, as described in City of Corona's Overall DBE Goal and Methodology states, "In conformance with Title 49 CFR Part 26; "Participation by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises in Department of Transportation Programs" and in further response to FTA Notices issued to Public Transportation Providers regarding DOT's DBE Program and Race-Neutral Policy Implementation Guidance, City of Corona is required to submit and implement a strictly Race-Neutral Overall DBE Goal for FFY 2018-2020, due to the absence of readily available evidence of discrimination and its effects in its marketplace. (Refer to Attachment E - Overall DBE Goal and Methodology for FFY 2018-2020).

This section of the program will be updated annually when and if the goal calculation is updated.

Contract Goals (§ 26.51(d-g))

City of Corona will meet the maximum feasible portion of its overall goal using race-neutral means of facilitating DBE participation. In order to do so, City of Corona will participate in:

1. Arranging solicitations, times for the presentation of bids, quantities, specifications, and delivery schedules in ways that facilitate participation by DBEs and other small businesses and by making contracts more accessible to small businesses
2. Providing assistance in overcoming limitations such as inability to obtain bonding or financing (e.g., by such means as simplifying the bonding process, reducing bonding requirements, eliminating the impact of surety costs from bids, and providing services to help DBEs, and other small businesses, obtain bonding and financing);
3. Providing technical assistance and other services;
4. Carrying out information and communications programs on contracting procedures and specific contract opportunities (e.g., ensuring the inclusion of DBEs, and other small businesses, on recipient mailing lists for bidders; ensuring the dissemination to bidders on prime contracts of lists of potential subcontractors; provision of information in languages other than English, where appropriate);

5. Implementing a supportive services program to develop and improve immediate and long-term business management, record keeping, and financial and accounting capability for DBEs and other small businesses;
6. Providing services to help DBEs, and other small businesses, improve long-term development, increase opportunities to participate in a variety of kinds of work, handle increasingly significant projects, and achieve eventual self-sufficiency;
7. Establishing a program to assist new, start-up firms, particularly in fields in which DBE participation has historically been low;
8. Ensuring distribution of your DBE directory, through print and electronic means, to the widest feasible universe of potential prime contractors; and
9. Assisting DBEs, and other small businesses, to develop their capability to utilize emerging technology and conduct business through electronic media.

Good Faith Efforts Procedures (§ 26.53)

Demonstration of good faith efforts (§ 26.53(a) & (c))

In the event the City of Corona Transit Service establishes an individual DBE contract goal, the City will not award the contract to a bidder who does not either: 1) meet the contract goal with verified, countable DBE participation; or 2) documents it has made adequate good faith efforts to meet the DBE contract goal. It is the obligation of the bidder/offeror to demonstrate it has made sufficient good faith efforts prior to submission of its bid. Examples of good faith efforts are found in Appendix A of 49 CFR Part 26 (Attachment G).

The Department Coordinator will be responsible for determining whether a bidder/offeror who has not met the contract goal has documented sufficient good faith efforts to be regarded as responsive.

City of Corona Transit Service staff will ensure that all information is complete and accurate and adequately documents the bidder/offer's good faith efforts before committing to the performance of the contract by the bidder/offeror.

Information to be submitted (§ 26.53(b))

City of Corona Transit Service treats bidder/offers' compliance with good faith efforts' requirements as a matter of responsiveness.

Each solicitation for which a contract goal has been established will require the bidders/offerors to submit the following information:

1. The names and addresses of DBE firms that will participate in the contract;
2. A description of the work that each DBE will perform;
3. The dollar amount of the participation of each DBE firm participating;
4. Written and signed documentation of commitment to use a DBE subcontractor whose participation it submits to meet a contract goal;
5. Written and signed confirmation from the DBE that it is participating in the contract as provided in the prime contractor's commitment; and
6. If the contract goal is not met, evidence of good faith efforts.

Administrative reconsideration (§ 26.53(d))

Within five (5) days of being informed by City of Corona Transit Service that it is not responsive because it has not documented sufficient good faith efforts, a bidder/offeror may request administrative reconsideration. Bidder/offerors should make this request in writing to the following reconsideration official: Public Works Director, Public Works 400 S. Vicentia Ave. Corona, CA 92882. The reconsideration official will not have played any role in the original determination that the bidder/offeror did not document sufficient good faith efforts.

As part of this reconsideration, the bidder/offeror will have the opportunity to provide written documentation or argument concerning the issue of whether it met the goal or made adequate good faith efforts to do so. The bidder/offeror will have the opportunity to meet in person with our reconsideration official to discuss the issue of whether it met the goal or made adequate good faith efforts to do so. We will send the bidder/offeror a written decision on reconsideration, explaining the basis for finding that the bidder did or did not meet the goal or make adequate good faith efforts to do so. The result of the reconsideration process is not administratively appealable to the Department of Transportation.

Good Faith Efforts when a DBE is replaced on a contract (§ 26.53(f))

City of Corona Transit Service will require a contractor to make good faith efforts to replace a DBE that is terminated or has otherwise failed to complete its work on a contract with another certified DBE, to the extent needed to meet the contract goal. We will require the prime contractor to notify the DBE Liaison officer immediately of the DBE's inability or unwillingness to perform and provide reasonable documentation.

In this situation, CCTS will require the prime contractor to obtain prior approval of the substitute DBE and to provide copies of new or amended subcontracts, or documentation of good faith efforts. If the contractor fails or refuses to comply in the time specified, our contracting office will issue an order stopping all or part of payment/work until satisfactory action has been taken. If the contractor still fails to comply, the contracting officer may issue a termination for default proceeding.

Sample Bid Specification:

The requirements of 49 CFR Part 26, Regulations of the U.S. Department of Transportation, apply to this contract. It is the policy of the [Name of Recipient] to practice nondiscrimination based on race, color, sex, or national origin in the award or performance of this contract. All firms qualifying under this solicitation are encouraged to submit bids/proposals. Award of this contract will be conditioned upon satisfying the requirements of this bid specification. These requirements apply to all bidders/offerors, including those who qualify as a DBE. A DBE contract goal of ____ percent has been established for this contract. The bidder/offeror shall make good faith efforts, as defined in Appendix A, 49 CFR Part 26 (Attachment G), to meet the contract goal for DBE participation in the performance of this contract.

The bidder/offeror will be required to submit the following information: (1) the names and addresses of DBE firms that will participate in the contract; (2) a description of the work that each DBE firm will perform; (3) the dollar amount of the participation of each DBE firm participating; (4) Written documentation of the bidder/offeror's commitment to use a DBE subcontractor whose participation it submits to meet the contract goal; (5) Written confirmation from the DBE that it is participating in the contract as provided in the commitment made under (4); and (5) if the contract goal is not met, evidence of good faith efforts.

Counting DBE Participation (§ 26.55)

City of Corona Transit Service will count DBE participation toward overall and contract goals as provided in 49 CFR 26.55.

SUBPART D and E - CERTIFICATION STANDARDS and PROCEDURES

DBE Certification Procedures (§ 26.61 - 26.91)

In order to reduce administrative burden associated with determining the eligibility of firms to participate as DBEs in FTA-assisted contracts, City of Corona will rely on the California Unified Certification Program (CUCP) to perform the DBE certification determinations.

City of Corona is a non-certifying member of the CUCP; and will utilize the CUCP certification directory to determine the eligibility of DBEs, their work codes, etc., in order to participate as DBEs on City of Corona Transit Service projects. The CUCP DBE directory is on the Caltrans website at: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/civil-rights/dbe-search>. For information about the DBE certification application process, contact:

CALTRANS

DBE Program- Certification Unit

1823 14th Street

Sacramento, CA 95811

Phone: (916) 324-1700 or (866) 810-6346

Email: DBE.Certifications@dot.ca.gov

Website: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/civil-rights>

In addition, see Attachment F – CUCP Brochure on how to apply for DBE Certification

SUBPART F - COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

Information, Confidentiality, Cooperation (§ 26.109)

City of Corona will safeguard from disclosing to third parties, information that may reasonably be regarded as confidential business information, consistent with Federal, state, and local law. California Government Code §6250 provides for the disclosure of certain public information. Since the City of Corona is not a Certifying Entity, personal information is not routinely handled by the City.

Notwithstanding any contrary provisions of state or local law, City of Corona will not release personal financial information submitted in response to the personal net worth requirement to a third party (other than DOT) without the written consent of the submitter.

Monitoring Payments to DBEs

City of Corona will require prime contractors to maintain records and documents of payments to DBEs for three years following the performance of the contract. These records will be made

available for inspection upon request by any authorized representative of the City of Corona or DOT. This reporting requirement also extends to any certified DBE subcontractor.

City of Corona will perform interim audits of contract payments to DBEs. The audit will review payments to DBE subcontractors to ensure that the actual amount paid to DBE subcontractors equals or exceeds the dollar amounts states in the schedule of DBE participation.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A City of Corona Transit Service - Organizational Chart
- Attachment B Bidders List Form
- Attachment C Statement of Compliance
- Attachment D DBE Utilization Attainment Report
- Attachment E Overall DBE Goal and Methodology
- Attachment F CUCP Brochure on how to apply for DBE Certification
- Attachment G Regulations: 49 CFR part 26

Attachment A – Organizational Chart

Attachment B – Bidders List Form



Project Name: _____

BIDDERS LIST

Bidder/Offeror: _____ **IFB/RFP #:** _____

The Department of Transportation requires the City of Corona, City of Corona Transit Service (CCTS) to create and maintain a “Bidders List” containing information about all firms (DBE and Non-DBE) that bid, propose or quote on CCTS’s DOT-assisted contracts, in accordance with 49 CFR Part 26.11. The “Bidders List” is intended to be a count of all firms that are participating, or attempting to participate, on DOT-assisted contracts, whether successful or unsuccessful in their attempt to obtain a contract.

The Bidder/Offeror is to complete all requested information on the “*Bidders List*” for every firm who submitted a bid, proposal or quote, including the primary Bidder/Offeror, and submit this information at the time of bid submission. However, if not elected to do so at the time of bid submission, bidders/Offerors must submit such information at the request of the Authority within the prescribed timeline set forth in the solicitation. The City of Corona will utilize this information to assist in CCTS’s overall annual DBE goal-setting process. ***The “Bidders List” content will not be considered in evaluating the bid/proposal or determining award of any contract.***

Prime Bidder’s/Offeror’s Information:		
Name of Prime’s Firm:	Phone: ()	Fax: ()
Firm Address	Type of work/services/materials provided:	
Contact Person:	Title:	
Number of years in business:	Is the firm currently certified as a DBE under 49 CFR Part 26? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Check the box below for your firm’s annual gross receipts last year:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$1 Million	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$5 million	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$10 million
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$15 million	<input type="checkbox"/> More than \$15 million	

Project Name: _____

Provide the following information for every firm (DBE and non-DBE) that submitted a bid, proposal or quote on this DOT-assisted project, whether successful or unsuccessful in their attempt to obtain a contract:		
Name of Firm:	Phone: ()	Fax: ()
Firm Address	Type of work/services/materials provided:	
Contact Person:	Title:	
Number of years in business:	Is the firm currently certified as a DBE under 49 CFR Part 26? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Check the box below for your firm's annual gross receipts last year:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$1 Million	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$5 million	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$10 million
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$15 million	<input type="checkbox"/> More than \$15 million	

Provide the following information for every firm (DBE and non-DBE) that submitted a bid, proposal or quote on this DOT-assisted project, whether successful or unsuccessful in their attempt to obtain a contract:		
Name of Firm:	Phone: ()	Fax: ()
Firm Address	Type of work/services/materials provided:	
Contact Person:	Title:	
Number of years in business:	Is the firm currently certified as a DBE under 49 CFR Part 26? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Check the box below for your firm's annual gross receipts last year:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$1 Million	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$5 million	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$10 million
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$15 million	<input type="checkbox"/> More than \$15 million	

If necessary, this “Bidders List” form can be duplicated to include all firms (DBE and non-DBE) that have submitted a bid, proposal or quote on this DOT-assisted project, whether successful or unsuccessful in their attempt to obtain a contract.

Failure of the Bidder/Offeror to submit the required “Bidders List” form will deem the Bidder/Offeror non-responsive.

Attachment C – Statement of Compliance

**Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)
Self-Certification
STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE**

Project No: _____

Project Name: _____

I, _____, undersigned, have the authority to act for
(Name & Title)

and on behalf of the CITY OF CORONA TRANSIT SERVICE, and certify under penalty of perjury that this federal-aided project has been monitored in conformance with Part 26 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations—DBE Regulations.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Comments/Exceptions (Explanation):

Enclosures: Copies of the DBE Final Payment Record

Maintain in contract file.

Attachment D – DBE Utilization Attainment Report

City of Corona Transit Service

MONTHLY DBE SUBCONTRACTOR COMMITMENT AND ATTAINMENT REPORT SUMMARY AND PAYMENT VERIFICATION

Report Period (month): _____ Contract Number: _____ Contract Award Date: _____ Prime Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____ Telephone No: _____ Original Project Goal: _____	Original Contract Award Amount: \$ - Prime Current Contract Value \$ - [B] Total Paid to Prime this quarter: \$ - Total Paid to Prime to date: \$ - [D] Total Paid to DBEs this quarter: \$ - Total Paid to DBEs to date: \$ - [A] % of Project Complete #DIV/0! [D/B] Prime's Current DBE Attainment: #DIV/0! [A/B] Prime's Current DBE Commitment: #DIV/0! [C/B]	Report prepared by: _____ Signature: _____ Title: _____ Report reviewed by: _____ Signature: _____ Title: _____ Date of last progress payment: _____
---	--	--

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SUBCONTRACTOR	Type of Work Performed Applicable NAICS Code(s)	Original \$ Amount Committed at Award	\$ +/- Resulting from Change Order	\$ Amount of Current Commitment	\$ Amount of Eligible DBE Participation Claimed [C]	\$ Amount Paid to DBE this month	% of Retention Withheld (if any)	% of Work Completed	Notes/Comments
Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, Zip Code: _____ Telephone No: _____ CERTIFICATION(s): SB <input type="checkbox"/> DBE <input type="checkbox"/> MB <input type="checkbox"/> Certification Number: _____ Verification of Payment Attached: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Anticipated Commencement of Work Date: _____									
Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, Zip Code: _____ Telephone No: _____ CERTIFICATION(s): SB <input type="checkbox"/> DBE <input type="checkbox"/> MB <input type="checkbox"/> Certification Number: _____ Verification of Payment Attached: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Anticipated Commencement of Work Date: _____									
DBE TOTAL(S):					\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
COMMENTS/ISSUES:									

If necessary, this form can be duplicated and/or modified; however, it must contain all requested data fields.

Attachment E – Overall DBE Goal and Methodology

**CITY OF CORONA, CITY OF CORONA TRANSIT SYSTEM
DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (DBE)
OVERALL DBE GOAL AND METHODOLOGY
FEDERAL FISCAL YEARS (FFY) 2021-2023
(Covering the period of October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2023)**

I. INTRODUCTION

City of Corona, City of Corona Transit System (CCTS) herein sets forth its Proposed Overall Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Goal and corresponding federally prescribed goal-setting methodology for the three-year Federal Fiscal year (FFY) goal period of 2021-2023 (October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2023), pursuant to Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 26 “Participation by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises in U.S. Department of Transportation Programs”.

The goal setting process consists of two steps. Step one determines the base figure for the relative availability of DBEs. Step two determines what adjustment, if any, may be needed.

II. BACKGROUND

Public agencies receiving U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Federal Transit Administration (FTA) assisted funds, who anticipate awarding \$250,000 or more in DOT-assisted contracts, must adopt a three-year Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal. As such, CCTS is required to develop and submit a Triennial Overall DBE Goal for DBE participation as a condition of receiving federal funding for its FTA-assisted projects.

Effective March 3, 2010, the United States Department of Transportation (“DOT”) issued a final rule affecting the implementation and management of the Department’s Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (“DBE”) program. The final rule requires submission of a goal-setting methodology on a three-year cycle. Pursuant to this final rule, CCTS is still required to conduct an annual review to account for changes that may warrant an adjustment to the overall goal or make an adjustment based on changed circumstances (i.e. significant change in the legal standards governing the DBE program, new contracting opportunities presented by the availability of new or different grant opportunities to ensure the goal and program as a whole are narrowly tailored throughout the goal period.

CCTS herein presents its Proposed Overall DBE Goal Methodology for FFY 2021/23 goal period, which resulted in a .5% Overall DBE Goal.

III. DOT-ASSISTED CONTRACTING PROGRAM FOR FFY 2021-2023

Table 1 below represents CCTS’ U.S. DOT-assisted (FTA) contracting program, which includes four (4) projects considered in preparing its Overall DBE Goal-Setting Methodology utilizing the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) work categories. The projects include: Contracting Services for Dial-A-Ride and Fixed Route Service, Comprehensive Operational Analysis, an Intelligent Transportation System, Bus Stop Amenities and Office Support equipment. These projects are anticipated to be awarded within FFYs 2021-2023. CCTS anticipates spending approximately \$4,730,026 of federal dollars in which there may be DBE contracting opportunities over the three-year term.

Table 1 – FTA-assisted Contracting Opportunities

PROJECT NAME	NAICS CUCP DATABASE	ESTIMATED FEDERAL DOLLAR SHARE	% OF FEDERAL FUNDING*
Contracting Services – Transit Operations	485113, 485991	\$4,000,000	84.6%
Consulting Services – Comprehensive Operations Analysis	541614	\$100,000	2.1%
Intelligent Transportation System	541512, 518210,	\$504,700	10.7%
Digital Land Mobile Radio System	517410	\$105,326	2.2%
Document Translation Services	541930	\$20,000	.4%
TOTAL:		\$4,730,026	100%

IV. GOAL METHODOLOGY

A. Step 1: Determination of a Base Figure (26.45)¹

To establish CCTS’s Base Figure of the relative availability of DBEs to all comparable firms (DBE and Non-DBEs) available to propose on CCTS’s DOT-assisted contracting opportunities projected to be solicited during the triennial goal period, CCTS followed the prescribed federal goal-setting methodologies in accordance with 49 CFR Part 26 regulations. This was accomplished by assessing the *California Unified Certification Program (CUCP) Directory of Certified DBE Firms*

¹ 26.45 represents Title 49 CFR Part 26 regulatory goal setting methodology reference.

and the **2018 U.S. Census Bureau County Business Patterns (CBP) Database**. Comparisons were made within the City of Corona Transit System’s market area (defined as Riverside County, San Bernardino County, and Orange County) and by specified industries and types of businesses identified in Table 1. The City of Corona Transit System’s local market area represents where the substantial majority of the City of Corona Transit System’s contracting dollars are expended and/or where the substantial majority of contractors and subcontractors bids or quotes are received. CCTS also considered LA County into the market area, however doing so decreased the relative DBE availability.

The City of Corona Transit System made a concerted effort to ensure that the scope of businesses included in the numerator was as close as possible to the scope included in the denominator. For corresponding detail of all work category classifications grouped, refer to Table 1.

- ⇒ **For the numerator: California UCP DBE Database of Certified Firms**
- ⇒ **For the denominator: 2018 U.S. Census Bureau’s Business Pattern Database (CBP)**

To determine the relative availability of DBEs, the City of Corona Transit System divided the numerator² representing the ratio of ready, willing and able DBE firms, by the denominator³ representing all firms (DBE and Non-DBEs) available in each work category and same geographical regional. Application of this formula yielded the following baseline information:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Ready, Willing and Able DBEs}}{\text{FIGURE Number of All Available Firms (including DBEs and Non-DBEs)}} = \text{BASE}$$

The Base Figure was further weighted by contract type and corresponding contract value. The Base Figure resulting from this weighted calculation is as follows:

² Numerator represents all DBE firms established within the City’s Market area.

³ Denominator represents all comparable available established firms.

Contracting Services – Transit Operations	Consulting Services – COA
485113 – Bus and Other Motor Vehicle Transit Systems 485991 – Special needs transportation	541614 – Process, Physical Distribution, and Logistics Consulting Services
Base Figure = $\left(84.57\% \frac{(\text{DBEs in } 485113/485991)}{(\text{CBPs in } 485113/485991)} \right)$	Base Figure = $\left(2.11\% \frac{(\text{DBEs in } 541614)}{(\text{CBPs in } 541614)} \right)$
Base Figure = $\left(0.8457 \frac{0}{96} \right)$	Base Figure = $\left(0.0211 \frac{31}{270} \right)$
Base Figure = 0.8457(0.000)	Base Figure = 0.0211(0.115)
Base Figure = 0.000	Base Figure = 0.002
Intelligent Transportation System	Digital Land Mobile Radio System
541512 – Computer Systems Design Services 518210 – Data Processing, Hosting and Related Services	517410 – Satellite telecommunications
Base Figure = $\left(10.67\% \frac{(\text{DBEs in } 541512/518210)}{(\text{CBPs in } 541512/518210)} \right)$	Base Figure = $\left(2.23\% \frac{(\text{DBEs in } 517410)}{(\text{CBPs in } 517410)} \right)$
Base Figure = $\left(0.1067 \frac{131}{1749} \right)$	Base Figure = $\left(0.0223 \frac{0}{24} \right)$
Base Figure = 0.1067(0.075)	Base Figure = 0.0223(0.000)
Base Figure = 0.008	Base Figure = 0.000
Document Translation Services	BASE FIGURE = .000+.002+.008+.000+.001 = .011 = (.011) 100 = 1.104 = 1%* <i>*Rounded to the nearest whole number</i>
541930 – Translation and Interpretation Services	
Base Figure = $\left(0.42\% \frac{(\text{DBEs in } 541930)}{(\text{CBPs in } 541930)} \right)$	
Base Figure = $\left(0.0042 \frac{12}{81} \right)$	
Base Figure = 0.0042(0.148)	
Base Figure = 0.001	

B. Step 2: Adjusting the Base Figure

Upon establishing the Base Figure, CCTS is required to review and assess other known evidence potentially impacting the relative availability of DBEs within CCTS’s market area, in accordance with prescribed narrow tailoring provisions set forth under 49 CFR Part 26.45 Step 2; DBE Goal Adjustment guidelines.

Evidence considered in making an adjustment to the Base Figure include *Past DBE Goal Attainments, Bidders List, Disparity Studies, and Other Evidence*. A summary of these considered follows:

Past DBE Goal Attainments

CCTS has experienced challenges in attaining its DBE goal for the past three federal fiscal years; the following table reflects the historical DBE participation on FTA-assisted contracts awarded by CCTS:

FFY18	FFY19	FFY20
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Median DBE Participation: 0.0%		

Median for the past DBE participation on CCTS projects was 0.0 percent and is lower than the Base Figure derived from Step 1; therefore an adjustment is made based on past DBE participation.

Majority of the capital program funds were for contracted transit operations; once the contract was awarded, there were no additional opportunities for the following years to meet the DBE goal. While the contractor utilized a subcontractor, the amount was not sufficient to meet the DBE goal for the year. In addition, the other three projects were delayed as much of the staff time was dedicated towards the transition of the new transit operations contractor. Furthermore, staff could not proceed with the projects as the funds have yet to be programmed in the federal grants. Together these three factors constrained CCTS’ ability to proceed with all of the federally funded projects and limited its ability to obtain its overall DBE goal.

While CCTS will make every effort to address the aforementioned limitations, CCTS expects to have similar contracting opportunities in the up-coming triennial cycle as previously proposed. In addition, majority of the funds have yet to be programmed. Therefore, CCTS has considered an adjustment to the Base Figure and it is calculated in accordance with FTA guidance by averaging the Base Figure with the Median DBE past attainment as show below:

$$\text{Adjusted Base Figure} = \frac{1\% (\text{Base Figure}) + 0\% (\text{Median Attainment})}{2}$$

The formula resulted in a proposed adjustment (decrease) to the Base Figure from 1% to .5%.

City of Corona Transit System's Bidders List

CCTS does not have a bidders list at this time, however CCTS will work to build and maintain a Bidder's List that can be utilized for future goal development. Bidders List will be developed based on the guidelines in CCTS' DBE Plan. CCTS has not made a further adjustment to the base figure based on a Bidder's List.

Evidence from Disparity Studies

CCTS did not find it feasible to conduct its own independent availability/disparity study. CCTS staff did review and consider the following studies available during the evaluation of adjustment of the Base Figures: 2016 Disparity Study available through California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the LA Metro 2017 Disparity Study.

Caltrans study is not applicable due to the following factors: study covers the entire state of California rather than focusing on a market area similar to CCTS; and their contracting opportunities differ from CCTS such that they focused on construction and engineering contract which do not coincide with types of opportunities available in the upcoming triennial period by CCTS.

Metro's study also emphasizes on large and complex projects such as Caltrans which are not similar in scope to the types of projects that CCTS will conduct. The study also indicated majority of Metro's contracting opportunities went to locations in the Los Angeles; as such LA County is considered as Metro's geographical market area. When calculating the base figure in Step 1, CCTS considered including LA County in CCTS' market area however this further reduced the DBE availability percentage.

Both of the studies vary in scope and not relevant to CCTS's federally-assistance contracting opportunities, therefore CCTS did not make an adjustment under this factor at this time. CCTS will continue to review applicable Disparity Studies as they become available and apply the appropriate adjustments to the DBE Program.

Other Evidence

CCTS is not in possession of other information nor aware of any other factors or adverse considerations that would have a material effect on DBE's availability within CCTS market area, or on DBEs ability to participate in CCTS' FTA-assisted contracting opportunities. Therefore, no goal adjustment was in consideration of this factor. However, during this triennial goal, CCTS will explore and consider all available evidence that would materially affect the opportunities for DBEs to form, grow, and compete in CCTS's FTA-assisted contracting programs.

Goal Adjustments

After considering the above factors, the Base Figure of 1% was adjusted, resulting in **CCTS' Overall DBE goal for Fiscal Years 2021-2023 of .5%.**

V. PROPOSED OVERALL DBE GOAL

The Overall DBE Goal for FFY 2021-2023 for the City of Corona Transit System's FTA-assisted contracts is .5%. The Overall Goal is expressed as a percentage of all DOT-assisted funds that CCTS will expend in applicable DOT-assisted contracts in the given federal fiscal years.

The goal further serves to identify the relative availability of DBE's based on evidence of ready willing, and able DBE's to all comparable firms, which are known to be available to compete for and perform on the City of Corona Transit System's DOT-assisted contracts. In addition, as part of the prescribed goal-setting methodology, CCTS must project the percentage of its Proposed Overall DBE Goal that can be met utilizing race-neutral and race-conscious measures.

In conformance with Title 49 CFR Part 26; "Participation by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises in Department of Transportation Programs" and in further response to FTA Notices issued to Public Transportation Providers regarding DOT's DBE Program and Race-Neutral Policy Implementation Guidance, CCTS intends to implement a **strictly Race-Neutral Overall DBE Goal for FFY 2021-2023**, due to the absence of readily available evidence of discrimination and its effects in its marketplace.

VI. RACE-NEUTRAL MEASURES

The CCTS will implement Race-Neutral measures to meet its Overall DBE Goal objectives in accordance with 49 CFR Part 26.51, including but not limited to:

- Reaching out to DBE's under California Unified Certification Program, arranging timely solicitations, times for the presentation of bids, quantities, specifications, and delivery schedules in ways that facilitate DBEs and other small business firms' participation.
- Unbundling large contracts to make them more accessible to small businesses, requiring or encouraging prime contractors to subcontract portions of work that they might otherwise perform with their own work forces.
- Providing technical assistance and other services to small businesses, including DBE firms.
- Providing information and communications programs on contracting procedures and specific contract opportunities.

A. Small Business Element

The City's DBE Program includes elements to facilitate competition by small businesses in the CCTS contracts as prime contractors or subcontractors. These elements include informational outreach on the City's website, business development references, contract language for small business primes and goals for subcontracting opportunities. The DBE Program includes details of the City's efforts to Foster Small Business Participation.

VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A. Consultation

In accordance with Public Participation Regulatory Requirements of Title 49 CFR Part 26, minority, women, local business chambers, and community organizations within the CCTS' market area were consulted and provided an opportunity to review the triennial goal analysis and provide input (see Attachment 1). CCTS reached out to the following community organizations to solicit their comments regarding the 2021-2023 Triennial DBE Goal:

- Inland Empire Women's Business Center
- Businesswomen's Association of San Bernardino County
- Orange County Small Business Development Center
- Southern California Minority Supplier Development Council
- Greater Riverside Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Asian Business Association
- Riverside County Black Chamber of Commerce
- Inland Empire Small Business Development Center
- Greater Riverside Chamber of Commerce
- Corona Chamber of Commerce
- San Bernardino Area Chamber of Commerce
- Orange County Chamber of Commerce

Organizations were contacted via email to discuss the proposed goal methodology, whereas, the organizations were provided the synopsis of the DBE Goal (see Attachment 2). Any interested parties were then provided the complete Overall DBE Goal & Methodology. CCTS did not receive any comments from the outreach efforts.

B. Public Notice

CCTS will also post a Public Notice announcing the proposed Overall Goal for the FFY 2021-2023 FTA-assisted contracts on its official internet website; CCTS has elected to utilize its official website as the publication site. Such Notice will inform the public that the proposed goal and rationale are available for inspection at the City of Corona Transit System's principal office during normal business hours for 30 days following the date of the Public Notice and that CCTS will accept comments on the goal analysis for 30 days from the date of the Public Notice. CCTS will give full consideration to all comments and input and assess its impact on the proposed Overall DBE Goal. If no impact and/or comments are received during the public participation process, the Goal will be considered final. If there are comments, the City will respond in accordance with the DBE Program.

CCTS reached out to the following community organizations to solicit their comments regarding the 2021-2023 Triennial DBE Goal:

- Inland Empire Women's Business Center
- Businesswomen's Association of San Bernardino County
- Orange County Small Business Development Center
- Southern California Minority Supplier Development Council
- Greater Riverside Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Asian Business Association
- Riverside County Black Chamber of Commerce
- Inland Empire Small Business Development Center
- Greater Riverside Chamber of Commerce
- Corona Chamber of Commerce
- San Bernardino Area Chamber of Commerce
- Orange County Chamber of Commerce

Organizations were contacted by email to discuss the proposed goal methodology. Organizations were provided the opportunity to comment on the goal methodology and the CCTS DBE Program.

Source	Communication	Comment Summary	Response Summary
Inland Empire Women's Business Center https://www.iewbc.org/ 3780 Market St. Riverside, CA 92501	Initial email sent 7/2/20 Follow-up email sent 7/17/20	No comments received 8/5/20 - email copy of the public notice	NA
Businesswomen's Association of San Bernardino County https://nasbc.org/ 330 Sixth St. #201 Redlands, CA 92374	Initial email sent 7/2/20 Follow-up email sent 7/17/20	No comments received 8/5/20 - email copy of the public notice	NA
Orange County Small Business Development Center https://orangecountyebdc.org/ 1300 S. Bristol St., 2nd floor Santa Ana, CA 92704	Initial email sent 7/2/20 Follow-up email sent 7/17/20	No comments received 8/5/20 - email copy of the public notice	NA
Southern California Minority Supplier Development Council https://www.scmssc.org/ 800 W. 6th St. #830 Los Angeles, CA 90017	Initial email sent 7/2/20 Follow-up email sent 7/17/20	No comments received 8/5/20 - email copy of the public notice	NA
Greater Riverside Hispanic Chamber of Commerce https://greaterriversidehispanicchamberofcommerce.org/	Initial email sent 7/2/20 Follow-up email sent 7/17/20	No comments received 8/5/20 - email copy of the public notice	NA
Asian Business Association https://www.abala.org Corona, CA 92878	Initial email sent 7/2/20 Follow-up email sent 7/17/20	No comments received 8/5/20 - email copy of the public notice	NA
Riverside County Black Chamber of Commerce https://riversidecountybcc.org/ 2060 Chicago Ave. # A13 Riverside, CA 92507	Initial email sent 7/2/20 sent follow-up email 7/17/20, original email was undeliverable	No comments received 8/5/20 - email copy of the public notice	7/17 Follow-up email to Pepi Jackson, president pepi@riversidecountybcc.org NA
Inland Empire Small Business Development Center https://inlandempireebdc.org/ 3780 Market St. Riverside, CA 92501	Tried to send initial email through website on 7/2 but undeliverable; had left voicemail. Received call back 7/6; provided consultant name & email.	7/6/20 Sent synopsis of the DBE Goal to email provided; received response back; sent the DBE Overall Goal & Methodology Phone appointment with consultant 7/9/20 @ 11am 8/5/20 - email copy of the public notice	No comments on the DBE Goal Methodology however are partnering to provide educational services to small businesses wishing to become DBE certified, transit projects opportunities in the next triennial period and connecting with prime contractors for subcontracting opportunities
Greater Riverside Chamber of Commerce http://www.riverside-chamber.com/ 3985 University Ave. Riverside, Ca 92501	Initial email sent 7/2/20 Follow-up email sent 7/17/20	7/17/20 received response back forwarding original email to the CEO/President for follow-up No comments received 8/5/20 - email copy of the public notice	
Corona Chamber of Commerce https://www.mychamber.org/ 904 E. 6th St. Corona, Ca 92879	Initial email sent 7/2/20 Follow-up email sent 7/17/20	No comments received 8/5/20 - email copy of the public notice	
San Bernardino Area Chamber of Commerce http://www.sbchamber.org/ 546 W. 6th St. San Bernardino, CA 92410	Initial email sent 7/2/20 Follow-up email sent 7/17/20	No comments received 8/5/20 - email copy of the public notice	
Orange County Chamber of Commerce https://www.orangechamber.com/ 635 S. Main St. Suite 200-310 Orange, CA 99268	Initial email sent 7/2/20 Follow-up email sent 7/17/20	No comments received 8/5/20 - email copy of the public notice	

CCTS TRIENNIAL DBE GOAL

City of Corona Transit System (CCTS) is in the process of preparing their Triennial Overall Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Goal for the upcoming triennial period (October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2023).

Overall DBE Goal

- As a direct recipient of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding, CCTS is required to have a DBE program to increase the participation of DBEs in federally aided contracts.
- The purpose of the DBE goal-setting process is to level the playing field so that DBEs can complete fairly for FTA-Associated contracts.
- The proposed overall DBE goal for Federal Fiscal Years 2021-2023 for CCTS's FTA-assisted contracts is .5%
- CCTS intends to use race-neutral methods to meet the overall DBE goal.

Project Goal

The Overall DBE Goal reflects the relative availability of DBEs and all comparable businesses available to compare within the market area.

DBE & Small Business Participation

CCTS plans to incorporate the following strategies to foster small business participation in its contracting process:

- Breaking out procurements or unbundling procurement actions to provide greater opportunities for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), small and minority firms, and women's business enterprises to participate.
- For procurements that require competition, the City will seek out small businesses to compete for these procurement actions by actively including DBE and non-DBE small business firms on the solicitation lists.
- For micro purchases that do not require competition, seeking out DBE and non-DBE small business firms to satisfy these requirements.

Race-Neutral Measures

CCTS plans to implement the following race-neutral measures for FFY 2021-2023 and will continue to explore other options:

- Reaching out to DBE's under California Unified Certification Program, arranging timely solicitations, times for the presentation of bids, quantities, specifications, and delivery schedules in ways that facilitate DBEs and other small business firms' participation.
- Unbundling large contracts to make them more accessible to small businesses, requiring or encouraging prime contractors to subcontract portions of work that they might otherwise perform with their own work forces.
- Providing technical assistance and other services to small businesses, including DBE firms.
- Providing information and communications programs on contracting procedures and specific contract opportunities.

Attachment F – City Council Action

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-123

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CORONA, CALIFORNIA, TO APPROVE THE DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (DBE) PROGRAM FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEARS 2021-2023; ESTABLISH AN OVERALL TRIENNIAL DBE GOAL OF 0.5%; AND AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO SIGN THE DBE PROGRAM OBJECTIVE AND POLICY STATEMENT.

WHEREAS, City of Corona Transit Service (CCTS) has established a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program in accordance with the regulations of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 49, Part 26, which requires that the DBE program and goal be established, reviewed, and updated every three years; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Title 49, part 26 of the Code of Federal Regulations, as amended, and regulations promulgated thereunder, in order to be eligible for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds, the City is required to have a DBE program and an overall three-year goal established; and

WHEREAS, CCTS, as a recipient of FTA funds, receiving more than \$250,000 in financial assistance from the FTA, has established a DBE Program in accordance with the regulations of DOT CFR Title 49, Part 26; and

WHEREAS, CCTS has established an overall three-year DBE goal of 0.5 percent for Federal Fiscal Years 2021-2023.

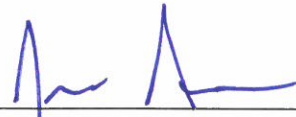
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Corona, California, as follows:

SECTION 1. The updated Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program is hereby approved and adopted.

SECTION 2. An overall DBE goal of 0.5 percent of FTA funded contracting opportunities is hereby approved and adopted for FFY 2020-2021 through FFY 2022-2023.

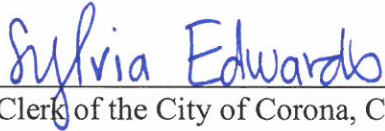
SECTION 3. The City Manager is authorized to sign the updated DBE Program Objective and Policy Statement.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED this 16th day of September, 2020.



Mayor of the City of Corona, California

ATTEST:



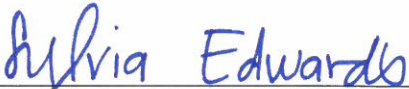
City Clerk of the City of Corona, California

CERTIFICATION

I, Sylvia Edwards, City Clerk of the City of Corona, California, do hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was regularly passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Corona, California, at a regular meeting thereof held on the 16th day of September 2020, by the following vote:

AYES:	CARRILLO, CASILLAS, SCOTT, SPEAKE, STEINER
NOES:	NONE
ABSENT:	NONE
ABSTAINED:	NONE

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the official seal of the City of Corona, California, this 16th day of September 2020.



City Clerk of the City of Corona, California

(SEAL)

Attachment G – CUCP Brochure on how to apply for DBE Certification

List of Certifying CUCP DBE Agencies

- **California Department of Transportation
Office of Business and Economic Opportunity**
1823 14th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811
916) 324-1700
- **City of Fresno**
2600 Fresno St., Room 2156
Fresno, CA 93721-3622
(559) 621-1163
- **City of Los Angeles**
1149 S. Broadway Street, Suite 300
Los Angeles, CA 90015
(213) 847-2684
- **Los Angeles County Metropolitan
Transportation Authority (METRO)**
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 922-2600
- **San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART)**
300 Lakeside Drive, 18th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 464-6100
- **San Francisco Municipal Transportation
Agency (SFMTA)**
1 South Van Ness Avenue, 6th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 701-4436
- **San Mateo County Transit District
(SAMTRANS) & Peninsula Corridor Joint
Powers Board (JPB)**
1250 San Carlos Avenue
San Carlos, CA 94070
(650) 508-7939
- **Santa Clara Valley Transportation
Authority (VTA)**
3331 North First Street, Bldg. A
San Jose, CA 95134
(408) 321-5962

List of Certifying CUCP ACDBE Agencies

- **California Department of Transportation
Office of Business and Economic Opportunity**
1823 14th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811
(916) 324-1700
- **City of Los Angeles**
1149 S. Broadway Street, Suite 300
Los Angeles, CA 90015
(213) 847-2684
- **San Diego Regional Airport Authority
Small Business Development Department**
P. O. Box 82776
San Diego, CA 92138
Ph. (619) 400-2568
(San Diego Concessions Only)
- **San Francisco International Airport (SFO)
Small Business Affairs Office**
P.O. Box 8097
San Francisco, CA 94128
Ph. (650) 821-5021
(SFO Concessions Only)
- **City of Fresno**
2600 Fresno St., Room 2156
Fresno, CA 93721-3622
(559) 621-1163

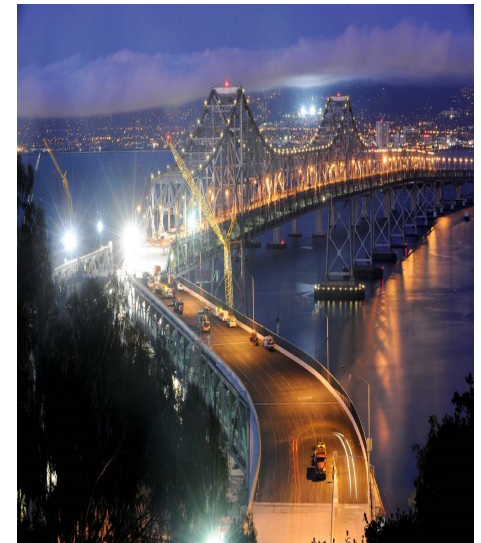
For individuals with disabilities, this document is available in Braille, large print, or computer disc. To obtain a copy in one of these alternative formats, please contact:

California Department of Transportation
Office of Business and Economic Opportunity
Certification Branch
1823 14th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811
(916) 324-1700
TTY: 711
Email address: DBE.Certification@dot.ca.gov

March, 2019



How to apply for Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Certification?



California Unified
Certification Program
(CUCP)

What are the main eligibility requirements for DBE certification?

Social and Economic Disadvantage:

A disadvantaged owner must be a U.S. Citizen (or resident alien) and meet the federal definition of socially and economically disadvantaged as defined in the Code of Federal Regulation 49 CFR Part 26.67. Presumptive groups include women, Black Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian-Pacific Americans, Subcontinent Asian-Americans, or any individual found to be socially and economically disadvantaged on a case-by-case basis.

Personal Net Worth: Only disadvantaged persons having their personal net worth (PNW) of less than \$1.32 million can be considered as a potential qualified DBE.

Business Size Standard: A firm (including affiliates) must be a small business as defined by the U.S. States Small Business Administration. Average annual gross receipts over the previous three fiscal years may not exceed \$23,980,000 (\$56,420,000 for airport concessions in general, with some exceptions). Lower size standards may apply depending on business activity determination.

Ownership: Must be a for-profit small business concern, where socially and economically disadvantaged individual(s) own at least 51 percent interest in the firm.

Independence: The business must not be affiliated with another firm in such a way as to compromise its independence and control.

Management and Control: The DBE owner(s) must possess the power to direct or cause the direction of the management and policies of the firm and to make day-to-day decisions, as well as long-term decisions on matters of management, policy and operations.

On-Site Visit: The Federal regulations require an on-site review be conducted for all DBE applicants.

How can I apply for DBE certification?

To begin the process, go to the Caltrans website at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/obeo>

Click on the box “Become DBE Certified” and check the boxes as it pertains to your firm. This takes you to the DBE application.

For your convenience, a list of helpful resources is located on the Caltrans website at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/obeo>

Under the OBEO Links heading click on Disadvantaged Business Enterprise and then DBE Certification Resources. This connects you to the federal regulations, sample DBE application packet, and the application process flowchart. For questions, contact the Caltrans DBE Certification Office at:

(916) 324-1700, Monday—Friday
8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. OR
DBE.Certification@dot.ca.gov

Where do I send my application once it has been completed and notarized?

See the list of certifying agencies on the back of this pamphlet and submit your application to the nearest agency in your firm’s geographic location. Include all the required supporting documents as it applies to your firm to ensure completeness of the application package.

If you have any additional questions, please contact the nearest agency to your firm for assistance.

What are the benefits of being DBE certified?

- Certification is recognized by 600 local agencies in California.
- Expands opportunities to participate in federally-funded projects.
- Become accessible to prime contractors needing to fulfill DBE participation goal requirements.
- Listing in official directories such as the DBE database used by prime contractors.
- Increase opportunities to network at events such as procurement fairs and pre-bids.
- Eligible for mentor protégé opportunities such as Caltrans’ CalMentor programs.
- No fees to apply, except the cost of having your application notarized.

Attachment H – Regulations: Title 49 CFR Part 26

PART 26—PARTICIPATION BY DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES IN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Contents

Subpart A—General

- §26.1 What are the objectives of this part?
- §26.3 To whom does this part apply?
- §26.5 What do the terms used in this part mean?
- §26.7 What discriminatory actions are forbidden?
- §26.9 How does the Department issue guidance and interpretations under this part?
- §26.11 What records do recipients keep and report?
- §26.13 What assurances must recipients and contractors make?
- §26.15 How can recipients apply for exemptions or waivers?

Subpart B—Administrative Requirements for DBE Programs for Federally-Assisted Contracting

- §26.21 Who must have a DBE program?
- §26.23 What is the requirement for a policy statement?
- §26.25 What is the requirement for a liaison officer?
- §26.27 What efforts must recipients make concerning DBE financial institutions?
- §26.29 What prompt payment mechanisms must recipients have?
- §26.31 What information must you include in your DBE directory?
- §26.33 What steps must a recipient take to address overconcentration of DBEs in certain types of work?
- §26.35 What role do business development and mentor-protégé programs have in the DBE program?
- §26.37 What are a recipient's responsibilities for monitoring the performance of other program participants?
- §26.39 Fostering small business participation.

Subpart C—Goals, Good Faith Efforts, and Counting

- §26.41 What is the role of the statutory 10 percent goal in this program?
- §26.43 Can recipients use set-asides or quotas as part of this program?
- §26.45 How do recipients set overall goals?
- §26.47 Can recipients be penalized for failing to meet overall goals?
- §26.49 How are overall goals established for transit vehicle manufacturers?
- §26.51 What means do recipients use to meet overall goals?
- §26.53 What are the good faith efforts procedures recipients follow in situations where there are contract goals?
- §26.55 How is DBE participation counted toward goals?

Subpart D—Certification Standards

- §26.61 How are burdens of proof allocated in the certification process?
- §26.63 What rules govern group membership determinations?
- §26.65 What rules govern business size determinations?
- §26.67 What rules determine social and economic disadvantage?
- §26.69 What rules govern determinations of ownership?
- §26.71 What rules govern determinations concerning control?
- §26.73 What are other rules affecting certification?

Subpart E—Certification Procedures

- §26.81 What are the requirements for Unified Certification Programs?
- §26.83 What procedures do recipients follow in making certification decisions?
- §26.85 Interstate certification.
- §26.86 What rules govern recipients' denials of initial requests for certification?
- §26.87 What procedures does a recipient use to remove a DBE's eligibility?
- §26.88 Summary suspension of certification.
- §26.89 What is the process for certification appeals to the Department of Transportation?
- §26.91 What actions do recipients take following DOT certification appeal decisions?

Subpart F—Compliance and Enforcement

- §26.101 What compliance procedures apply to recipients?
- §26.103 What enforcement actions apply in FHWA and FTA programs?
- §26.105 What enforcement actions apply in FAA programs?
- §26.107 What enforcement actions apply to firms participating in the DBE program?
- §26.109 What are the rules governing information, confidentiality, cooperation, and intimidation or retaliation?

Appendix A to Part 26—Guidance Concerning Good Faith Efforts
Appendix B to Part 26—Uniform Report of DBE Awards or Commitments and Payments Form
Appendix C to Part 26—DBE Business Development Program Guidelines
Appendix D to Part 26—Mentor-Protégé Program Guidelines
Appendix E to Part 26—Individual Determinations of Social and Economic Disadvantage
Appendix F to Part 26—Uniform Certification Application Form
Appendix G to Part 26—Personal Net Worth Statement

AUTHORITY: 23 U.S.C. 304 and 324; 42 U.S.C. 2000d, *et seq.* ; 49 U.S.C. 47107, 47113, 47123; Sec. 1101(b), Pub. L. 105-178, 112 Stat. 107, 113.

SOURCE: 64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, unless otherwise noted.

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Subpart A—General

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§26.1 What are the objectives of this part?

This part seeks to achieve several objectives:

- (a) To ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of DOT-assisted contracts in the Department's highway, transit, and airport financial assistance programs;
- (b) To create a level playing field on which DBEs can compete fairly for DOT-assisted contracts;
- (c) To ensure that the Department's DBE program is narrowly tailored in accordance with applicable law;
- (d) To ensure that only firms that fully meet this part's eligibility standards are permitted to participate as DBEs;
- (e) To help remove barriers to the participation of DBEs in DOT-assisted contracts;
- (f) To promote the use of DBEs in all types of federally-assisted contracts and procurement activities conducted by recipients.
- (g) To assist the development of firms that can compete successfully in the marketplace outside the DBE program; and
- (h) To provide appropriate flexibility to recipients of Federal financial assistance in establishing and providing opportunities for DBEs.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 79 FR 59592, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.3 To whom does this part apply?

(a) If you are a recipient of any of the following types of funds, this part applies to you:

(1) Federal-aid highway funds authorized under Titles I (other than Part B) and V of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), Pub. L. 102-240, 105 Stat. 1914, or Titles I, III, and V of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), Pub. L. 105-178, 112 Stat. 107. Titles I, III, and V of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Pub. L. 109-59, 119 Stat. 1144; and Divisions A and B of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), Pub. L. 112-141, 126 Stat. 405.

(2) Federal transit funds authorized by Titles I, III, V and VI of ISTEA, Pub. L. 102-240 or by Federal transit laws in Title 49, U.S. Code, or Titles I, III, and V of the TEA-21, Pub. L. 105-178. Titles I, III, and V of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Pub. L. 109-59, 119 Stat. 1144; and Divisions A and B of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), Pub. L. 112-141, 126 Stat. 405.

(3) Airport funds authorized by 49 U.S.C. 47101, *et seq.*

(b) [Reserved]

(c) If you are letting a contract, and that contract is to be performed entirely outside the United States, its territories and possessions, Puerto Rico, Guam, or the Northern Marianas Islands, this part does not apply to the contract.

(d) If you are letting a contract in which DOT financial assistance does not participate, this part does not apply to the contract.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 79 FR 59592, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.5 What do the terms used in this part mean?

Affiliation has the same meaning the term has in the Small Business Administration (SBA) regulations, 13 CFR part 121.

(1) Except as otherwise provided in 13 CFR part 121, concerns are affiliates of each other when, either directly or indirectly:

(i) One concern controls or has the power to control the other; or

(ii) A third party or parties controls or has the power to control both; or

(iii) An identity of interest between or among parties exists such that affiliation may be found.

(2) In determining whether affiliation exists, it is necessary to consider all appropriate factors, including common ownership, common management, and contractual relationships. Affiliates must be considered together in determining whether a concern meets small business size criteria and the statutory cap on the participation of firms in the DBE program.

Alaska Native means a citizen of the United States who is a person of one-fourth degree or more Alaskan Indian (including Tsimshian Indians not enrolled in the Metlaktla Indian Community), Eskimo, or Aleut blood, or a combination of those bloodlines. The term includes, in the absence of proof of a minimum blood quantum, any citizen whom a Native village or Native group regards as an Alaska Native if their father or mother is regarded as an Alaska Native.

Alaska Native Corporation (ANC) means any Regional Corporation, Village Corporation, Urban Corporation, or Group Corporation organized under the laws of the State of Alaska in accordance with the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, as amended (43 U.S.C. 1601, *et seq.*).

Assets mean all the property of a person available for paying debts or for distribution, including one's respective share of jointly held assets. This includes, but is not limited to, cash on hand and in banks, savings accounts, IRA or other retirement accounts, accounts receivable, life insurance, stocks and bonds, real estate, and personal property.

Business, business concern or business enterprise means an entity organized for profit with a place of business located in the United States, and which operates primarily within the United States or which makes a significant contribution to the United States economy through payment of taxes or use of American products, materials, or labor.

Compliance means that a recipient has correctly implemented the requirements of this part.

Contingent Liability means a liability that depends on the occurrence of a future and uncertain event. This includes, but is not limited to, guaranty for debts owed by the applicant concern, legal claims and judgments, and provisions for federal income tax.

Contract means a legally binding relationship obligating a seller to furnish supplies or services (including, but not limited to, construction and professional services) and the buyer to pay for them. For purposes of this part, a lease is considered to be a contract.

Contractor means one who participates, through a contract or subcontract (at any tier), in a DOT-assisted highway, transit, or airport program.

Days mean calendar days. In computing any period of time described in this part, the day from which the period begins to run is not counted, and when the last day of the period is a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday, the period extends to the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday. Similarly, in circumstances where the recipient's offices are closed for all or part of the last day, the period extends to the next day on which the agency is open.

Department or DOT means the U.S. Department of Transportation, including the Office of the Secretary, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Disadvantaged business enterprise or DBE means a for-profit small business concern—

(1) That is at least 51 percent owned by one or more individuals who are both socially and economically disadvantaged or, in the case of a corporation, in which 51 percent of the stock is owned by one or more such individuals; and

(2) Whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more of the socially and economically disadvantaged individuals who own it.

DOT-assisted contract means any contract between a recipient and a contractor (at any tier) funded in whole or in part with DOT financial assistance, including letters of credit or loan guarantees, except a contract solely for the purchase of land.

Good faith efforts means efforts to achieve a DBE goal or other requirement of this part which, by their scope, intensity, and appropriateness to the objective, can reasonably be expected to fulfill the program requirement.

Home state means the state in which a DBE firm or applicant for DBE certification maintains its principal place of business.

Immediate family member means father, mother, husband, wife, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandfather, grandmother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, and domestic partner and civil unions recognized under State law.

Indian tribe means any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community of Indians, including any ANC, which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians, or is recognized as such by the State in which the tribe, band, nation, group, or community resides. See definition of "tribally-owned concern" in this section.

Joint venture means an association of a DBE firm and one or more other firms to carry out a single, for-profit business enterprise, for which the parties combine their property, capital, efforts, skills and knowledge, and in which the DBE is responsible for a distinct, clearly defined portion of the work of the contract and whose share in the capital contribution, control, management, risks, and profits of the joint venture are commensurate with its ownership interest.

Liabilities mean financial or pecuniary obligations. This includes, but is not limited to, accounts payable, notes payable to bank or others, installment accounts, mortgages on real estate, and unpaid taxes.

Native Hawaiian means any individual whose ancestors were natives, prior to 1778, of the area which now comprises the State of Hawaii.

Native Hawaiian Organization means any community service organization serving Native Hawaiians in the State of Hawaii which is a not-for-profit organization chartered by the State of Hawaii, is controlled by Native Hawaiians, and whose business activities will principally benefit such Native Hawaiians.

Noncompliance means that a recipient has not correctly implemented the requirements of this part.

Operating Administration or *OA* means any of the following parts of DOT: the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The “Administrator” of an operating administration includes his or her designees.

Personal net worth means the net value of the assets of an individual remaining after total liabilities are deducted. An individual's personal net worth does not include: The individual's ownership interest in an applicant or participating DBE firm; or the individual's equity in his or her primary place of residence. An individual's personal net worth includes only his or her own share of assets held jointly or as community property with the individual's spouse.

Primary industry classification means the most current North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) designation which best describes the primary business of a firm. The NAICS is described in the North American Industry Classification Manual—United States, which is available on the Internet at the U.S. Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/>.

Primary recipient means a recipient which receives DOT financial assistance and passes some or all of it on to another recipient.

Principal place of business means the business location where the individuals who manage the firm's day-to-day operations spend most working hours. If the offices from which management is directed and where the business records are kept are in different locations, the recipient will determine the principal place of business.

Program means any undertaking on a recipient's part to use DOT financial assistance, authorized by the laws to which this part applies.

Race-conscious measure or program is one that is focused specifically on assisting only DBEs, including women-owned DBEs.

Race-neutral measure or program is one that is, or can be, used to assist all small businesses. For the purposes of this part, *race-neutral* includes gender-neutrality.

Recipient is any entity, public or private, to which DOT financial assistance is extended, whether directly or through another recipient, through the programs of the FAA, FHWA, or FTA, or who has applied for such assistance.

Secretary means the Secretary of Transportation or his/her designee.

Set-aside means a contracting practice restricting eligibility for the competitive award of a contract solely to DBE firms.

Small Business Administration or *SBA* means the United States Small Business Administration.

SBA certified firm refers to firms that have a current, valid certification from or recognized by the SBA under the 8(a) BD or SDB programs.

Small business concern means, with respect to firms seeking to participate as DBEs in DOT-assisted contracts, a small business concern as defined pursuant to section 3 of the Small Business Act and Small Business Administration regulations implementing it (13 CFR part 121) that also does not exceed the cap on average annual gross receipts specified in §26.65(b).

Socially and economically disadvantaged individual means any individual who is a citizen (or lawfully admitted permanent resident) of the United States and who has been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice or cultural bias within American society because of his or her identity as a members of groups and without regard to his or her individual qualities. The social disadvantage must stem from circumstances beyond the individual's control.

(1) Any individual who a recipient finds to be a socially and economically disadvantaged individual on a case-by-case basis. An individual must demonstrate that he or she has held himself or herself out, as a member of a designated group if you require it.

(2) Any individual in the following groups, members of which are rebuttably presumed to be socially and economically disadvantaged:

(i) "Black Americans," which includes persons having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa;

(ii) "Hispanic Americans," which includes persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Dominican, Central or South American, or other Spanish or Portuguese culture or origin, regardless of race;

(iii) "Native Americans," which includes persons who are enrolled members of a federally or State recognized Indian tribe, Alaska Natives, or Native Hawaiians;

(iv) "Asian-Pacific Americans," which includes persons whose origins are from Japan, China, Taiwan, Korea, Burma (Myanmar), Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia (Kampuchea), Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Brunei, Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands (Republic of Palau), Republic of the Northern Marianas Islands, Samoa, Macao, Fiji, Tonga, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Nauru, Federated States of Micronesia, or Hong Kong;

(v) "Subcontinent Asian Americans," which includes persons whose origins are from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives Islands, Nepal or Sri Lanka;

(vi) Women;

(vii) Any additional groups whose members are designated as socially and economically disadvantaged by the SBA, at such time as the SBA designation becomes effective.

(3) Being born in a particular country does not, standing alone, mean that a person is necessarily a member of one of the groups listed in this definition.

Spouse means a married person, including a person in a domestic partnership or a civil union recognized under State law.

Transit vehicle manufacturer means any manufacturer whose primary business purpose is to manufacture vehicles specifically built for public mass transportation. Such vehicles include, but are not limited to: Buses, rail cars, trolleys, ferries, and vehicles manufactured specifically for paratransit purposes. Producers of vehicles that receive post-production alterations or retrofitting to be used for public transportation purposes (e.g., so-called cutaway vehicles, vans customized for service to people with disabilities) are also considered transit vehicle manufacturers. Businesses that manufacture, mass-produce, or distribute vehicles solely for personal use and for sale "off the lot" are not considered transit vehicle manufacturers.

Tribally-owned concern means any concern at least 51 percent owned by an Indian tribe as defined in this section.

You refers to a recipient, unless a statement in the text of this part or the context requires otherwise (i.e., 'You must do XYZ' means that recipients must do XYZ).

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 64 FR 34570, June 28, 1999; 68 FR 35553, June 16, 2003; 76 FR 5096, Jan. 28, 2011; 79 FR 59592, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.7 What discriminatory actions are forbidden?

(a) You must never exclude any person from participation in, deny any person the benefits of, or otherwise discriminate against anyone in connection with the award and performance of any contract covered by this part on the basis of race, color, sex, or national origin.

(b) In administering your DBE program, you must not, directly or through contractual or other arrangements, use criteria or methods of administration that have the effect of defeating or substantially impairing accomplishment of the objectives of the program with respect to individuals of a particular race, color, sex, or national origin.

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§26.9 How does the Department issue guidance and interpretations under this part?

(a) Only guidance and interpretations (including interpretations set forth in certification appeal decisions) consistent with this part 26 and issued after March 4, 1999 express the official positions and views of the Department of Transportation or any of its operating administrations.

(b) The Secretary of Transportation, Office of the Secretary of Transportation, FHWA, FTA, and FAA may issue written interpretations of or written guidance concerning this part. Written interpretations and guidance are valid, and express the official positions and views of the Department of Transportation or any of its operating administrations, only if they are issued over the signature of the Secretary of Transportation or if they contain the following statement:

The General Counsel of the Department of Transportation has reviewed this document and approved it as consistent with the language and intent of 49 CFR part 26.

[72 FR 15617, Apr. 2, 2007]

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§26.11 What records do recipients keep and report?

(a) You must transmit the Uniform Report of DBE Awards or Commitments and Payments, found in Appendix B to this part, at the intervals stated on the form.

(b) You must continue to provide data about your DBE program to the Department as directed by DOT operating administrations.

(c) You must create and maintain a bidders list.

(1) The purpose of this list is to provide you as accurate data as possible about the universe of DBE and non-DBE contractors and subcontractors who seek to work on your Federally-assisted contracts for use in helping you set your overall goals.

(2) You must obtain the following information about DBE and non-DBE contractors and subcontractors who seek to work on your Federally-assisted contracts:

(i) Firm name;

(ii) Firm address;

(iii) Firm's status as a DBE or non-DBE;

(iv) Age of the firm; and

(v) The annual gross receipts of the firm. You may obtain this information by asking each firm to indicate into what gross receipts bracket they fit (*e.g.*, less than \$500,000; \$500,000-\$1 million; \$1-2 million; \$2-5 million; etc.) rather than requesting an exact figure from the firm.

(3) You may acquire the information for your bidders list in a variety of ways. For example, you can collect the data from all bidders, before or after the bid due date. You can conduct a survey that will result in statistically sound estimate of the universe of DBE and non-DBE contractors and subcontractors who seek to work on your Federally-assisted contracts. You may combine different data collection approaches (*e.g.*, collect name and address information from all bidders, while conducting a survey with respect to age and gross receipts information).

(d) You must maintain records documenting a firm's compliance with the requirements of this part. At a minimum, you must keep a complete application package for each certified firm and all affidavits of no-change, change notices, and on-site reviews. These records must be retained in accordance with applicable record retention requirements for the recipient's financial assistance agreement. Other certification or compliance related records must be retained for a minimum of three (3) years unless otherwise provided by applicable record retention requirements for the recipient's financial assistance agreement, whichever is longer.

(e) The State department of transportation in each UCP established pursuant to §26.81 of this part must report to the Department of Transportation's Office of Civil Rights, by January 1, 2015, and each year thereafter, the percentage and location in the State of certified DBE firms in the UCP Directory controlled by the following:

(1) Women;

(2) Socially and economically disadvantaged individuals (other than women); and

(3) Individuals who are women and are otherwise socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.

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§26.13 What assurances must recipients and contractors make?

(a) Each financial assistance agreement you sign with a DOT operating administration (or a primary recipient) must include the following assurance: The recipient shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in the award and performance of any DOT-assisted contract or in the administration of its DBE program or the requirements 49 CFR part 26. The recipient shall take all necessary and reasonable steps under 49 CFR part 26 to ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of DOT-assisted contracts. The recipient's DBE program, as required by 49 CFR part 26 and as approved by DOT, is incorporated by reference in this agreement. Implementation of this program is a legal obligation and failure to carry out its terms shall be treated as a violation of this agreement. Upon notification to the recipient of its failure to carry out its approved program, the Department may impose sanctions as provided for under 49 CFR part 26 and may, in appropriate cases, refer the matter for enforcement under 18 U.S.C. 1001 and/or the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act of 1986 (31 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.).

(b) Each contract you sign with a contractor (and each subcontract the prime contractor signs with a subcontractor) must include the following assurance: The contractor, sub recipient or subcontractor shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in the performance of this contract. The contractor shall carry out applicable requirements of 49 CFR part 26 in the award and administration of DOT-assisted contracts. Failure by the contractor to carry out these requirements is a material breach of this contract, which may result in the termination of this contract or such other remedy as the recipient deems appropriate, which may include, but is not limited to:

- (1) Withholding monthly progress payments;
- (2) Assessing sanctions;
- (3) Liquidated damages; and/or
- (4) Disqualifying the contractor from future bidding as non-responsible.

[79 FR 59593, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.15 How can recipients apply for exemptions or waivers?

(a) You can apply for an exemption from any provision of this part. To apply, you must request the exemption in writing from the Office of the Secretary of Transportation, FHWA, FTA, or FAA. The Secretary will grant the request only if it documents special or exceptional circumstances, not likely to be generally applicable, and not contemplated in connection with the rulemaking that established this part, that make your compliance with a specific provision of this part impractical. You must agree to take any steps that the Department specifies to comply with the intent of the provision from which an exemption is granted. The Secretary will issue a written response to all exemption requests.

(b) You can apply for a waiver of any provision of Subpart B or C of this part including, but not limited to, any provisions regarding administrative requirements, overall goals, contract goals or good faith efforts. Program waivers are for the purpose of authorizing you to operate a DBE program

that achieves the objectives of this part by means that may differ from one or more of the requirements of Subpart B or C of this part. To receive a program waiver, you must follow these procedures:

(1) You must apply through the concerned operating administration. The application must include a specific program proposal and address how you will meet the criteria of paragraph (b)(2) of this section. Before submitting your application, you must have had public participation in developing your proposal, including consultation with the DBE community and at least one public hearing. Your application must include a summary of the public participation process and the information gathered through it.

(2) Your application must show that—

(i) There is a reasonable basis to conclude that you could achieve a level of DBE participation consistent with the objectives of this part using different or innovative means other than those that are provided in subpart B or C of this part;

(ii) Conditions in your jurisdiction are appropriate for implementing the proposal;

(iii) Your proposal would prevent discrimination against any individual or group in access to contracting opportunities or other benefits of the program; and

(iv) Your proposal is consistent with applicable law and program requirements of the concerned operating administration's financial assistance program.

(3) The Secretary has the authority to approve your application. If the Secretary grants your application, you may administer your DBE program as provided in your proposal, subject to the following conditions:

(i) DBE eligibility is determined as provided in subparts D and E of this part, and DBE participation is counted as provided in §26.49;

(ii) Your level of DBE participation continues to be consistent with the objectives of this part;

(iii) There is a reasonable limitation on the duration of your modified program; and

(iv) Any other conditions the Secretary makes on the grant of the waiver.

(4) The Secretary may end a program waiver at any time and require you to comply with this part's provisions. The Secretary may also extend the waiver, if he or she determines that all requirements of paragraphs (b)(2) and (3) of this section continue to be met. Any such extension shall be for no longer than period originally set for the duration of the program.

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Subpart B—Administrative Requirements for DBE Programs for Federally-Assisted Contracting

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§26.21 Who must have a DBE program?

(a) If you are in one of these categories and let DOT-assisted contracts, you must have a DBE program meeting the requirements of this part:

(1) All FHWA primary recipients receiving funds authorized by a statute to which this part applies;

(2) FTA recipients receiving planning, capital and/or operating assistance who will award prime contracts (excluding transit vehicle purchases) the cumulative total value of which exceeds \$250,000 in FTA funds in a Federal fiscal year;

(3) FAA recipients receiving grants for airport planning or development who will award prime contracts the cumulative total value of which exceeds \$250,000 in FAA funds in a Federal fiscal year.

(b)(1) You must submit a DBE program conforming to this part by August 31, 1999 to the concerned operating administration (OA). Once the OA has approved your program, the approval counts for all of your DOT-assisted programs (except that goals are reviewed by the particular operating administration that provides funding for your DOT-assisted contracts).

(2) You do not have to submit regular updates of your DBE programs, as long as you remain in compliance. However, you must submit significant changes in the program for approval.

(c) You are not eligible to receive DOT financial assistance unless DOT has approved your DBE program and you are in compliance with it and this part. You must continue to carry out your program until all funds from DOT financial assistance have been expended.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 64 FR 34570, June 28, 1999; 65 FR 68951, Nov. 15, 2000; 79 FR 59593, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.23 What is the requirement for a policy statement?

You must issue a signed and dated policy statement that expresses your commitment to your DBE program, states its objectives, and outlines responsibilities for its implementation. You must circulate the statement throughout your organization and to the DBE and non-DBE business communities that perform work on your DOT-assisted contracts.

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§26.25 What is the requirement for a liaison officer?

You must have a DBE liaison officer, who shall have direct, independent access to your Chief Executive Officer concerning DBE program matters. The liaison officer shall be responsible for implementing all aspects of your DBE program. You must also have adequate staff to administer the program in compliance with this part.

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§26.27 What efforts must recipients make concerning DBE financial institutions?

You must thoroughly investigate the full extent of services offered by financial institutions owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals in your community and make reasonable efforts to use these institutions. You must also encourage prime contractors to use such institutions.

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§26.29 What prompt payment mechanisms must recipients have?

(a) You must establish, as part of your DBE program, a contract clause to require prime contractors to pay subcontractors for satisfactory performance of their contracts no later than 30 days from receipt of each payment you make to the prime contractor.

(b) You must ensure prompt and full payment of retainage from the prime contractor to the subcontractor within 30 days after the subcontractor's work is satisfactorily completed. You must use one of the following methods to comply with this requirement:

(1) You may decline to hold retainage from prime contractors and prohibit prime contractors from holding retainage from subcontractors.

(2) You may decline to hold retainage from prime contractors and require a contract clause obligating prime contractors to make prompt and full payment of any retainage kept by prime contractor to the subcontractor within 30 days after the subcontractor's work is satisfactorily completed.

(3) You may hold retainage from prime contractors and provide for prompt and regular incremental acceptances of portions of the prime contract, pay retainage to prime contractors based on these acceptances, and require a contract clause obligating the prime contractor to pay all retainage owed to the subcontractor for satisfactory completion of the accepted work within 30 days after your payment to the prime contractor.

(c) For purposes of this section, a subcontractor's work is satisfactorily completed when all the tasks called for in the subcontract have been accomplished and documented as required by the recipient. When a recipient has made an incremental acceptance of a portion of a prime contract, the work of a subcontractor covered by that acceptance is deemed to be satisfactorily completed.

(d) Your DBE program must provide appropriate means to enforce the requirements of this section. These means may include appropriate penalties for failure to comply, the terms and conditions of which you set. Your program may also provide that any delay or postponement of payment among the parties may take place only for good cause, with your prior written approval.

(e) You may also establish, as part of your DBE program, any of the following additional mechanisms to ensure prompt payment:

(1) A contract clause that requires prime contractors to include in their subcontracts language providing that prime contractors and subcontractors will use appropriate alternative dispute resolution mechanisms to resolve payment disputes. You may specify the nature of such mechanisms.

(2) A contract clause providing that the prime contractor will not be reimbursed for work performed by subcontractors unless and until the prime contractor ensures that the subcontractors are promptly paid for the work they have performed.

(3) Other mechanisms, consistent with this part and applicable state and local law, to ensure that DBEs and other contractors are fully and promptly paid.

[68 FR 35553, June 16, 2003]

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§26.31 What information must you include in your DBE directory?

(a) In the directory required under §26.81(g) of this Part, you must list all firms eligible to participate as DBEs in your program. In the listing for each firm, you must include its address, phone number, and the types of work the firm has been certified to perform as a DBE.

(b) You must list each type of work for which a firm is eligible to be certified by using the most specific NAICS code available to describe each type of work. You must make any changes to your current directory entries necessary to meet the requirement of this paragraph (a) by August 26, 2011.

[76 FR 5096, Jan. 28, 2011]

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§26.33 What steps must a recipient take to address overconcentration of DBEs in certain types of work?

(a) If you determine that DBE firms are so overconcentrated in a certain type of work as to unduly burden the opportunity of non-DBE firms to participate in this type of work, you must devise appropriate measures to address this overconcentration.

(b) These measures may include the use of incentives, technical assistance, business development programs, mentor-protégé programs, and other appropriate measures designed to assist DBEs in performing work outside of the specific field in which you have determined that non-DBEs are unduly burdened. You may also consider varying your use of contract goals, to the extent consistent with §26.51, to ensure that non-DBEs are not unfairly prevented from competing for subcontracts.

(c) You must obtain the approval of the concerned DOT operating administration for your determination of overconcentration and the measures you devise to address it. Once approved, the measures become part of your DBE program.

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§26.35 What role do business development and mentor-protégé programs have in the DBE program?

(a) You may or, if an operating administration directs you to, you must establish a DBE business development program (BDP) to assist firms in gaining the ability to compete successfully in

the marketplace outside the DBE program. You may require a DBE firm, as a condition of receiving assistance through the BDP, to agree to terminate its participation in the DBE program after a certain time has passed or certain objectives have been reached. See Appendix C of this part for guidance on administering BDP programs.

(b) As part of a BDP or separately, you may establish a “mentor-protégé” program, in which another DBE or non-DBE firm is the principal source of business development assistance to a DBE firm.

(1) Only firms you have certified as DBEs before they are proposed for participation in a mentor-protégé program are eligible to participate in the mentor-protégé program.

(2) During the course of the mentor-protégé relationship, you must:

(i) Not award DBE credit to a non-DBE mentor firm for using its own protégé firm for more than one half of its goal on any contract let by the recipient; and

(ii) Not award DBE credit to a non-DBE mentor firm for using its own protégé firm for more than every other contract performed by the protégé firm.

(3) For purposes of making determinations of business size under this part, you must not treat protégé firms as affiliates of mentor firms, when both firms are participating under an approved mentor-protégé program. See Appendix D of this part for guidance concerning the operation of mentor-protégé programs.

(c) Your BDPs and mentor-protégé programs must be approved by the concerned operating administration before you implement them. Once approved, they become part of your DBE program.

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§26.37 What are a recipient's responsibilities for monitoring the performance of other program participants?

(a) You must implement appropriate mechanisms to ensure compliance with the part's requirements by all program participants (e.g., applying legal and contract remedies available under Federal, state and local law). You must set forth these mechanisms in your DBE program.

(b) Your DBE program must also include a monitoring and enforcement mechanism to ensure that work committed to DBEs at contract award or subsequently (e.g., as the result of modification to the contract) is actually performed by the DBEs to which the work was committed. This mechanism must include a written certification that you have reviewed contracting records and monitored work sites in your state for this purpose. The monitoring to which this paragraph refers may be conducted in conjunction with monitoring of contract performance for other purposes (e.g., close-out reviews for a contract).

(c) This mechanism must provide for a running tally of actual DBE attainments (e.g., payments actually made to DBE firms), including a means of comparing these attainments to commitments. In your reports of DBE participation to the Department, you must display both commitments and attainments.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 65 FR 68951, Nov. 15, 2000; 68 FR 35554, June 16, 2003; 76 FR 5097, Jan. 28, 2011]

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§26.39 Fostering small business participation.

(a) Your DBE program must include an element to structure contracting requirements to facilitate competition by small business concerns, taking all reasonable steps to eliminate obstacles to their participation, including unnecessary and unjustified bundling of contract requirements that may preclude small business participation in procurements as prime contractors or subcontractors.

(b) This element must be submitted to the appropriate DOT operating administration for approval as a part of your DBE program by February 28, 2012. As part of this program element you may include, but are not limited to, the following strategies:

(1) Establishing a race-neutral small business set-aside for prime contracts under a stated amount (e.g., \$1 million).

(2) In multi-year design-build contracts or other large contracts (e.g., for “megaprojects”) requiring bidders on the prime contract to specify elements of the contract or specific subcontracts that are of a size that small businesses, including DBEs, can reasonably perform.

(3) On prime contracts not having DBE contract goals, requiring the prime contractor to provide subcontracting opportunities of a size that small businesses, including DBEs, can reasonably perform, rather than self-performing all the work involved.

(4) Identifying alternative acquisition strategies and structuring procurements to facilitate the ability of consortia or joint ventures consisting of small businesses, including DBEs, to compete for and perform prime contracts.

(5) To meet the portion of your overall goal you project to meet through race-neutral measures, ensuring that a reasonable number of prime contracts are of a size that small businesses, including DBEs, can reasonably perform.

(c) You must actively implement your program elements to foster small business participation. Doing so is a requirement of good faith implementation of your DBE program.

[76 FR 5097, Jan. 28, 2011]

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Subpart C—Goals, Good Faith Efforts, and Counting

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§26.41 What is the role of the statutory 10 percent goal in this program?

(a) The statutes authorizing this program provide that, except to the extent the Secretary determines otherwise, not less than 10 percent of the authorized funds are to be expended with DBEs.

(b) This 10 percent goal is an aspirational goal at the national level, which the Department uses as a tool in evaluating and monitoring DBEs' opportunities to participate in DOT-assisted contracts.

(c) The national 10 percent goal does not authorize or require recipients to set overall or contract goals at the 10 percent level, or any other particular level, or to take any special administrative steps if their goals are above or below 10 percent.

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§26.43 Can recipients use set-asides or quotas as part of this program?

(a) You are not permitted to use quotas for DBEs on DOT-assisted contracts subject to this part.

(b) You may not set-aside contracts for DBEs on DOT-assisted contracts subject to this part, except that, in limited and extreme circumstances, you may use set-asides when no other method could be reasonably expected to redress egregious instances of discrimination.

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§26.45 How do recipients set overall goals?

(a)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (a)(2) of this section, you must set an overall goal for DBE participation in your DOT-assisted contracts.

(2) If you are a FTA or FAA recipient who reasonably anticipates awarding (excluding transit vehicle purchases) \$250,000 or less in FTA or FAA funds in prime contracts in a Federal fiscal year, you are not required to develop overall goals for FTA or FAA respectively for that fiscal year. However, if you have an existing DBE program, it must remain in effect and you must seek to fulfill the objectives outlined in §26.1.

(b) Your overall goal must be based on demonstrable evidence of the availability of ready, willing and able DBEs relative to all businesses ready, willing and able to participate on your DOT-assisted contracts (hereafter, the "relative availability of DBEs"). The goal must reflect your determination of the level of DBE participation you would expect absent the effects of discrimination. You cannot simply rely on either the 10 percent national goal, your previous overall goal or past DBE participation rates in your program without reference to the relative availability of DBEs in your market.

(c) *Step 1.* You must begin your goal setting process by determining a base figure for the relative availability of DBEs. The following are examples of approaches that you may take toward determining a base figure. These examples are provided as a starting point for your goal setting process. Any percentage figure derived from one of these examples should be considered a basis from which you begin when examining all evidence available in your jurisdiction. These examples are not intended as an exhaustive list. Other methods or combinations of methods to determine a base figure may be used, subject to approval by the concerned operating administration.

(1) *Use DBE Directories and Census Bureau Data.* Determine the number of ready, willing and able DBEs in your market from your DBE directory. Using the Census Bureau's County Business Pattern (CBP) data base, determine the number of all ready, willing and able businesses available in your market that perform work in the same NAICS codes. (Information about the CBP data base

may be obtained from the Census Bureau at their web site, www.census.gov/epcd/cbp/view/cbpview.html.) Divide the number of DBEs by the number of all businesses to derive a base figure for the relative availability of DBEs in your market.

(2) *Use a bidders list.* Determine the number of DBEs that have bid or quoted (successful and unsuccessful) on your DOT-assisted prime contracts or subcontracts in the past three years. Determine the number of all businesses that have bid or quoted (successful and unsuccessful) on prime or subcontracts in the same time period. Divide the number of DBE bidders and quoters by the number of all businesses to derive a base figure for the relative availability of DBEs in your market. When using this approach, you must establish a mechanism (documented in your goal submission) to directly capture data on DBE and non-DBE prime and subcontractors that submitted bids or quotes on your DOT-assisted contracts.

(3) *Use data from a disparity study.* Use a percentage figure derived from data in a valid, applicable disparity study.

(4) *Use the goal of another DOT recipient.* If another DOT recipient in the same, or substantially similar, market has set an overall goal in compliance with this rule, you may use that goal as a base figure for your goal.

(5) *Alternative methods.* Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph, you may use other methods to determine a base figure for your overall goal. Any methodology you choose must be based on demonstrable evidence of local market conditions and be designed to ultimately attain a goal that is rationally related to the relative availability of DBEs in your market. The exclusive use of a list of prequalified contractors or plan holders, or a bidders list that does not comply with the requirements of paragraph (c)(2) of this section, is not an acceptable alternative means of determining the availability of DBEs.

(d) *Step 2.* Once you have calculated a base figure, you must examine all of the evidence available in your jurisdiction to determine what adjustment, if any, is needed to the base figure to arrive at your overall goal. If the evidence does not suggest an adjustment is necessary, then no adjustment shall be made.

(1) There are many types of evidence that must be considered when adjusting the base figure. These include:

(i) The current capacity of DBEs to perform work in your DOT-assisted contracting program, as measured by the volume of work DBEs have performed in recent years;

(ii) Evidence from disparity studies conducted anywhere within your jurisdiction, to the extent it is not already accounted for in your base figure; and

(iii) If your base figure is the goal of another recipient, you must adjust it for differences in your local market and your contracting program.

(2) If available, you must consider evidence from related fields that affect the opportunities for DBEs to form, grow and compete. These include, but are not limited to:

(i) Statistical disparities in the ability of DBEs to get the financing, bonding and insurance required to participate in your program;

(ii) Data on employment, self-employment, education, training and union apprenticeship programs, to the extent you can relate it to the opportunities for DBEs to perform in your program.

(3) If you attempt to make an adjustment to your base figure to account for the continuing effects of past discrimination (often called the “but for” factor) or the effects of an ongoing DBE program, the adjustment must be based on demonstrable evidence that is logically and directly related to the effect for which the adjustment is sought.

(e) Once you have determined a percentage figure in accordance with paragraphs (c) and (d) of this section, you should express your overall goal as follows:

(1) If you are an FHWA recipient, as a percentage of all Federal-aid highway funds you will expend in FHWA-assisted contracts in the forthcoming three fiscal years.

(2) If you are an FTA or FAA recipient, as a percentage of all FT or FAA funds (exclusive of FTA funds to be used for the purchase of transit vehicles) that you will expend in FTA or FAA-assisted contracts in the three forthcoming fiscal years.

(3) In appropriate cases, the FHWA, FTA or FAA Administrator may permit or require you to express your overall goal as a percentage of funds for a particular grant or project or group of grants and/or projects, including entire projects. Like other overall goals, a project goal may be adjusted to reflect changed circumstances, with the concurrence of the appropriate operating administration.

(i) A project goal is an overall goal, and must meet all the substantive and procedural requirements of this section pertaining to overall goals.

(ii) A project goal covers the entire length of the project to which it applies.

(iii) The project goal should include a projection of the DBE participation anticipated to be obtained during each fiscal year covered by the project goal.

(iv) The funds for the project to which the project goal pertains are separated from the base from which your regular overall goal, applicable to contracts not part of the project covered by a project goal, is calculated.

(f)(1)(i) If you set your overall goal on a fiscal year basis, you must submit it to the applicable DOT operating administration by August 1 at three-year intervals, based on a schedule established by the FHWA, FTA, or FAA, as applicable, and posted on that agency's Web site.

(ii) You may adjust your three-year overall goal during the three-year period to which it applies, in order to reflect changed circumstances. You must submit such an adjustment to the concerned operating administration for review and approval.

(iii) The operating administration may direct you to undertake a review of your goal if necessary to ensure that the goal continues to fit your circumstances appropriately.

(iv) While you are required to submit an overall goal to FHWA, FTA, or FAA only every three years, the overall goal and the provisions of Sec. 26.47(c) apply to each year during that three-year period.

(v) You may make, for informational purposes, projections of your expected DBE achievements during each of the three years covered by your overall goal. However, it is the overall goal itself, and not these informational projections, to which the provisions of section 26.47(c) of this part apply.

(2) If you are a recipient and set your overall goal on a project or grant basis as provided in paragraph (e)(3) of this section, you must submit the goal for review at a time determined by the FHWA, FTA or FAA Administrator, as applicable.

(3) You must include with your overall goal submission a description of the methodology you used to establish the goal, including your base figure and the evidence with which it was calculated, and the adjustments you made to the base figure and the evidence you relied on for the adjustments. You should also include a summary listing of the relevant available evidence in your jurisdiction and, where applicable, an explanation of why you did not use that evidence to adjust your base figure. You must also include your projection of the portions of the overall goal you expect to meet through race-neutral and race-conscious measures, respectively (see 26.51(c)).

(4) You are not required to obtain prior operating administration concurrence with your overall goal. However, if the operating administration's review suggests that your overall goal has not been correctly calculated or that your method for calculating goals is inadequate, the operating administration may, after consulting with you, adjust your overall goal or require that you do so. The adjusted overall goal is binding on you. In evaluating the adequacy or soundness of the methodology used to derive the overall goal, the operating administration will be guided by goal setting principles and best practices identified by the Department in guidance issued pursuant to §26.9.

(5) If you need additional time to collect data or take other steps to develop an approach to setting overall goals, you may request the approval of the concerned operating administration for an interim goal and/or goal-setting mechanism. Such a mechanism must:

(i) Reflect the relative availability of DBEs in your local market to the maximum extent feasible given the data available to you; and

(ii) Avoid imposing undue burdens on non-DBEs.

(6) Timely submission and operating administration approval of your overall goal is a condition of eligibility for DOT financial assistance.

(7) If you fail to establish and implement goals as provided in this section, you are not in compliance with this part. If you establish and implement goals in a way different from that provided in this part, you are not in compliance with this part. If you fail to comply with this requirement, you are not eligible to receive DOT financial assistance.

(g)(1) In establishing an overall goal, you must provide for consultation and publication. This includes:

(i) Consultation with minority, women's and general contractor groups, community organizations, and other officials or organizations which could be expected to have information concerning the availability of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged businesses, the effects of discrimination on opportunities for DBEs, and your efforts to establish a level playing field for the participation of DBEs. The consultation must include a scheduled, direct, interactive exchange (e.g., a face-to-face meeting, video conference, teleconference) with as many interested stakeholders as possible focused on obtaining information relevant to the goal setting process, and it must occur before you are required to submit your methodology to the operating administration for review

pursuant to paragraph (f) of this section. You must document in your goal submission the consultation process you engaged in. Notwithstanding paragraph (f)(4) of this section, you may not implement your proposed goal until you have complied with this requirement.

(ii) A published notice announcing your proposed overall goal before submission to the operating administration on August 1st. The notice must be posted on your official Internet Web site and may be posted in any other sources (e.g., minority-focused media, trade association publications). If the proposed goal changes following review by the operating administration, the revised goal must be posted on your official Internet Web site.

(2) At your discretion, you may inform the public that the proposed overall goal and its rationale are available for inspection during normal business hours at your principal office and for a 30-day comment period. Notice of the comment period must include addresses to which comments may be sent. The public comment period will not extend the August 1st deadline set in paragraph (f) of this section.

(h) Your overall goals must provide for participation by all certified DBEs and must not be subdivided into group-specific goals.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 64 FR 34570, June 28, 1999; 65 FR 68951, Nov. 15, 2000; 68 FR 35553, June 16, 2003; 75 FR 5536, Feb. 3, 2010; 76 FR 5097, Jan. 28, 2011; 79 FR 59593, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.47 Can recipients be penalized for failing to meet overall goals?

(a) You cannot be penalized, or treated by the Department as being in noncompliance with this rule, because your DBE participation falls short of your overall goal, unless you have failed to administer your program in good faith.

(b) If you do not have an approved DBE program or overall goal, or if you fail to implement your program in good faith, you are in noncompliance with this part.

(c) If the awards and commitments shown on your Uniform Report of Awards or Commitments and Payments at the end of any fiscal year are less than the overall goal applicable to that fiscal year, you must do the following in order to be regarded by the Department as implementing your DBE program in good faith:

(1) Analyze in detail the reasons for the difference between the overall goal and your awards and commitments in that fiscal year;

(2) Establish specific steps and milestones to correct the problems you have identified in your analysis and to enable you to meet fully your goal for the new fiscal year;

(3)(i) If you are a state highway agency; one of the 50 largest transit authorities as determined by the FTA; or an Operational Evolution Partnership Plan airport or other airport designated by the FAA, you must submit, within 90 days of the end of the fiscal year, the analysis and corrective actions developed under paragraphs (c)(1) and (2) of this section to the appropriate operating administration for approval. If the operating administration approves the report, you will be regarded as complying with the requirements of this section for the remainder of the fiscal year.

(ii) As a transit authority or airport not meeting the criteria of paragraph (c)(3)(i) of this section, you must retain analysis and corrective actions in your records for three years and make it available to FTA or FAA on request for their review.

(4) FHWA, FTA, or FAA may impose conditions on the recipient as part of its approval of the recipient's analysis and corrective actions including, but not limited to, modifications to your overall goal methodology, changes in your race-conscious/race-neutral split, or the introduction of additional race-neutral or race-conscious measures.

(5) You may be regarded as being in noncompliance with this Part, and therefore subject to the remedies in §26.103 or §26.105 of this part and other applicable regulations, for failing to implement your DBE program in good faith if any of the following things occur:

(i) You do not submit your analysis and corrective actions to FHWA, FTA, or FAA in a timely manner as required under paragraph (c)(3) of this section;

(ii) FHWA, FTA, or FAA disapproves your analysis or corrective actions; or

(iii) You do not fully implement the corrective actions to which you have committed or conditions that FHWA, FTA, or FAA has imposed following review of your analysis and corrective actions.

(d) If, as recipient, your Uniform Report of DBE Awards or Commitments and Payments or other information coming to the attention of FTA, FHWA, or FAA, demonstrates that current trends make it unlikely that you will achieve DBE awards and commitments that would be necessary to allow you to meet your overall goal at the end of the fiscal year, FHWA, FTA, or FAA, as applicable, may require you to make further good faith efforts, such as by modifying your race-conscious/race-neutral split or introducing additional race-neutral or race-conscious measures for the remainder of the fiscal year.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 76 FR 5098, Jan. 28, 2011]

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§26.49 How are overall goals established for transit vehicle manufacturers?

(a) If you are an FTA recipient, you must require in your DBE program that each transit vehicle manufacturer, as a condition of being authorized to bid or propose on FTA-assisted transit vehicle procurements, certify that it has complied with the requirements of this section. You do not include FTA assistance used in transit vehicle procurements in the base amount from which your overall goal is calculated.

(1) Only those transit vehicle manufacturers listed on FTA's certified list of Transit Vehicle Manufacturers, or that have submitted a goal methodology to FTA that has been approved or has not been disapproved, at the time of solicitation are eligible to bid.

(2) A TVM's failure to implement the DBE Program in the manner as prescribed in this section and throughout 49 CFR part 26 will be deemed as non-compliance, which will result in removal from FTA's certified TVMs list, resulting in that manufacturer becoming ineligible to bid.

(3) FTA recipient's failure to comply with the requirements set forth in paragraph (a) of this section may result in formal enforcement action or appropriate sanction as determined by FTA (e.g., FTA declining to participate in the vehicle procurement).

(4) FTA recipients are required to submit within 30 days of making an award, the name of the successful bidder, and the total dollar value of the contract in the manner prescribed in the grant agreement.

(b) If you are a transit vehicle manufacturer, you must establish and submit for FTA's approval an annual overall percentage goal.

(1) In setting your overall goal, you should be guided, to the extent applicable, by the principles underlying §26.45. The base from which you calculate this goal is the amount of FTA financial assistance included in transit vehicle contracts you will bid on during the fiscal year in question, less the portion(s) attributable to the manufacturing process performed entirely by the transit vehicle manufacturer's own forces.

(i) You must consider and include in your base figure all domestic contracting opportunities made available to non-DBE firms; and

(ii) You must exclude from this base figure funds attributable to work performed outside the United States and its territories, possessions, and commonwealths.

(iii) In establishing an overall goal, the transit vehicle manufacturer must provide for public participation. This includes consultation with interested parties consistent with §26.45(g).

(2) The requirements of this part with respect to submission and approval of overall goals apply to you as they do to recipients.

(c) Transit vehicle manufacturers awarded must comply with the reporting requirements of §26.11 of this part including the requirement to submit the Uniform Report of Awards or Commitments and Payments, in order to remain eligible to bid on FTA assisted transit vehicle procurements.

(d) Transit vehicle manufacturers must implement all other applicable requirements of this part, except those relating to UCPs and DBE certification procedures.

(e) If you are an FHWA or FAA recipient, you may, with FHWA or FAA approval, use the procedures of this section with respect to procurements of vehicles or specialized equipment. If you choose to do so, then the manufacturers of this equipment must meet the same requirements (including goal approval by FHWA or FAA) as transit vehicle manufacturers must meet in FTA-assisted procurements.

(f) As a recipient you may, with FTA approval, establish project-specific goals for DBE participation in the procurement of transit vehicles in lieu of complying through the procedures of this section.

[79 FR 59594, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.51 What means do recipients use to meet overall goals?

(a) You must meet the maximum feasible portion of your overall goal by using race-neutral means of facilitating race-neutral DBE participation. Race-neutral DBE participation includes any time a DBE wins a prime contract through customary competitive procurement procedures or is awarded a subcontract on a prime contract that does not carry a DBE contract goal.

(b) Race-neutral means include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Arranging solicitations, times for the presentation of bids, quantities, specifications, and delivery schedules in ways that facilitate participation by DBEs and other small businesses and by making contracts more accessible to small businesses, by means such as those provided under §26.39 of this part.

(2) Providing assistance in overcoming limitations such as inability to obtain bonding or financing (e.g., by such means as simplifying the bonding process, reducing bonding requirements, eliminating the impact of surety costs from bids, and providing services to help DBEs, and other small businesses, obtain bonding and financing);

(3) Providing technical assistance and other services;

(4) Carrying out information and communications programs on contracting procedures and specific contract opportunities (e.g., ensuring the inclusion of DBEs, and other small businesses, on recipient mailing lists for bidders; ensuring the dissemination to bidders on prime contracts of lists of potential subcontractors; provision of information in languages other than English, where appropriate);

(5) Implementing a supportive services program to develop and improve immediate and long-term business management, record keeping, and financial and accounting capability for DBEs and other small businesses;

(6) Providing services to help DBEs, and other small businesses, improve long-term development, increase opportunities to participate in a variety of kinds of work, handle increasingly significant projects, and achieve eventual self-sufficiency;

(7) Establishing a program to assist new, start-up firms, particularly in fields in which DBE participation has historically been low;

(8) Ensuring distribution of your DBE directory, through print and electronic means, to the widest feasible universe of potential prime contractors; and

(9) Assisting DBEs, and other small businesses, to develop their capability to utilize emerging technology and conduct business through electronic media.

(c) Each time you submit your overall goal for review by the concerned operating administration, you must also submit your projection of the portion of the goal that you expect to meet through race-neutral means and your basis for that projection. This projection is subject to approval by the concerned operating administration, in conjunction with its review of your overall goal.

(d) You must establish contract goals to meet any portion of your overall goal you do not project being able to meet using race-neutral means.

(e) The following provisions apply to the use of contract goals:

(1) You may use contract goals only on those DOT-assisted contracts that have subcontracting possibilities.

(2) You are not required to set a contract goal on every DOT-assisted contract. You are not required to set each contract goal at the same percentage level as the overall goal. The goal for a specific contract may be higher or lower than that percentage level of the overall goal, depending on such factors as the type of work involved, the location of the work, and the availability of DBEs for the work of the particular contract. However, over the period covered by your overall goal, you must set contract goals so that they will cumulatively result in meeting any portion of your overall goal you do not project being able to meet through the use of race-neutral means.

(3) Operating administration approval of each contract goal is not necessarily required. However, operating administrations may review and approve or disapprove any contract goal you establish.

(4) Your contract goals must provide for participation by all certified DBEs and must not be subdivided into group-specific goals.

(f) To ensure that your DBE program continues to be narrowly tailored to overcome the effects of discrimination, you must adjust your use of contract goals as follows:

(1) If your approved projection under paragraph (c) of this section estimates that you can meet your entire overall goal for a given year through race-neutral means, you must implement your program without setting contract goals during that year, unless it becomes necessary in order meet your overall goal.

Example to paragraph (f)(1): Your overall goal for Year 1 is 12 percent. You estimate that you can obtain 12 percent or more DBE participation through the use of race-neutral measures, without any use of contract goals. In this case, you do not set any contract goals for the contracts that will be performed in Year 1. However, if part way through Year 1, your DBE awards or commitments are not at a level that would permit you to achieve your overall goal for Year 1, you could begin setting race-conscious DBE contract goals during the remainder of the year as part of your obligation to implement your program in good faith.

(2) If, during the course of any year in which you are using contract goals, you determine that you will exceed your overall goal, you must reduce or eliminate the use of contract goals to the extent necessary to ensure that the use of contract goals does not result in exceeding the overall goal. If you determine that you will fall short of your overall goal, then you must make appropriate modifications in your use of race-neutral and/or race-conscious measures to allow you to meet the overall goal.

Example to paragraph (f)(2): In Year II, your overall goal is 12 percent. You have estimated that you can obtain 5 percent DBE participation through use of race-neutral measures. You therefore plan to obtain the remaining 7 percent participation through use of DBE goals. By September, you have already obtained 11 percent DBE participation for the year. For contracts let during the remainder of the year, you use contract goals only to the extent necessary to obtain an additional one percent DBE participation. However, if you determine in September that your participation for the year is likely to be only 8 percent total, then you would increase your use of race-neutral and/or race-conscious means during the remainder of the year in order to achieve your overall goal.

(3) If the DBE participation you have obtained by race-neutral means alone meets or exceeds your overall goals for two consecutive years, you are not required to make a projection of the amount of your goal you can meet using such means in the next year. You do not set contract goals on any contracts in the next year. You continue using only race-neutral means to meet your overall goals unless and until you do not meet your overall goal for a year.

Example to paragraph (f)(3): Your overall goal for Years I and Year II is 10 percent. The DBE participation you obtain through race-neutral measures alone is 10 percent or more in each year. (For this purpose, it does not matter whether you obtained additional DBE participation through using contract goals in these years.) In Year III and following years, you do not need to make a projection under paragraph (c) of this section of the portion of your overall goal you expect to meet using race-neutral means. You simply use race-neutral means to achieve your overall goals. However, if in Year VI your DBE participation falls short of your overall goal, then you must make a paragraph (c) projection for Year VII and, if necessary, resume use of contract goals in that year.

(4) If you obtain DBE participation that exceeds your overall goal in two consecutive years through the use of contract goals (*i.e.*, not through the use of race-neutral means alone), you must reduce your use of contract goals proportionately in the following year.

Example to paragraph (f)(4): In Years I and II, your overall goal is 12 percent, and you obtain 14 and 16 percent DBE participation, respectively. You have exceeded your goals over the two-year period by an average of 25 percent. In Year III, your overall goal is again 12 percent, and your paragraph (c) projection estimates that you will obtain 4 percent DBE participation through race-neutral means and 8 percent through contract goals. You then reduce the contract goal projection by 25 percent (*i.e.*, from 8 to 6 percent) and set contract goals accordingly during the year. If in Year III you obtain 11 percent participation, you do not use this contract goal adjustment mechanism for Year IV, because there have not been two *consecutive* years of exceeding overall goals.

(g) In any year in which you project meeting part of your goal through race-neutral means and the remainder through contract goals, you must maintain data separately on DBE achievements in those contracts with and without contract goals, respectively. You must report this data to the concerned operating administration as provided in §26.11.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 76 FR 5098, Jan. 28, 2011; 79 FR 59595, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.53 What are the good faith efforts procedures recipients follow in situations where there are contract goals?

(a) When you have established a DBE contract goal, you must award the contract only to a bidder/offeror who makes good faith efforts to meet it. You must determine that a bidder/offeror has made good faith efforts if the bidder/offeror does either of the following things:

(1) Documents that it has obtained enough DBE participation to meet the goal; or

(2) Documents that it made adequate good faith efforts to meet the goal, even though it did not succeed in obtaining enough DBE participation to do so. If the bidder/offeror does document adequate good faith efforts, you must not deny award of the contract on the basis that the bidder/offeror failed to meet the goal. See Appendix A of this part for guidance in determining the adequacy of a bidder/offeror's good faith efforts.

(b) In your solicitations for DOT-assisted contracts for which a contract goal has been established, you must require the following:

(1) Award of the contract will be conditioned on meeting the requirements of this section;

(2) All bidders or offerors will be required to submit the following information to the recipient, at the time provided in paragraph (b)(3) of this section:

(i) The names and addresses of DBE firms that will participate in the contract;

(ii) A description of the work that each DBE will perform. To count toward meeting a goal, each DBE firm must be certified in a NAICS code applicable to the kind of work the firm would perform on the contract;

(iii) The dollar amount of the participation of each DBE firm participating;

(iv) Written documentation of the bidder/offeror's commitment to use a DBE subcontractor whose participation it submits to meet a contract goal; and

(v) Written confirmation from each listed DBE firm that it is participating in the contract in the kind and amount of work provided in the prime contractor's commitment.

(vi) If the contract goal is not met, evidence of good faith efforts (see Appendix A of this part). The documentation of good faith efforts must include copies of each DBE and non-DBE subcontractor quote submitted to the bidder when a non-DBE subcontractor was selected over a DBE for work on the contract; and

(3)(i) At your discretion, the bidder/offeror must present the information required by paragraph (b)(2) of this section—

(A) Under sealed bid procedures, as a matter of responsiveness, or with initial proposals, under contract negotiation procedures; or

(B) No later than 7 days after bid opening as a matter of responsibility. The 7 days shall be reduced to 5 days beginning January 1, 2017.

(ii) Provided that, in a negotiated procurement, including a design-build procurement, the bidder/offeror may make a contractually binding commitment to meet the goal at the time of bid submission or the presentation of initial proposals but provide the information required by paragraph (b)(2) of this section before the final selection for the contract is made by the recipient.

(c) You must make sure all information is complete and accurate and adequately documents the bidder/offeror's good faith efforts before committing yourself to the performance of the contract by the bidder/offeror.

(d) If you determine that the apparent successful bidder/offeror has failed to meet the requirements of paragraph (a) of this section, you must, before awarding the contract, provide the bidder/offeror an opportunity for administrative reconsideration.

(1) As part of this reconsideration, the bidder/offeror must have the opportunity to provide written documentation or argument concerning the issue of whether it met the goal or made adequate good faith efforts to do so.

(2) Your decision on reconsideration must be made by an official who did not take part in the original determination that the bidder/offeror failed to meet the goal or make adequate good faith efforts to do so.

(3) The bidder/offeror must have the opportunity to meet in person with your reconsideration official to discuss the issue of whether it met the goal or made adequate good faith efforts to do so.

(4) You must send the bidder/offeror a written decision on reconsideration, explaining the basis for finding that the bidder did or did not meet the goal or make adequate good faith efforts to do so.

(5) The result of the reconsideration process is not administratively appealable to the Department of Transportation.

(e) In a "design-build" or "turnkey" contracting situation, in which the recipient lets a master contract to a contractor, who in turn lets subsequent subcontracts for the work of the project, a recipient may establish a goal for the project. The master contractor then establishes contract goals, as appropriate, for the subcontracts it lets. Recipients must maintain oversight of the master contractor's activities to ensure that they are conducted consistent with the requirements of this part.

(f)(1)(i) You must require that a prime contractor not terminate a DBE subcontractor listed in response to paragraph (b)(2) of this section (or an approved substitute DBE firm) without your prior written consent. This includes, but is not limited to, instances in which a prime contractor seeks to perform work originally designated for a DBE subcontractor with its own forces or those of an affiliate, a non-DBE firm, or with another DBE firm.

(ii) You must include in each prime contract a provision stating:

(A) That the contractor shall utilize the specific DBEs listed to perform the work and supply the materials for which each is listed unless the contractor obtains your written consent as provided in this paragraph (f); and

(B) That, unless your consent is provided under this paragraph (f), the contractor shall not be entitled to any payment for work or material unless it is performed or supplied by the listed DBE.

(2) You may provide such written consent only if you agree, for reasons stated in your concurrence document, that the prime contractor has good cause to terminate the DBE firm.

(3) For purposes of this paragraph, good cause includes the following circumstances:

(i) The listed DBE subcontractor fails or refuses to execute a written contract;

(ii) The listed DBE subcontractor fails or refuses to perform the work of its subcontract in a way consistent with normal industry standards. Provided, however, that good cause does not exist if the failure or refusal of the DBE subcontractor to perform its work on the subcontract results from the bad faith or discriminatory action of the prime contractor;

(iii) The listed DBE subcontractor fails or refuses to meet the prime contractor's reasonable, nondiscriminatory bond requirements.

(iv) The listed DBE subcontractor becomes bankrupt, insolvent, or exhibits credit unworthiness;

(v) The listed DBE subcontractor is ineligible to work on public works projects because of suspension and debarment proceedings pursuant 2 CFR Parts 180, 215 and 1,200 or applicable state law;

(vii) You have determined that the listed DBE subcontractor is not a responsible contractor;

(vi) The listed DBE subcontractor voluntarily withdraws from the project and provides to you written notice of its withdrawal;

(vii) The listed DBE is ineligible to receive DBE credit for the type of work required;

(viii) A DBE owner dies or becomes disabled with the result that the listed DBE contractor is unable to complete its work on the contract;

(ix) Other documented good cause that you determine compels the termination of the DBE subcontractor. Provided, that good cause does not exist if the prime contractor seeks to terminate a DBE it relied upon to obtain the contract so that the prime contractor can self-perform the work for which the DBE contractor was engaged or so that the prime contractor can substitute another DBE or non-DBE contractor after contract award.

(4) Before transmitting to you its request to terminate and/or substitute a DBE subcontractor, the prime contractor must give notice in writing to the DBE subcontractor, with a copy to you, of its intent to request to terminate and/or substitute, and the reason for the request.

(5) The prime contractor must give the DBE five days to respond to the prime contractor's notice and advise you and the contractor of the reasons, if any, why it objects to the proposed termination of its subcontract and why you should not approve the prime contractor's action. If required in a particular case as a matter of public necessity (*e.g.*, safety), you may provide a response period shorter than five days.

(6) In addition to post-award terminations, the provisions of this section apply to preaward deletions of or substitutions for DBE firms put forward by offerors in negotiated procurements.

(g) When a DBE subcontractor is terminated as provided in paragraph (f) of this section, or fails to complete its work on the contract for any reason, you must require the prime contractor to make good faith efforts to find another DBE subcontractor to substitute for the original DBE. These good faith efforts shall be directed at finding another DBE to perform at least the same amount of work under the contract as the DBE that was terminated, to the extent needed to meet the contract goal you established for the procurement. The good faith efforts shall be documented by the contractor. If the recipient requests documentation under this provision, the contractor shall submit the documentation within 7 days, which may be extended for an additional 7 days if necessary at the request of the contractor, and the recipient shall provide a written determination to the contractor stating whether or not good faith efforts have been demonstrated.

(h) You must include in each prime contract the contract clause required by §26.13(b) stating that failure by the contractor to carry out the requirements of this part is a material breach of the contract and may result in the termination of the contract or such other remedies set forth in that section you deem appropriate if the prime contractor fails to comply with the requirements of this section.

(i) You must apply the requirements of this section to DBE bidders/offerors for prime contracts. In determining whether a DBE bidder/offeror for a prime contract has met a contract goal, you count the work the DBE has committed to performing with its own forces as well as the work that it has committed to be performed by DBE subcontractors and DBE suppliers.

(j) You must require the contractor awarded the contract to make available upon request a copy of all DBE subcontracts. The subcontractor shall ensure that all subcontracts or an agreement with DBEs to supply labor or materials require that the subcontract and all lower tier subcontractors be performed in accordance with this part's provisions.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 76 FR 5098, Jan. 28, 2011; 79 FR 59595, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.55 How is DBE participation counted toward goals?

(a) When a DBE participates in a contract, you count only the value of the work actually performed by the DBE toward DBE goals.

(1) Count the entire amount of that portion of a construction contract (or other contract not covered by paragraph (a)(2) of this section) that is performed by the DBE's own forces. Include the cost of supplies and materials obtained by the DBE for the work of the contract, including supplies purchased or equipment leased by the DBE (except supplies and equipment the DBE subcontractor purchases or leases from the prime contractor or its affiliate).

(2) Count the entire amount of fees or commissions charged by a DBE firm for providing a bona fide service, such as professional, technical, consultant, or managerial services, or for providing bonds or insurance specifically required for the performance of a DOT-assisted contract, toward DBE goals, provided you determine the fee to be reasonable and not excessive as compared with fees customarily allowed for similar services.

(3) When a DBE subcontracts part of the work of its contract to another firm, the value of the subcontracted work may be counted toward DBE goals only if the DBE's subcontractor is itself a DBE. Work that a DBE subcontracts to a non-DBE firm does not count toward DBE goals.

(b) When a DBE performs as a participant in a joint venture, count a portion of the total dollar value of the contract equal to the distinct, clearly defined portion of the work of the contract that the DBE performs with its own forces toward DBE goals.

(c) Count expenditures to a DBE contractor toward DBE goals only if the DBE is performing a commercially useful function on that contract.

(1) A DBE performs a commercially useful function when it is responsible for execution of the work of the contract and is carrying out its responsibilities by actually performing, managing, and supervising the work involved. To perform a commercially useful function, the DBE must also be responsible, with respect to materials and supplies used on the contract, for negotiating price, determining quality and quantity, ordering the material, and installing (where applicable) and paying for the material itself. To determine whether a DBE is performing a commercially useful function, you must evaluate the amount of work subcontracted, industry practices, whether the amount the firm is to be paid under the contract is commensurate with the work it is actually performing and the DBE credit claimed for its performance of the work, and other relevant factors.

(2) A DBE does not perform a commercially useful function if its role is limited to that of an extra participant in a transaction, contract, or project through which funds are passed in order to obtain the appearance of DBE participation. In determining whether a DBE is such an extra participant, you must examine similar transactions, particularly those in which DBEs do not participate.

(3) If a DBE does not perform or exercise responsibility for at least 30 percent of the total cost of its contract with its own work force, or the DBE subcontracts a greater portion of the work of a contract than would be expected on the basis of normal industry practice for the type of work involved, you must presume that it is not performing a commercially useful function.

(4) When a DBE is presumed not to be performing a commercially useful function as provided in paragraph (c)(3) of this section, the DBE may present evidence to rebut this presumption. You may determine that the firm is performing a commercially useful function given the type of work involved and normal industry practices.

(5) Your decisions on commercially useful function matters are subject to review by the concerned operating administration, but are not administratively appealable to DOT.

(d) Use the following factors in determining whether a DBE trucking company is performing a commercially useful function:

(1) The DBE must be responsible for the management and supervision of the entire trucking operation for which it is responsible on a particular contract, and there cannot be a contrived arrangement for the purpose of meeting DBE goals.

(2) The DBE must itself own and operate at least one fully licensed, insured, and operational truck used on the contract.

(3) The DBE receives credit for the total value of the transportation services it provides on the contract using trucks it owns, insures, and operates using drivers it employs.

(4) The DBE may lease trucks from another DBE firm, including an owner-operator who is certified as a DBE. The DBE who leases trucks from another DBE receives credit for the total value of the transportation services the lessee DBE provides on the contract.

(5) The DBE may also lease trucks from a non-DBE firm, including from an owner-operator. The DBE that leases trucks equipped with drivers from a non-DBE is entitled to credit for the total value of transportation services provided by non-DBE leased trucks equipped with drivers not to exceed the value of transportation services on the contract provided by DBE-owned trucks or leased trucks with DBE employee drivers. Additional participation by non-DBE owned trucks equipped with drivers receives credit only for the fee or commission it receives as a result of the lease arrangement. If a recipient chooses this approach, it must obtain written consent from the appropriate DOT operating administration.

Example to paragraph (d)(5): DBE Firm X uses two of its own trucks on a contract. It leases two trucks from DBE Firm Y and six trucks equipped with drivers from non-DBE Firm Z. DBE credit would be awarded for the total value of transportation services provided by Firm X and Firm Y, and may also be awarded for the total value of transportation services provided by four of the six trucks provided by Firm Z. In all, full credit would be allowed for the participation of eight trucks. DBE credit could be awarded only for the fees or commissions pertaining to the remaining trucks Firm X receives as a result of the lease with Firm Z.

(6) The DBE may lease trucks without drivers from a non-DBE truck leasing company. If the DBE leases trucks from a non-DBE truck leasing company and uses its own employees as drivers, it is entitled to credit for the total value of these hauling services.

Example to paragraph (d)(6): DBE Firm X uses two of its own trucks on a contract. It leases two additional trucks from non-DBE Firm Z. Firm X uses its own employees to drive the trucks leased from Firm Z. DBE credit would be awarded for the total value of the transportation services provided by all four trucks.

(7) For purposes of this paragraph (d), a lease must indicate that the DBE has exclusive use of and control over the truck. This does not preclude the leased truck from working for others during the term of the lease with the consent of the DBE, so long as the lease gives the DBE absolute priority for use of the leased truck. Leased trucks must display the name and identification number of the DBE.

(e) Count expenditures with DBEs for materials or supplies toward DBE goals as provided in the following:

(1)(i) If the materials or supplies are obtained from a DBE manufacturer, count 100 percent of the cost of the materials or supplies toward DBE goals.

(ii) For purposes of this paragraph (e)(1), a manufacturer is a firm that operates or maintains a factory or establishment that produces, on the premises, the materials, supplies, articles, or equipment required under the contract and of the general character described by the specifications.

(2)(i) If the materials or supplies are purchased from a DBE regular dealer, count 60 percent of the cost of the materials or supplies toward DBE goals.

(ii) For purposes of this section, a regular dealer is a firm that owns, operates, or maintains a store, warehouse, or other establishment in which the materials, supplies, articles or equipment of the general character described by the specifications and required under the contract are bought, kept in stock, and regularly sold or leased to the public in the usual course of business.

(A) To be a regular dealer, the firm must be an established, regular business that engages, as its principal business and under its own name, in the purchase and sale or lease of the products in question.

(B) A person may be a regular dealer in such bulk items as petroleum products, steel, cement, gravel, stone, or asphalt without owning, operating, or maintaining a place of business as provided in this paragraph (e)(2)(ii) if the person both owns and operates distribution equipment for the products. Any supplementing of regular dealers' own distribution equipment shall be by a long-term lease agreement and not on an ad hoc or contract-by-contract basis.

(C) Packagers, brokers, manufacturers' representatives, or other persons who arrange or expedite transactions are not regular dealers within the meaning of this paragraph (e)(2).

(3) With respect to materials or supplies purchased from a DBE which is neither a manufacturer nor a regular dealer, count the entire amount of fees or commissions charged for assistance in the procurement of the materials and supplies, or fees or transportation charges for the delivery of materials or supplies required on a job site, toward DBE goals, provided you determine the fees to be reasonable and not excessive as compared with fees customarily allowed for similar services. Do not count any portion of the cost of the materials and supplies themselves toward DBE goals, however.

(4) You must determine the amount of credit awarded to a firm for the provisions of materials and supplies (e.g., whether a firm is acting as a regular dealer or a transaction expediter) on a contract-by-contract basis.

(f) If a firm is not currently certified as a DBE in accordance with the standards of subpart D of this part at the time of the execution of the contract, do not count the firm's participation toward any DBE goals, except as provided for in §26.87(i).

(g) Do not count the dollar value of work performed under a contract with a firm after it has ceased to be certified toward your overall goal.

(h) Do not count the participation of a DBE subcontractor toward a contractor's final compliance with its DBE obligations on a contract until the amount being counted has actually been paid to the DBE.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 65 FR 68951, Nov. 15, 2000; 68 FR 35554, June 16, 2003; 79 FR 59595, Oct. 2, 2014]

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Subpart D—Certification Standards

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§26.61 How are burdens of proof allocated in the certification process?

(a) In determining whether to certify a firm as eligible to participate as a DBE, you must apply the standards of this subpart.

(b) The firm seeking certification has the burden of demonstrating to you, by a preponderance of the evidence, that it meets the requirements of this subpart concerning group membership or individual disadvantage, business size, ownership, and control.

(c) You must rebuttably presume that members of the designated groups identified in §26.67(a) are socially and economically disadvantaged. This means they do not have the burden of proving to you that they are socially and economically disadvantaged. In order to obtain the benefit of the rebuttable presumption, individuals must submit a signed, notarized statement that they are a member of one of the groups in §26.67(a). Applicants do have the obligation to provide you information concerning their economic disadvantage (see §26.67).

(d) Individuals who are not presumed to be socially and economically disadvantaged, and individuals concerning whom the presumption of disadvantage has been rebutted, have the burden of proving to you, by a preponderance of the evidence, that they are socially and economically disadvantaged. (See Appendix E of this part.)

(e) You must make determinations concerning whether individuals and firms have met their burden of demonstrating group membership, ownership, control, and social and economic disadvantage (where disadvantage must be demonstrated on an individual basis) by considering all the facts in the record, viewed as a whole.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 68 FR 35554, June 16, 2003]

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§26.63 What rules govern group membership determinations?

(a)(1) If, after reviewing the signed notarized statement of membership in a presumptively disadvantaged group (see §26.61(c)), you have a well founded reason to question the individual's claim of membership in that group, you must require the individual to present additional evidence that he or she is a member of the group.

(2) You must provide the individual a written explanation of your reasons for questioning his or her group membership and a written request for additional evidence as outlined in paragraph (b) of this section.

(3) In implementing this section, you must take special care to ensure that you do not impose a disproportionate burden on members of any particular designated group. Imposing a disproportionate burden on members of a particular group could violate §26.7(b) and/or Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and 49 CFR part 21.

(b) In making such a determination, you must consider whether the person has held himself out to be a member of the group over a long period of time prior to application for certification and whether the person is regarded as a member of the group by the relevant community. You may require the applicant to produce appropriate documentation of group membership.

(1) If you determine that an individual claiming to be a member of a group presumed to be disadvantaged is not a member of a designated disadvantaged group, the individual must demonstrate social and economic disadvantage on an individual basis.

(2) Your decisions concerning membership in a designated group are subject to the certification appeals procedure of §26.89.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 68 FR 35554, June 16, 2003]

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§26.65 What rules govern business size determinations?

(a) To be an eligible DBE, a firm (including its affiliates) must be an existing small business, as defined by Small Business Administration (SBA) standards. As a recipient, you must apply current SBA business size standard(s) found in 13 CFR part 121 appropriate to the type(s) of work the firm seeks to perform in DOT-assisted contracts, including the primary industry classification of the applicant.

(b) Even if it meets the requirements of paragraph (a) of this section, a firm is not an eligible DBE in any Federal fiscal year if the firm (including its affiliates) has had average annual gross receipts, as defined by SBA regulations (see 13 CFR 121.402), over the firm's previous three fiscal years, in excess of \$23.98 million.

(c) The Department adjusts the number in paragraph (b) of this section annually using the Department of Commerce price deflators for purchases by State and local governments as the basis for this adjustment.

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§26.67 What rules determine social and economic disadvantage?

(a) *Presumption of disadvantage.* (1) You must rebuttably presume that citizens of the United States (or lawfully admitted permanent residents) who are women, Black Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian-Pacific Americans, Subcontinent Asian Americans, or other minorities found to be disadvantaged by the SBA, are socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. You must require applicants to submit a signed, notarized certification that each presumptively disadvantaged owner is, in fact, socially and economically disadvantaged.

(2)(i) You must require each individual owner of a firm applying to participate as a DBE, whose ownership and control are relied upon for DBE certification, to certify that he or she has a personal net worth that does not exceed \$1.32 million.

(ii) You must require each individual who makes this certification to support it with a signed, notarized statement of personal net worth, with appropriate supporting documentation. To meet this requirement, you must use the DOT personal net worth form provided in appendix G to this part without change or revision. Where necessary to accurately determine an individual's personal net worth, you may, on a case-by-case basis, require additional financial information from the owner of an applicant firm (e.g., information concerning the assets of the owner's spouse, where needed to clarify whether assets have been transferred to the spouse or when the owner's spouse is involved in the operation of the company). Requests for additional information shall not be unduly burdensome or intrusive.

(iii) In determining an individual's net worth, you must observe the following requirements:

(A) Exclude an individual's ownership interest in the applicant firm;

(B) Exclude the individual's equity in his or her primary residence (except any portion of such equity that is attributable to excessive withdrawals from the applicant firm). The equity is the market value of the residence less any mortgages and home equity loan balances. Recipients must ensure that home equity loan balances are included in the equity calculation and not as a separate liability on the individual's personal net worth form. Exclusions for net worth purposes are not exclusions for asset valuation or access to capital and credit purposes.

(C) Do not use a contingent liability to reduce an individual's net worth.

(D) With respect to assets held in vested pension plans, Individual Retirement Accounts, 401(k) accounts, or other retirement savings or investment programs in which the assets cannot be distributed to the individual at the present time without significant adverse tax or interest consequences, include only the present value of such assets, less the tax and interest penalties that would accrue if the asset were distributed at the present time.

(iv) Notwithstanding any provision of Federal or State law, you must not release an individual's personal net worth statement nor any documents pertaining to it to any third party without the written consent of the submitter. Provided, that you must transmit this information to DOT in any certification appeal proceeding under §26.89 of this part or to any other State to which the individual's firm has applied for certification under §26.85 of this part.

(b) *Rebuttal of presumption of disadvantage.* (1) An individual's presumption of economic disadvantage may be rebutted in two ways.

(i) If the statement of personal net worth and supporting documentation that an individual submits under paragraph (a)(2) of this section shows that the individual's personal net worth exceeds \$1.32 million, the individual's presumption of economic disadvantage is rebutted. You are not required to have a proceeding under paragraph (b)(2) of this section in order to rebut the presumption of economic disadvantage in this case.

Example to paragraph (b)(1)(i): An individual with very high assets and significant liabilities may, in accounting terms, have a PNW of less than \$1.32 million. However, the person's assets collectively (e.g., high income level, a very expensive house, a yacht, extensive real or personal property holdings) may lead a reasonable person to conclude that he or she is not economically disadvantaged. The recipient may rebut the individual's presumption of economic disadvantage under these circumstances, as provided in this section, even though the individual's PNW is less than \$1.32 million.

(ii)(A) If the statement of personal net worth and supporting documentation that an individual submits under paragraph (a)(2) of this section demonstrates that the individual is able to accumulate substantial wealth, the individual's presumption of economic disadvantage is rebutted. In making this determination, as a certifying agency, you may consider factors that include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Whether the average adjusted gross income of the owner over the most recent three year period exceeds \$350,000;

(2) Whether the income was unusual and not likely to occur in the future;

(3) Whether the earnings were offset by losses;

(4) Whether the income was reinvested in the firm or used to pay taxes arising in the normal course of operations by the firm;

(5) Other evidence that income is not indicative of lack of economic disadvantage; and

(6) Whether the total fair market value of the owner's assets exceed \$6 million.

(B) You must have a proceeding under paragraph (b)(2) of this section in order to rebut the presumption of economic disadvantage in this case.

(2) If you have a reasonable basis to believe that an individual who is a member of one of the designated groups is not, in fact, socially and/or economically disadvantaged you may, at any time, start a proceeding to determine whether the presumption should be regarded as rebutted with respect to that individual. Your proceeding must follow the procedures of §26.87.

(3) In such a proceeding, you have the burden of demonstrating, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the individual is not socially and economically disadvantaged. You may require the individual to produce information relevant to the determination of his or her disadvantage.

(4) When an individual's presumption of social and/or economic disadvantage has been rebutted, his or her ownership and control of the firm in question cannot be used for purposes of DBE eligibility under this subpart unless and until he or she makes an individual showing of social and/or economic disadvantage. If the basis for rebutting the presumption is a determination that the

individual's personal net worth exceeds \$1.32 million, the individual is no longer eligible for participation in the program and cannot regain eligibility by making an individual showing of disadvantage, so long as his or her PNW remains above that amount.

(c) *Transfers within two years.* (1) Except as set forth in paragraph (c)(2) of this section, recipients must attribute to an individual claiming disadvantaged status any assets which that individual has transferred to an immediate family member, to a trust a beneficiary of which is an immediate family member, or to the applicant firm for less than fair market value, within two years prior to a concern's application for participation in the DBE program or within two years of recipient's review of the firm's annual affidavit, unless the individual claiming disadvantaged status can demonstrate that the transfer is to or on behalf of an immediate family member for that individual's education, medical expenses, or some other form of essential support.

(2) Recipients must not attribute to an individual claiming disadvantaged status any assets transferred by that individual to an immediate family member that are consistent with the customary recognition of special occasions, such as birthdays, graduations, anniversaries, and retirements.

(d) *Individual determinations of social and economic disadvantage.* Firms owned and controlled by individuals who are not presumed to be socially and economically disadvantaged (including individuals whose presumed disadvantage has been rebutted) may apply for DBE certification. You must make a case-by-case determination of whether each individual whose ownership and control are relied upon for DBE certification is socially and economically disadvantaged. In such a proceeding, the applicant firm has the burden of demonstrating to you, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the individuals who own and control it are socially and economically disadvantaged. An individual whose personal net worth exceeds \$1.32 million shall not be deemed to be economically disadvantaged. In making these determinations, use the guidance found in Appendix E of this part. You must require that applicants provide sufficient information to permit determinations under the guidance of appendix E of this part.

[79 FR 59596, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.69 What rules govern determinations of ownership?

(a) In determining whether the socially and economically disadvantaged participants in a firm own the firm, you must consider all the facts in the record viewed as a whole, including the origin of all assets and how and when they were used in obtaining the firm. All transactions for the establishment and ownership (or transfer of ownership) must be in the normal course of business, reflecting commercial and arms-length practices.

(b) To be an eligible DBE, a firm must be at least 51 percent owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.

(1) In the case of a corporation, such individuals must own at least 51 percent of the each class of voting stock outstanding and 51 percent of the aggregate of all stock outstanding.

(2) In the case of a partnership, 51 percent of each class of partnership interest must be owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. Such ownership must be reflected in the firm's partnership agreement.

(3) In the case of a limited liability company, at least 51 percent of each class of member interest must be owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.

(c)(1) The firm's ownership by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, including their contribution of capital or expertise to acquire their ownership interests, must be real, substantial, and continuing, going beyond pro forma ownership of the firm as reflected in ownership documents. Proof of contribution of capital should be submitted at the time of the application. When the contribution of capital is through a loan, there must be documentation of the value of assets used as collateral for the loan.

(2) Insufficient contributions include a promise to contribute capital, an unsecured note payable to the firm or an owner who is not a disadvantaged individual, mere participation in a firm's activities as an employee, or capitalization not commensurate with the value for the firm.

(3) The disadvantaged owners must enjoy the customary incidents of ownership, and share in the risks and be entitled to the profits and loss commensurate with their ownership interests, as demonstrated by the substance, not merely the form, of arrangements. Any terms or practices that give a non-disadvantaged individual or firm a priority or superior right to a firm's profits, compared to the disadvantaged owner(s), are grounds for denial.

(4) Debt instruments from financial institutions or other organizations that lend funds in the normal course of their business do not render a firm ineligible, even if the debtor's ownership interest is security for the loan.

Examples to paragraph (c): (i) An individual pays \$100 to acquire a majority interest in a firm worth \$1 million. The individual's contribution to capital would not be viewed as substantial.

(ii) A 51% disadvantaged owner and a non-disadvantaged 49% owner contribute \$100 and \$10,000, respectively, to acquire a firm grossing \$1 million. This may be indicative of a pro forma arrangement that does not meet the requirements of (c)(1).

(iii) The disadvantaged owner of a DBE applicant firm spends \$250 to file articles of incorporation and obtains a \$100,000 loan, but makes only nominal or sporadic payments to repay the loan. This type of contribution is not of a continuing nature.

(d) All securities that constitute ownership of a firm shall be held directly by disadvantaged persons. Except as provided in this paragraph (d), no securities or assets held in trust, or by any guardian for a minor, are considered as held by disadvantaged persons in determining the ownership of a firm. However, securities or assets held in trust are regarded as held by a disadvantaged individual for purposes of determining ownership of the firm, if—

(1) The beneficial owner of securities or assets held in trust is a disadvantaged individual, and the trustee is the same or another such individual; or

(2) The beneficial owner of a trust is a disadvantaged individual who, rather than the trustee, exercises effective control over the management, policy-making, and daily operational activities of the firm. Assets held in a revocable living trust may be counted only in the situation where the same disadvantaged individual is the sole grantor, beneficiary, and trustee.

(e) The contributions of capital or expertise by the socially and economically disadvantaged owners to acquire their ownership interests must be real and substantial. Examples of insufficient contributions include a promise to contribute capital, an unsecured note payable to the firm or an owner who is not a disadvantaged individual, or mere participation in a firm's activities as an

employee. Debt instruments from financial institutions or other organizations that lend funds in the normal course of their business do not render a firm ineligible, even if the debtor's ownership interest is security for the loan.

(f) The following requirements apply to situations in which expertise is relied upon as part of a disadvantaged owner's contribution to acquire ownership:

(1) The owner's expertise must be—

(i) In a specialized field;

(ii) Of outstanding quality;

(iii) In areas critical to the firm's operations;

(iv) Indispensable to the firm's potential success;

(v) Specific to the type of work the firm performs; and

(vi) Documented in the records of the firm. These records must clearly show the contribution of expertise and its value to the firm.

(2) The individual whose expertise is relied upon must have a significant financial investment in the firm.

(g) You must always deem as held by a socially and economically disadvantaged individual, for purposes of determining ownership, all interests in a business or other assets obtained by the individual—

(1) As the result of a final property settlement or court order in a divorce or legal separation, provided that no term or condition of the agreement or divorce decree is inconsistent with this section; or

(2) Through inheritance, or otherwise because of the death of the former owner.

(h)(1) You must presume as not being held by a socially and economically disadvantaged individual, for purposes of determining ownership, all interests in a business or other assets obtained by the individual as the result of a gift, or transfer without adequate consideration, from any non-disadvantaged individual or non-DBE firm who is—

(i) Involved in the same firm for which the individual is seeking certification, or an affiliate of that firm;

(ii) Involved in the same or a similar line of business; or

(iii) Engaged in an ongoing business relationship with the firm, or an affiliate of the firm, for which the individual is seeking certification.

(2) To overcome this presumption and permit the interests or assets to be counted, the disadvantaged individual must demonstrate to you, by clear and convincing evidence, that—

(i) The gift or transfer to the disadvantaged individual was made for reasons other than obtaining certification as a DBE; and

(ii) The disadvantaged individual actually controls the management, policy, and operations of the firm, notwithstanding the continuing participation of a non-disadvantaged individual who provided the gift or transfer.

(i) You must apply the following rules in situations in which marital assets form a basis for ownership of a firm:

(1) When marital assets (other than the assets of the business in question), held jointly or as community property by both spouses, are used to acquire the ownership interest asserted by one spouse, you must deem the ownership interest in the firm to have been acquired by that spouse with his or her own individual resources, provided that the other spouse irrevocably renounces and transfers all rights in the ownership interest in the manner sanctioned by the laws of the state in which either spouse or the firm is domiciled. You do not count a greater portion of joint or community property assets toward ownership than state law would recognize as belonging to the socially and economically disadvantaged owner of the applicant firm.

(2) A copy of the document legally transferring and renouncing the other spouse's rights in the jointly owned or community assets used to acquire an ownership interest in the firm must be included as part of the firm's application for DBE certification.

(j) You may consider the following factors in determining the ownership of a firm. However, you must not regard a contribution of capital as failing to be real and substantial, or find a firm ineligible, solely because—

(1) A socially and economically disadvantaged individual acquired his or her ownership interest as the result of a gift, or transfer without adequate consideration, other than the types set forth in paragraph (h) of this section;

(2) There is a provision for the co-signature of a spouse who is not a socially and economically disadvantaged individual on financing agreements, contracts for the purchase or sale of real or personal property, bank signature cards, or other documents; or

(3) Ownership of the firm in question or its assets is transferred for adequate consideration from a spouse who is not a socially and economically disadvantaged individual to a spouse who is such an individual. In this case, you must give particularly close and careful scrutiny to the ownership and control of a firm to ensure that it is owned and controlled, in substance as well as in form, by a socially and economically disadvantaged individual.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 79 FR 59597, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.71 What rules govern determinations concerning control?

(a) In determining whether socially and economically disadvantaged owners control a firm, you must consider all the facts in the record, viewed as a whole.

(b) Only an independent business may be certified as a DBE. An independent business is one the viability of which does not depend on its relationship with another firm or firms.

(1) In determining whether a potential DBE is an independent business, you must scrutinize relationships with non-DBE firms, in such areas as personnel, facilities, equipment, financial and/or bonding support, and other resources.

(2) You must consider whether present or recent employer/employee relationships between the disadvantaged owner(s) of the potential DBE and non-DBE firms or persons associated with non-DBE firms compromise the independence of the potential DBE firm.

(3) You must examine the firm's relationships with prime contractors to determine whether a pattern of exclusive or primary dealings with a prime contractor compromises the independence of the potential DBE firm.

(4) In considering factors related to the independence of a potential DBE firm, you must consider the consistency of relationships between the potential DBE and non-DBE firms with normal industry practice.

(c) A DBE firm must not be subject to any formal or informal restrictions which limit the customary discretion of the socially and economically disadvantaged owners. There can be no restrictions through corporate charter provisions, by-law provisions, contracts or any other formal or informal devices (e.g., cumulative voting rights, voting powers attached to different classes of stock, employment contracts, requirements for concurrence by non-disadvantaged partners, conditions precedent or subsequent, executory agreements, voting trusts, restrictions on or assignments of voting rights) that prevent the socially and economically disadvantaged owners, without the cooperation or vote of any non-disadvantaged individual, from making any business decision of the firm. This paragraph does not preclude a spousal co-signature on documents as provided for in §26.69(j)(2).

(d) The socially and economically disadvantaged owners must possess the power to direct or cause the direction of the management and policies of the firm and to make day-to-day as well as long-term decisions on matters of management, policy and operations.

(1) A disadvantaged owner must hold the highest officer position in the company (e.g., chief executive officer or president).

(2) In a corporation, disadvantaged owners must control the board of directors.

(3) In a partnership, one or more disadvantaged owners must serve as general partners, with control over all partnership decisions.

(e) Individuals who are not socially and economically disadvantaged or immediate family members may be involved in a DBE firm as owners, managers, employees, stockholders, officers, and/or directors. Such individuals must not, however possess or exercise the power to control the firm, or be disproportionately responsible for the operation of the firm.

(f) The socially and economically disadvantaged owners of the firm may delegate various areas of the management, policymaking, or daily operations of the firm to other participants in the firm, regardless of whether these participants are socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. Such delegations of authority must be revocable, and the socially and economically disadvantaged

owners must retain the power to hire and fire any person to whom such authority is delegated. The managerial role of the socially and economically disadvantaged owners in the firm's overall affairs must be such that the recipient can reasonably conclude that the socially and economically disadvantaged owners actually exercise control over the firm's operations, management, and policy.

(g) The socially and economically disadvantaged owners must have an overall understanding of, and managerial and technical competence and experience directly related to, the type of business in which the firm is engaged and the firm's operations. The socially and economically disadvantaged owners are not required to have experience or expertise in every critical area of the firm's operations, or to have greater experience or expertise in a given field than managers or key employees. The socially and economically disadvantaged owners must have the ability to intelligently and critically evaluate information presented by other participants in the firm's activities and to use this information to make independent decisions concerning the firm's daily operations, management, and policymaking. Generally, expertise limited to office management, administration, or bookkeeping functions unrelated to the principal business activities of the firm is insufficient to demonstrate control.

(h) If state or local law requires the persons to have a particular license or other credential in order to own and/or control a certain type of firm, then the socially and economically disadvantaged persons who own and control a potential DBE firm of that type must possess the required license or credential. If state or local law does not require such a person to have such a license or credential to own and/or control a firm, you must not deny certification solely on the ground that the person lacks the license or credential. However, you may take into account the absence of the license or credential as one factor in determining whether the socially and economically disadvantaged owners actually control the firm.

(i)(1) You may consider differences in remuneration between the socially and economically disadvantaged owners and other participants in the firm in determining whether to certify a firm as a DBE. Such consideration shall be in the context of the duties of the persons involved, normal industry practices, the firm's policy and practice concerning reinvestment of income, and any other explanations for the differences proffered by the firm. You may determine that a firm is controlled by its socially and economically disadvantaged owner although that owner's remuneration is lower than that of some other participants in the firm.

(2) In a case where a non-disadvantaged individual formerly controlled the firm, and a socially and economically disadvantaged individual now controls it, you may consider a difference between the remuneration of the former and current controller of the firm as a factor in determining who controls the firm, particularly when the non-disadvantaged individual remains involved with the firm and continues to receive greater compensation than the disadvantaged individual.

(j) In order to be viewed as controlling a firm, a socially and economically disadvantaged owner cannot engage in outside employment or other business interests that conflict with the management of the firm or prevent the individual from devoting sufficient time and attention to the affairs of the firm to control its activities. For example, absentee ownership of a business and part-time work in a full-time firm are not viewed as constituting control. However, an individual could be viewed as controlling a part-time business that operates only on evenings and/or weekends, if the individual controls it all the time it is operating.

(k)(1) A socially and economically disadvantaged individual may control a firm even though one or more of the individual's immediate family members (who themselves are not socially and economically disadvantaged individuals) participate in the firm as a manager, employee, owner, or in another capacity. Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph, you must make a judgment about

the control the socially and economically disadvantaged owner exercises vis-a-vis other persons involved in the business as you do in other situations, without regard to whether or not the other persons are immediate family members.

(2) If you cannot determine that the socially and economically disadvantaged owners—as distinct from the family as a whole—control the firm, then the socially and economically disadvantaged owners have failed to carry their burden of proof concerning control, even though they may participate significantly in the firm's activities.

(l) Where a firm was formerly owned and/or controlled by a non-disadvantaged individual (whether or not an immediate family member), ownership and/or control were transferred to a socially and economically disadvantaged individual, and the nondisadvantaged individual remains involved with the firm in any capacity, there is a rebuttable presumption of control by the non-disadvantaged individual unless the disadvantaged individual now owning the firm demonstrates to you, by clear and convincing evidence, that:

(1) The transfer of ownership and/or control to the disadvantaged individual was made for reasons other than obtaining certification as a DBE; and

(2) The disadvantaged individual actually controls the management, policy, and operations of the firm, notwithstanding the continuing participation of a nondisadvantaged individual who formerly owned and/or controlled the firm.

(m) In determining whether a firm is controlled by its socially and economically disadvantaged owners, you may consider whether the firm owns equipment necessary to perform its work. However, you must not determine that a firm is not controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals solely because the firm leases, rather than owns, such equipment, where leasing equipment is a normal industry practice and the lease does not involve a relationship with a prime contractor or other party that compromises the independence of the firm.

(n) You must grant certification to a firm only for specific types of work in which the socially and economically disadvantaged owners have the ability to control the firm. To become certified in an additional type of work, the firm need demonstrate to you only that its socially and economically disadvantaged owners are able to control the firm with respect to that type of work. You must not require that the firm be recertified or submit a new application for certification, but you must verify the disadvantaged owner's control of the firm in the additional type of work.

(1) The types of work a firm can perform (whether on initial certification or when a new type of work is added) must be described in terms of the most specific available NAICS code for that type of work. If you choose, you may also, in addition to applying the appropriate NAICS code, apply a descriptor from a classification scheme of equivalent detail and specificity. A correct NAICS code is one that describes, as specifically as possible, the principal goods or services which the firm would provide to DOT recipients. Multiple NAICS codes may be assigned where appropriate. Program participants must rely on, and not depart from, the plain meaning of NAICS code descriptions in determining the scope of a firm's certification. If your Directory does not list types of work for any firm in a manner consistent with this paragraph (a)(1), you must update the Directory entry for that firm to meet the requirements of this paragraph (a)(1) by August 28, 2011.

(2) Firms and recipients must check carefully to make sure that the NAICS codes cited in a certification are kept up-to-date and accurately reflect work which the UCP has determined the firm's owners can control. The firm bears the burden of providing detailed company information the certifying agency needs to make an appropriate NAICS code designation.

(3) If a firm believes that there is not a NAICS code that fully or clearly describes the type(s) of work in which it is seeking to be certified as a DBE, the firm may request that the certifying agency, in its certification documentation, supplement the assigned NAICS code(s) with a clear, specific, and detailed narrative description of the type of work in which the firm is certified. A vague, general, or confusing description is not sufficient for this purpose, and recipients should not rely on such a description in determining whether a firm's participation can be counted toward DBE goals.

(4) A certifier is not precluded from changing a certification classification or description if there is a factual basis in the record. However, certifiers must not make after-the-fact statements about the scope of a certification, not supported by evidence in the record of the certification action.

(o) A business operating under a franchise or license agreement may be certified if it meets the standards in this subpart and the franchiser or licensor is not affiliated with the franchisee or licensee. In determining whether affiliation exists, you should generally not consider the restraints relating to standardized quality, advertising, accounting format, and other provisions imposed on the franchisee or licensee by the franchise agreement or license, provided that the franchisee or licensee has the right to profit from its efforts and bears the risk of loss commensurate with ownership. Alternatively, even though a franchisee or licensee may not be controlled by virtue of such provisions in the franchise agreement or license, affiliation could arise through other means, such as common management or excessive restrictions on the sale or transfer of the franchise interest or license.

(p) In order for a partnership to be controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, any non-disadvantaged partners must not have the power, without the specific written concurrence of the socially and economically disadvantaged partner(s), to contractually bind the partnership or subject the partnership to contract or tort liability.

(q) The socially and economically disadvantaged individuals controlling a firm may use an employee leasing company. The use of such a company does not preclude the socially and economically disadvantaged individuals from controlling their firm if they continue to maintain an employer-employee relationship with the leased employees. This includes being responsible for hiring, firing, training, assigning, and otherwise controlling the on-the-job activities of the employees, as well as ultimate responsibility for wage and tax obligations related to the employees.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 76 FR 5099, Jan. 28, 2011; 79 FR 59597, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.73 What are other rules affecting certification?

(a)(1) Consideration of whether a firm performs a commercially useful function or is a regular dealer pertains solely to counting toward DBE goals the participation of firms that have already been certified as DBEs. Except as provided in paragraph (a)(2) of this section, you must not consider commercially useful function issues in any way in making decisions about whether to certify a firm as a DBE.

(2) You may consider, in making certification decisions, whether a firm has exhibited a pattern of conduct indicating its involvement in attempts to evade or subvert the intent or requirements of the DBE program.

(b)(1) You must evaluate the eligibility of a firm on the basis of present circumstances. You must not refuse to certify a firm based solely on historical information indicating a lack of ownership

or control of the firm by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals at some time in the past, if the firm currently meets the ownership and control standards of this part.

(2) You must not refuse to certify a firm solely on the basis that it is a newly formed firm, has not completed projects or contracts at the time of its application, has not yet realized profits from its activities, or has not demonstrated a potential for success. If the firm meets disadvantaged, size, ownership, and control requirements of this Part, the firm is eligible for certification.

(c) DBE firms and firms seeking DBE certification shall cooperate fully with your requests (and DOT requests) for information relevant to the certification process. Failure or refusal to provide such information is a ground for a denial or removal of certification.

(d) Only firms organized for profit may be eligible DBEs. Not-for-profit organizations, even though controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, are not eligible to be certified as DBEs.

(e) An eligible DBE firm must be owned by individuals who are socially and economically disadvantaged. Except as provided in this paragraph, a firm that is not owned by such individuals, but instead is owned by another firm—even a DBE firm—cannot be an eligible DBE.

(1) If socially and economically disadvantaged individuals own and control a firm through a parent or holding company, established for tax, capitalization or other purposes consistent with industry practice, and the parent or holding company in turn owns and controls an operating subsidiary, you may certify the subsidiary if it otherwise meets all requirements of this subpart. In this situation, the individual owners and controllers of the parent or holding company are deemed to control the subsidiary through the parent or holding company.

(2) You may certify such a subsidiary only if there is cumulatively 51 percent ownership of the subsidiary by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. The following examples illustrate how this cumulative ownership provision works:

Example 1: Socially and economically disadvantaged individuals own 100 percent of a holding company, which has a wholly-owned subsidiary. The subsidiary may be certified, if it meets all other requirements.

Example 2: Disadvantaged individuals own 100 percent of the holding company, which owns 51 percent of a subsidiary. The subsidiary may be certified, if all other requirements are met.

Example 3: Disadvantaged individuals own 80 percent of the holding company, which in turn owns 70 percent of a subsidiary. In this case, the cumulative ownership of the subsidiary by disadvantaged individuals is 56 percent (80 percent of the 70 percent). This is more than 51 percent, so you may certify the subsidiary, if all other requirements are met.

Example 4: Same as Example 2 or 3, but someone other than the socially and economically disadvantaged owners of the parent or holding company controls the subsidiary. Even though the subsidiary is owned by disadvantaged individuals, through the holding or parent company, you cannot certify it because it fails to meet control requirements.

Example 5: Disadvantaged individuals own 60 percent of the holding company, which in turn owns 51 percent of a subsidiary. In this case, the cumulative ownership of the subsidiary by disadvantaged individuals is about 31 percent. This is less than 51 percent, so you cannot certify the subsidiary.

Example 6: The holding company, in addition to the subsidiary seeking certification, owns several other companies. The combined gross receipts of the holding companies and its subsidiaries are greater than the size standard for the subsidiary seeking certification and/or the gross receipts cap of §26.65(b). Under the rules concerning affiliation, the subsidiary fails to meet the size standard and cannot be certified.

(f) Recognition of a business as a separate entity for tax or corporate purposes is not necessarily sufficient to demonstrate that a firm is an independent business, owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.

(g) You must not require a DBE firm to be prequalified as a condition for certification.

(h) A firm that is owned by an Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization, rather than by Indians or Native Hawaiians as individuals, may be eligible for certification. Such a firm must meet the size standards of §26.65. Such a firm must be controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, as provided in §26.71.

(i) The following special rules apply to the certification of firms related to Alaska Native Corporations (ANCs).

(1) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this subpart, a direct or indirect subsidiary corporation, joint venture, or partnership entity of an ANC is eligible for certification as a DBE if it meets all of the following requirements:

(i) The Settlement Common Stock of the underlying ANC and other stock of the ANC held by holders of the Settlement Common Stock and by Natives and descendants of Natives represents a majority of both the total equity of the ANC and the total voting power of the corporation for purposes of electing directors;

(ii) The shares of stock or other units of common ownership interest in the subsidiary, joint venture, or partnership entity held by the ANC and by holders of its Settlement Common Stock represent a majority of both the total equity of the entity and the total voting power of the entity for the purpose of electing directors, the general partner, or principal officers; and

(iii) The subsidiary, joint venture, or partnership entity has been certified by the Small Business Administration under the 8(a) or small disadvantaged business program.

(2) As a recipient to whom an ANC-related entity applies for certification, you do not use the DOT uniform application form (see Appendix F of this part). You must obtain from the firm documentation sufficient to demonstrate that entity meets the requirements of paragraph (i)(1) of this section. You must also obtain sufficient information about the firm to allow you to administer your program (e.g., information that would appear in your DBE Directory).

(3) If an ANC-related firm does not meet all the conditions of paragraph (i)(1) of this section, then it must meet the requirements of paragraph (h) of this section in order to be certified, on the same basis as firms owned by Indian Tribes or Native Hawaiian Organizations.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 68 FR 35555, June 16, 2003; 76 FR 5099, Jan. 28, 2011; 79 FR 59598, Oct. 2, 2014]

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Subpart E—Certification Procedures

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§26.81 What are the requirements for Unified Certification Programs?

(a) You and all other DOT recipients in your state must participate in a Unified Certification Program (UCP).

(1) Within three years of March 4, 1999, you and the other recipients in your state must sign an agreement establishing the UCP for that state and submit the agreement to the Secretary for approval. The Secretary may, on the basis of extenuating circumstances shown by the recipients in the state, extend this deadline for no more than one additional year.

(2) The agreement must provide for the establishment of a UCP meeting all the requirements of this section. The agreement must specify that the UCP will follow all certification procedures and standards of this part, on the same basis as recipients; that the UCP shall cooperate fully with oversight, review, and monitoring activities of DOT and its operating administrations; and that the UCP shall implement DOT directives and guidance concerning certification matters. The agreement shall also commit recipients to ensuring that the UCP has sufficient resources and expertise to carry out the requirements of this part. The agreement shall include an implementation schedule ensuring that the UCP is fully operational no later than 18 months following the approval of the agreement by the Secretary.

(3) Subject to approval by the Secretary, the UCP in each state may take any form acceptable to the recipients in that state.

(4) The Secretary shall review the UCP and approve it, disapprove it, or remand it to the recipients in the state for revisions. A complete agreement which is not disapproved or remanded within 180 days of its receipt is deemed to be accepted.

(5) If you and the other recipients in your state fail to meet the deadlines set forth in this paragraph (a), you shall have the opportunity to make an explanation to the Secretary why a deadline could not be met and why meeting the deadline was beyond your control. If you fail to make such an explanation, or the explanation does not justify the failure to meet the deadline, the Secretary shall direct you to complete the required action by a date certain. If you and the other recipients fail to carry out this direction in a timely manner, you are collectively in noncompliance with this part.

(b) The UCP shall make all certification decisions on behalf of all DOT recipients in the state with respect to participation in the DOT DBE Program.

(1) Certification decisions by the UCP shall be binding on all DOT recipients within the state.

(2) The UCP shall provide "one-stop shopping" to applicants for certification, such that an applicant is required to apply only once for a DBE certification that will be honored by all recipients in the state.

(3) All obligations of recipients with respect to certification and nondiscrimination must be carried out by UCPs, and recipients may use only UCPs that comply with the certification and nondiscrimination requirements of this part.

(c) All certifications by UCPs shall be pre-certifications; i.e., certifications that have been made final before the due date for bids or offers on a contract on which a firm seeks to participate as a DBE.

(d) A UCP is not required to process an application for certification from a firm having its principal place of business outside the state if the firm is not certified by the UCP in the state in which it maintains its principal place of business. The "home state" UCP shall share its information and documents concerning the firm with other UCPs that are considering the firm's application.

(e) Subject to DOT approval as provided in this section, the recipients in two or more states may form a regional UCP. UCPs may also enter into written reciprocity agreements with other UCPs. Such an agreement shall outline the specific responsibilities of each participant. A UCP may accept the certification of any other UCP or DOT recipient.

(f) Pending the establishment of UCPs meeting the requirements of this section, you may enter into agreements with other recipients, on a regional or inter-jurisdictional basis, to perform certification functions required by this part. You may also grant reciprocity to other recipient's certification decisions.

(g) Each UCP shall maintain a unified DBE directory containing, for all firms certified by the UCP (including those from other states certified under the provisions of this part), the information required by §26.31. The UCP shall make the directory available to the public electronically, on the internet, as well as in print. The UCP shall update the electronic version of the directory by including additions, deletions, and other changes as soon as they are made and shall revise the print version of the Directory at least once a year.

(h) Except as otherwise specified in this section, all provisions of this subpart and subpart D of this part pertaining to recipients also apply to UCPs.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 76 FR 5100, Jan. 28, 2011]

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§26.83 What procedures do recipients follow in making certification decisions?

(a) You must ensure that only firms certified as eligible DBEs under this section participate as DBEs in your program.

(b) You must determine the eligibility of firms as DBEs consistent with the standards of subpart D of this part. When a UCP is formed, the UCP must meet all the requirements of subpart D of this part and this subpart that recipients are required to meet.

(c)(1) You must take all the following steps in determining whether a DBE firm meets the standards of subpart D of this part:

(i) Perform an on-site visit to the firm's principal place of business. You must interview the principal officers and review their résumés and/or work histories. You may interview key personnel of the firm if necessary. You must also perform an on-site visit to job sites if there are such sites on which the firm is working at the time of the eligibility investigation in your jurisdiction or local area. You may rely upon the site visit report of any other recipient with respect to a firm applying for certification;

(ii) Analyze documentation related to the legal structure, ownership, and control of the applicant firm. This includes, but is not limited to, Articles of Incorporation/Organization; corporate by-laws or operating agreements; organizational, annual and board/member meeting records; stock ledgers and certificates; and State-issued Certificates of Good Standing

(iii) Analyze the bonding and financial capacity of the firm; lease and loan agreements; bank account signature cards;

(iv) Determine the work history of the firm, including contracts it has received, work it has completed; and payroll records;

(v) Obtain a statement from the firm of the type of work it prefers to perform as part of the DBE program and its preferred locations for performing the work, if any.

(vi) Obtain or compile a list of the equipment owned by or available to the firm and the licenses the firm and its key personnel possess to perform the work it seeks to do as part of the DBE program;

(vii) Obtain complete Federal income tax returns (or requests for extensions) filed by the firm, its affiliates, and the socially and economically disadvantaged owners for the last 3 years. A complete return includes all forms, schedules, and statements filed with the Internal Revenue Service.

(viii) Require potential DBEs to complete and submit an appropriate application form, except as otherwise provided in §26.85 of this part.

(2) You must use the application form provided in Appendix F to this part without change or revision. However, you may provide in your DBE program, with the written approval of the concerned operating administration, for supplementing the form by requesting specified additional information not inconsistent with this part.

(3) You must make sure that the applicant attests to the accuracy and truthfulness of the information on the application form. This shall be done either in the form of an affidavit sworn to by the applicant before a person who is authorized by State law to administer oaths or in the form of an unsworn declaration executed under penalty of perjury of the laws of the United States.

(4) You must review all information on the form prior to making a decision about the eligibility of the firm. You may request clarification of information contained in the application at any time in the application process.

(d) When another recipient, in connection with its consideration of the eligibility of a firm, makes a written request for certification information you have obtained about that firm (e.g., including application materials or the report of a site visit, if you have made one to the firm), you must promptly make the information available to the other recipient.

(e) [Reserved]

(f) Subject to the approval of the concerned operating administration as part of your DBE program, you may impose a reasonable application fee for certification. Fee waivers shall be made in appropriate cases.

(g) You must safeguard from disclosure to unauthorized persons information gathered as part of the certification process that may reasonably be regarded as proprietary or other confidential business information, consistent with applicable Federal, state, and local law.

(h)(1) Once you have certified a DBE, it shall remain certified until and unless you have removed its certification, in whole or in part, through the procedures of §26.87 of this part, except as provided in §26.67(b)(1) of this part.

(2) You may not require DBEs to reapply for certification or undergo a recertification process. However, you may conduct a certification review of a certified DBE firm, including a new on-site review, if appropriate in light of changed circumstances (e.g., of the kind requiring notice under paragraph (i) of this section or relating to suspension of certification under §26.88), a complaint, or other information concerning the firm's eligibility. If information comes to your attention that leads you to question the firm's eligibility, you may conduct an on-site review on an unannounced basis, at the firm's offices and job sites.

(i) If you are a DBE, you must inform the recipient or UCP in writing of any change in circumstances affecting your ability to meet size, disadvantaged status, ownership, or control requirements of this part or any material change in the information provided in your application form.

(1) Changes in management responsibility among members of a limited liability company are covered by this requirement.

(2) You must attach supporting documentation describing in detail the nature of such changes.

(3) The notice must take the form of an affidavit sworn to by the applicant before a person who is authorized by state law to administer oaths or of an unsworn declaration executed under penalty of perjury of the laws of the United States. You must provide the written notification within 30 days of the occurrence of the change. If you fail to make timely notification of such a change, you will be deemed to have failed to cooperate under §26.109(c).

(j) If you are a DBE, you must provide to the recipient, every year on the anniversary of the date of your certification, an affidavit sworn to by the firm's owners before a person who is authorized by State law to administer oaths or an unsworn declaration executed under penalty of perjury of the laws of the United States. This affidavit must affirm that there have been no changes in the firm's circumstances affecting its ability to meet size, disadvantaged status, ownership, or control requirements of this part or any material changes in the information provided in its application form, except for changes about which you have notified the recipient under paragraph (i) of this section. The affidavit shall specifically affirm that your firm continues to meet SBA business size criteria and the overall gross receipts cap of this part, documenting this affirmation with supporting documentation of your firm's size and gross receipts (e.g., submission of Federal tax returns). If you fail to provide this affidavit in a timely manner, you will be deemed to have failed to cooperate under §26.109(c).

(k) If you are a recipient, you must make decisions on applications for certification within 90 days of receiving from the applicant firm all information required under this part. You may extend this time period once, for no more than an additional 60 days, upon written notice to the firm, explaining fully and specifically the reasons for the extension. You may establish a different time frame in your DBE program, upon a showing that this time frame is not feasible, and subject to the approval of the concerned operating administration. Your failure to make a decision by the applicable deadline under this paragraph is deemed a constructive denial of the application, on the basis of which the firm may appeal to DOT under §26.89.

(l) As a recipient or UCP, you must advise each applicant within 30 days from your receipt of the application whether the application is complete and suitable for evaluation and, if not, what additional information or action is required.

(m) Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph, if an applicant for DBE certification withdraws its application before you have issued a decision on the application, the applicant can resubmit the application at any time. As a recipient or UCP, you may not apply the waiting period

provided under §26.86(c) of this part before allowing the applicant to resubmit its application. However, you may place the reapplication at the “end of the line,” behind other applications that have been made since the firm's previous application was withdrawn. You may also apply the waiting period provided under §26.86(c) of this part to a firm that has established a pattern of frequently withdrawing applications before you make a decision.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 68 FR 35555, June 16, 2003; 76 FR 5100, Jan. 28, 2011; 79 FR 59598, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.85 Interstate certification.

(a) This section applies with respect to any firm that is currently certified in its home state.

(b) When a firm currently certified in its home state (“State A”) applies to another State (“State B”) for DBE certification, State B may, at its discretion, accept State A's certification and certify the firm, without further procedures.

(1) To obtain certification in this manner, the firm must provide to State B a copy of its certification notice from State A.

(2) Before certifying the firm, State B must confirm that the firm has a current valid certification from State A. State B can do so by reviewing State A's electronic directory or obtaining written confirmation from State A.

(c) In any situation in which State B chooses not to accept State A's certification of a firm as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, as the applicant firm you must provide the information in paragraphs (c)(1) through (4) of this section to State B.

(1) You must provide to State B a complete copy of the application form, all supporting documents, and any other information you have submitted to State A or any other state related to your firm's certification. This includes affidavits of no change (see §26.83(j)) and any notices of changes (see §26.83(i)) that you have submitted to State A, as well as any correspondence you have had with State A's UCP or any other recipient concerning your application or status as a DBE firm.

(2) You must also provide to State B any notices or correspondence from states other than State A relating to your status as an applicant or certified DBE in those states. For example, if you have been denied certification or decertified in State C, or subject to a decertification action there, you must inform State B of this fact and provide all documentation concerning this action to State B.

(3) If you have filed a certification appeal with DOT (see §26.89), you must inform State B of the fact and provide your letter of appeal and DOT's response to State B.

(4) You must submit an affidavit sworn to by the firm's owners before a person who is authorized by State law to administer oaths or an unsworn declaration executed under penalty of perjury of the laws of the United States.

(i) This affidavit must affirm that you have submitted all the information required by 49 CFR 26.85(c) and the information is complete and, in the case of the information required by §26.85(c)(1), is an identical copy of the information submitted to State A.

(ii) If the on-site report from State A supporting your certification in State A is more than three years old, as of the date of your application to State B, State B may require that your affidavit also affirm that the facts in the on-site report remain true and correct.

(d) As State B, when you receive from an applicant firm all the information required by paragraph (c) of this section, you must take the following actions:

(1) Within seven days contact State A and request a copy of the site visit review report for the firm (see §26.83(c)(1)), any updates to the site visit review, and any evaluation of the firm based on the site visit. As State A, you must transmit this information to State B within seven days of receiving the request. A pattern by State B of not making such requests in a timely manner or by "State A" or any other State of not complying with such requests in a timely manner is noncompliance with this Part.

(2) Determine whether there is good cause to believe that State A's certification of the firm is erroneous or should not apply in your State. Reasons for making such a determination may include the following:

(i) Evidence that State A's certification was obtained by fraud;

(ii) New information, not available to State A at the time of its certification, showing that the firm does not meet all eligibility criteria;

(iii) State A's certification was factually erroneous or was inconsistent with the requirements of this part;

(iv) The State law of State B requires a result different from that of the State law of State A.

(v) The information provided by the applicant firm did not meet the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section.

(3) If, as State B, unless you have determined that there is good cause to believe that State A's certification is erroneous or should not apply in your State, you must, no later than 60 days from the date on which you received from the applicant firm all the information required by paragraph (c) of this section, send to the applicant firm a notice that it is certified and place the firm on your directory of certified firms.

(4) If, as State B, you have determined that there is good cause to believe that State A's certification is erroneous or should not apply in your State, you must, no later than 60 days from the date on which you received from the applicant firm all the information required by paragraph (c) of this section, send to the applicant firm a notice stating the reasons for your determination.

(i) This notice must state with particularity the specific reasons why State B believes that the firm does not meet the requirements of this Part for DBE eligibility and must offer the firm an opportunity to respond to State B with respect to these reasons.

(ii) The firm may elect to respond in writing, to request an in-person meeting with State B's decision maker to discuss State B's objections to the firm's eligibility, or both. If the firm requests a meeting, as State B you must schedule the meeting to take place within 30 days of receiving the firm's request.

(iii) The firm bears the burden of demonstrating, by a preponderance of evidence, that it meets the requirements of this Part with respect to the particularized issues raised by State B's notice. The firm is not otherwise responsible for further demonstrating its eligibility to State B.

(iv) The decision maker for State B must be an individual who is thoroughly familiar with the provisions of this Part concerning certification.

(v) State B must issue a written decision within 30 days of the receipt of the written response from the firm or the meeting with the decision maker, whichever is later.

(vi) The firm's application for certification is stayed pending the outcome of this process.

(vii) A decision under this paragraph (d)(4) may be appealed to the Departmental Office of Civil Rights under s§26.89 of this part.

(e) As State B, if you have not received from State A a copy of the site visit review report by a date 14 days after you have made a timely request for it, you may hold action required by paragraphs (d)(2) through (4) of this section in abeyance pending receipt of the site visit review report. In this event, you must, no later than 30 days from the date on which you received from an applicant firm all the information required by paragraph (c) of this section, notify the firm in writing of the delay in the process and the reason for it.

(f)(1) As a UCP, when you deny a firm's application, reject the application of a firm certified in State A or any other State in which the firm is certified, through the procedures of paragraph (d)(4) of this section, or decertify a firm, in whole or in part, you must make an entry in the Department of Transportation Office of Civil Rights' (DOCR's) Ineligibility Determination Online Database. You must enter the following information:

(i) The name of the firm;

(ii) The name(s) of the firm's owner(s);

(iii) The type and date of the action;

(iv) The reason for the action.

(2) As a UCP, you must check the DOCR Web site at least once every month to determine whether any firm that is applying to you for certification or that you have already certified is on the list.

(3) For any such firm that is on the list, you must promptly request a copy of the listed decision from the UCP that made it. As the UCP receiving such a request, you must provide a copy of the decision to the requesting UCP within 7 days of receiving the request. As the UCP receiving the decision, you must then consider the information in the decision in determining what, if any, action to take with respect to the certified DBE firm or applicant.

(g) You must implement the requirements of this section beginning January 1, 2012.

[76 FR 5100, Jan. 28, 2011]

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§26.86 What rules govern recipients' denials of initial requests for certification?

(a) When you deny a request by a firm, which is not currently certified with you, to be certified as a DBE, you must provide the firm a written explanation of the reasons for the denial, specifically referencing the evidence in the record that supports each reason for the denial. All documents and other information on which the denial is based must be made available to the applicant, on request.

(b) [Reserved]

(c) When a firm is denied certification, you must establish a time period of no more than twelve months that must elapse before the firm may reapply to the recipient for certification. You may provide, in your DBE program, subject to approval by the concerned operating administration, a shorter waiting period for reapplication. The time period for reapplication begins to run on the date the explanation required by paragraph (a) of this section is received by the firm. An applicant's appeal of your decision to the Department pursuant to §26.89 does not extend this period.

(d) When you make an administratively final denial of certification concerning a firm, the firm may appeal the denial to the Department under §26.89.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999. Redesignated and amended at 68 FR 35555, June 16, 2003; 79 FR 59598, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.87 What procedures does a recipient use to remove a DBE's eligibility?

(a) *Ineligibility complaints.* (1) Any person may file with you a written complaint alleging that a currently-certified firm is ineligible and specifying the alleged reasons why the firm is ineligible. You are not required to accept a general allegation that a firm is ineligible or an anonymous complaint. The complaint may include any information or arguments supporting the complainant's assertion that the firm is ineligible and should not continue to be certified. Confidentiality of complainants' identities must be protected as provided in §26.109(b).

(2) You must review your records concerning the firm, any material provided by the firm and the complainant, and other available information. You may request additional information from the firm or conduct any other investigation that you deem necessary.

(3) If you determine, based on this review, that there is reasonable cause to believe that the firm is ineligible, you must provide written notice to the firm that you propose to find the firm ineligible, setting forth the reasons for the proposed determination. If you determine that such reasonable cause does not exist, you must notify the complainant and the firm in writing of this determination and the reasons for it. All statements of reasons for findings on the issue of reasonable cause must specifically reference the evidence in the record on which each reason is based.

(b) *Recipient-initiated proceedings.* If, based on notification by the firm of a change in its circumstances or other information that comes to your attention, you determine that there is reasonable cause to believe that a currently certified firm is ineligible, you must provide written notice to the firm that you propose to find the firm ineligible, setting forth the reasons for the proposed determination. The statement of reasons for the finding of reasonable cause must specifically reference the evidence in the record on which each reason is based.

(c) *DOT directive to initiate proceeding.* (1) If the concerned operating administration determines that information in your certification records, or other information available to the concerned operating administration, provides reasonable cause to believe that a firm you certified does not meet the eligibility criteria of this part, the concerned operating administration may direct you to initiate a proceeding to remove the firm's certification.

(2) The concerned operating administration must provide you and the firm a notice setting forth the reasons for the directive, including any relevant documentation or other information.

(3) You must immediately commence and prosecute a proceeding to remove eligibility as provided by paragraph (b) of this section.

(d) *Hearing.* When you notify a firm that there is reasonable cause to remove its eligibility, as provided in paragraph (a), (b), or (c) of this section, you must give the firm an opportunity for an informal hearing, at which the firm may respond to the reasons for the proposal to remove its eligibility in person and provide information and arguments concerning why it should remain certified.

(1) In such a proceeding, you bear the burden of proving, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the firm does not meet the certification standards of this part.

(2) You must maintain a complete record of the hearing, by any means acceptable under state law for the retention of a verbatim record of an administrative hearing. If there is an appeal to DOT under §26.89, you must provide a transcript of the hearing to DOT and, on request, to the firm. You must retain the original record of the hearing. You may charge the firm only for the cost of copying the record.

(3) The firm may elect to present information and arguments in writing, without going to a hearing. In such a situation, you bear the same burden of proving, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the firm does not meet the certification standards, as you would during a hearing.

(e) *Separation of functions.* You must ensure that the decision in a proceeding to remove a firm's eligibility is made by an office and personnel that did not take part in actions leading to or seeking to implement the proposal to remove the firm's eligibility and are not subject, with respect to the matter, to direction from the office or personnel who did take part in these actions.

(1) Your method of implementing this requirement must be made part of your DBE program.

(2) The decisionmaker must be an individual who is knowledgeable about the certification requirements of your DBE program and this part.

(3) Before a UCP is operational in its state, a small airport or small transit authority (*i.e.*, an airport or transit authority serving an area with less than 250,000 population) is required to meet this requirement only to the extent feasible.

(f) *Grounds for decision.* You may base a decision to remove a firm's eligibility only on one or more of the following grounds:

(1) Changes in the firm's circumstances since the certification of the firm by the recipient that render the firm unable to meet the eligibility standards of this part;

(2) Information or evidence not available to you at the time the firm was certified;

(3) Information relevant to eligibility that has been concealed or misrepresented by the firm;

(4) A change in the certification standards or requirements of the Department since you certified the firm;

(5) Your decision to certify the firm was clearly erroneous;

(6) The firm has failed to cooperate with you (see §26.109(c));

(7) The firm has exhibited a pattern of conduct indicating its involvement in attempts to subvert the intent or requirements of the DBE program (see §26.73(a)(2)); or

(8) The firm has been suspended or debarred for conduct related to the DBE program. The notice required by paragraph (g) of this section must include a copy of the suspension or debarment action. A decision to remove a firm for this reason shall not be subject to the hearing procedures in paragraph (d) of this section.

(g) *Notice of decision.* Following your decision, you must provide the firm written notice of the decision and the reasons for it, including specific references to the evidence in the record that supports each reason for the decision. The notice must inform the firm of the consequences of your decision and of the availability of an appeal to the Department of Transportation under §26.89. You must send copies of the notice to the complainant in an ineligibility complaint or the concerned operating administration that had directed you to initiate the proceeding. Provided that, when sending such a notice to a complainant other than a DOT operating administration, you must not include information reasonably construed as confidential business information without the written consent of the firm that submitted the information.

(h) [Reserved]

(i) *Status of firm during proceeding.* (1) A firm remains an eligible DBE during the pendency of your proceeding to remove its eligibility.

(2) The firm does not become ineligible until the issuance of the notice provided for in paragraph (g) of this section.

(j) *Effects of removal of eligibility.* When you remove a firm's eligibility, you must take the following action:

(1) When a prime contractor has made a commitment to using the ineligible firm, or you have made a commitment to using a DBE prime contractor, but a subcontract or contract has not been executed before you issue the decertification notice provided for in paragraph (g) of this section, the ineligible firm does not count toward the contract goal or overall goal. You must direct the prime

contractor to meet the contract goal with an eligible DBE firm or demonstrate to you that it has made a good faith effort to do so.

(2) If a prime contractor has executed a subcontract with the firm before you have notified the firm of its ineligibility, the prime contractor may continue to use the firm on the contract and may continue to receive credit toward its DBE goal for the firm's work. In this case, or in a case where you have let a prime contract to the DBE that was later ruled ineligible, the portion of the ineligible firm's performance of the contract remaining after you issued the notice of its ineligibility shall not count toward your overall goal, but may count toward the contract goal.

(3) *Exception:* If the DBE's ineligibility is caused solely by its having exceeded the size standard during the performance of the contract, you may continue to count its participation on that contract toward overall and contract goals.

(k) *Availability of appeal.* When you make an administratively final removal of a firm's eligibility under this section, the firm may appeal the removal to the Department under §26.89.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 68 FR 35556, June 16, 2003; 76 FR 5101, Jan. 28, 2011; 79 FR 59599, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.88 Summary suspension of certification.

(a) A recipient shall immediately suspend a DBE's certification without adhering to the requirements in §26.87(d) of this part when an individual owner whose ownership and control of the firm are necessary to the firm's certification dies or is incarcerated.

(b)(1) A recipient may immediately suspend a DBE's certification without adhering to the requirements in §26.87(d) when there is adequate evidence to believe that there has been a material change in circumstances that may affect the eligibility of the DBE firm to remain certified, or when the DBE fails to notify the recipient or UCP in writing of any material change in circumstances as required by §26.83(i) of this part or fails to timely file an affidavit of no change under §26.83(j).

(2) In determining the adequacy of the evidence to issue a suspension under paragraph (b)(1) of this section, the recipient shall consider all relevant factors, including how much information is available, the credibility of the information and allegations given the circumstances, whether or not important allegations are corroborated, and what inferences can reasonably be drawn as a result.

(c) The concerned operating administration may direct the recipient to take action pursuant to paragraph (a) or (b) this section if it determines that information available to it is sufficient to warrant immediate suspension.

(d) When a firm is suspended pursuant to paragraph (a) or (b) of this section, the recipient shall immediately notify the DBE of the suspension by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the last known address of the owner(s) of the DBE.

(e) Suspension is a temporary status of ineligibility pending an expedited show cause hearing/proceeding under §26.87 of this part to determine whether the DBE is eligible to participate in the program and consequently should be removed. The suspension takes effect when the DBE receives, or is deemed to have received, the Notice of Suspension.

(f) While suspended, the DBE may not be considered to meet a contract goal on a new contract, and any work it does on a contract received during the suspension shall not be counted toward a recipient's overall goal. The DBE may continue to perform under an existing contract executed before the DBE received a Notice of Suspension and may be counted toward the contract goal during the period of suspension as long as the DBE is performing a commercially useful function under the existing contract.

(g) Following receipt of the Notice of Suspension, if the DBE believes it is no longer eligible, it may voluntarily withdraw from the program, in which case no further action is required. If the DBE believes that its eligibility should be reinstated, it must provide to the recipient information demonstrating that the firm is eligible notwithstanding its changed circumstances. Within 30 days of receiving this information, the recipient must either lift the suspension and reinstate the firm's certification or commence a decertification action under §26.87 of this part. If the recipient commences a decertification proceeding, the suspension remains in effect during the proceeding.

(h) The decision to immediately suspend a DBE under paragraph (a) or (b) of this section is not appealable to the US Department of Transportation. The failure of a recipient to either lift the suspension and reinstate the firm or commence a decertification proceeding, as required by paragraph (g) of this section, is appealable to the U.S. Department of Transportation under §26.89 of this part, as a constructive decertification.

[79 FR 59599, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.89 What is the process for certification appeals to the Department of Transportation?

(a)(1) If you are a firm that is denied certification or whose eligibility is removed by a recipient, including SBA-certified firms, you may make an administrative appeal to the Department.

(2) If you are a complainant in an ineligibility complaint to a recipient (including the concerned operating administration in the circumstances provided in §26.87(c)), you may appeal to the Department if the recipient does not find reasonable cause to propose removing the firm's eligibility or, following a removal of eligibility proceeding, determines that the firm is eligible.

(3) Send appeals to the following address: U.S. Department of Transportation, Departmental Office of Civil Rights, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590-0001.

(b) Pending the Department's decision in the matter, the recipient's decision remains in effect. The Department does not stay the effect of the recipient's decision while it is considering an appeal.

(c) If you want to file an appeal, you must send a letter to the Department within 90 days of the date of the recipient's final decision, including information and setting forth a full and specific statement as to why the decision is erroneous, what significant fact that the recipient failed to consider, or what provisions of this Part the recipient did not properly apply. The Department may accept an appeal filed later than 90 days after the date of the decision if the Department determines that there was good cause for the late filing of the appeal or in the interest of justice.

(d) When it receives an appeal, the Department requests a copy of the recipient's complete administrative record in the matter. If you are the recipient, you must provide the administrative record, including a hearing transcript, within 20 days of the Department's request. The Department

may extend this time period on the basis of a recipient's showing of good cause. To facilitate the Department's review of a recipient's decision, you must ensure that such administrative records are well organized, indexed, and paginated. Records that do not comport with these requirements are not acceptable and will be returned to you to be corrected immediately. If an appeal is brought concerning one recipient's certification decision concerning a firm, and that recipient relied on the decision and/or administrative record of another recipient, this requirement applies to both recipients involved.

(e) The Department makes its decision based solely on the entire administrative record as supplemented by the appeal. The Department does not make a de novo review of the matter and does not conduct a hearing. The Department may also supplement the administrative record by adding relevant information made available by the DOT Office of Inspector General; Federal, State, or local law enforcement authorities; officials of a DOT operating administration or other appropriate DOT office; a recipient; or a firm or other private party.

(f) As a recipient, when you provide supplementary information to the Department, you shall also make this information available to the firm and any third-party complainant involved, consistent with Federal or applicable state laws concerning freedom of information and privacy. The Department makes available, on request by the firm and any third-party complainant involved, any supplementary information it receives from any source.

(1) The Department affirms your decision unless it determines, based on the entire administrative record, that your decision is unsupported by substantial evidence or inconsistent with the substantive or procedural provisions of this part concerning certification.

(2) If the Department determines, after reviewing the entire administrative record, that your decision was unsupported by substantial evidence or inconsistent with the substantive or procedural provisions of this part concerning certification, the Department reverses your decision and directs you to certify the firm or remove its eligibility, as appropriate. You must take the action directed by the Department's decision immediately upon receiving written notice of it.

(3) The Department is not required to reverse your decision if the Department determines that a procedural error did not result in fundamental unfairness to the appellant or substantially prejudice the opportunity of the appellant to present its case.

(4) If it appears that the record is incomplete or unclear with respect to matters likely to have a significant impact on the outcome of the case, the Department may remand the record to you with instructions seeking clarification or augmentation of the record before making a finding. The Department may also remand a case to you for further proceedings consistent with Department instructions concerning the proper application of the provisions of this part.

(5) The Department does not uphold your decision based on grounds not specified in your decision.

(6) The Department's decision is based on the status and circumstances of the firm as of the date of the decision being appealed.

(7) The Department provides written notice of its decision to you, the firm, and the complainant in an ineligibility complaint. A copy of the notice is also sent to any other recipient whose administrative record or decision has been involved in the proceeding (see paragraph (d) of this section). The Department will also notify the SBA in writing when DOT takes an action on an appeal that results in or confirms a loss of eligibility to any SBA-certified firm. The notice includes the

reasons for the Department's decision, including specific references to the evidence in the record that supports each reason for the decision.

(8) The Department's policy is to make its decision within 180 days of receiving the complete administrative record. If the Department does not make its decision within this period, the Department provides written notice to concerned parties, including a statement of the reason for the delay and a date by which the appeal decision will be made.

(g) All decisions under this section are administratively final, and are not subject to petitions for reconsideration.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 65 FR 68951, Nov. 15, 2000; 68 FR 35556, June 16, 2003; 73 FR 33329, June 12, 2008; 79 FR 59599, Oct. 2, 2014]

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§26.91 What actions do recipients take following DOT certification appeal decisions?

(a) If you are the recipient from whose action an appeal under §26.89 is taken, the decision is binding. It is not binding on other recipients.

(b) If you are a recipient to which a DOT determination under §26.89 is applicable, you must take the following action:

(1) If the Department determines that you erroneously certified a firm, you must remove the firm's eligibility on receipt of the determination, without further proceedings on your part. Effective on the date of your receipt of the Department's determination, the consequences of a removal of eligibility set forth in §26.87(i) take effect.

(2) If the Department determines that you erroneously failed to find reasonable cause to remove the firm's eligibility, you must expeditiously commence a proceeding to determine whether the firm's eligibility should be removed, as provided in §26.87.

(3) If the Department determines that you erroneously declined to certify or removed the eligibility of the firm, you must certify the firm, effective on the date of your receipt of the written notice of Department's determination.

(4) If the Department determines that you erroneously determined that the presumption of social and economic disadvantage either should or should not be deemed rebutted, you must take appropriate corrective action as determined by the Department.

(5) If the Department affirms your determination, no further action is necessary.

(c) Where DOT has upheld your denial of certification to or removal of eligibility from a firm, or directed the removal of a firm's eligibility, other recipients with whom the firm is certified may commence a proceeding to remove the firm's eligibility under §26.87. Such recipients must not remove the firm's eligibility absent such a proceeding. Where DOT has reversed your denial of certification to or removal of eligibility from a firm, other recipients must take the DOT action into account in any certification action involving the firm. However, other recipients are not required to certify the firm based on the DOT decision.

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Subpart F—Compliance and Enforcement

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§26.101 What compliance procedures apply to recipients?

(a) If you fail to comply with any requirement of this part, you may be subject to formal enforcement action under §26.103 or §26.105 or appropriate program sanctions by the concerned operating administration, such as the suspension or termination of Federal funds, or refusal to approve projects, grants or contracts until deficiencies are remedied. Program sanctions may include, in the case of the FHWA program, actions provided for under 23 CFR 1.36; in the case of the FAA program, actions consistent with 49 U.S.C. 47106(d), 47111(d), and 47122; and in the case of the FTA program, any actions permitted under 49 U.S.C. chapter 53 or applicable FTA program requirements.

(b) As provided in statute, you will not be subject to compliance actions or sanctions for failing to carry out any requirement of this part because you have been prevented from complying because a Federal court has issued a final order in which the court found that the requirement is unconstitutional.

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§26.103 What enforcement actions apply in FHWA and FTA programs?

The provisions of this section apply to enforcement actions under FHWA and FTA programs:

(a) *Noncompliance complaints.* Any person who believes that a recipient has failed to comply with its obligations under this part may file a written complaint with the concerned operating administration's Office of Civil Rights. If you want to file a complaint, you must do so no later than 180 days after the date of the alleged violation or the date on which you learned of a continuing course of conduct in violation of this part. In response to your written request, the Office of Civil Rights may extend the time for filing in the interest of justice, specifying in writing the reason for so doing. The Office of Civil Rights may protect the confidentiality of your identity as provided in §26.109(b). Complaints under this part are limited to allegations of violation of the provisions of this part.

(b) *Compliance reviews.* The concerned operating administration may review the recipient's compliance with this part at any time, including reviews of paperwork and on-site reviews, as appropriate. The Office of Civil Rights may direct the operating administration to initiate a compliance review based on complaints received.

(c) *Reasonable cause notice.* If it appears, from the investigation of a complaint or the results of a compliance review, that you, as a recipient, are in noncompliance with this part, the appropriate DOT office promptly sends you, return receipt requested, a written notice advising you that there is reasonable cause to find you in noncompliance. The notice states the reasons for this finding and directs you to reply within 30 days concerning whether you wish to begin conciliation.

(d) *Conciliation.* (1) If you request conciliation, the appropriate DOT office shall pursue conciliation for at least 30, but not more than 120, days from the date of your request. The

appropriate DOT office may extend the conciliation period for up to 30 days for good cause, consistent with applicable statutes.

(2) If you and the appropriate DOT office sign a conciliation agreement, then the matter is regarded as closed and you are regarded as being in compliance. The conciliation agreement sets forth the measures you have taken or will take to ensure compliance. While a conciliation agreement is in effect, you remain eligible for FHWA or FTA financial assistance.

(3) The concerned operating administration shall monitor your implementation of the conciliation agreement and ensure that its terms are complied with. If you fail to carry out the terms of a conciliation agreement, you are in noncompliance.

(4) If you do not request conciliation, or a conciliation agreement is not signed within the time provided in paragraph (d)(1) of this section, then enforcement proceedings begin.

(e) *Enforcement actions.* (1) Enforcement actions are taken as provided in this subpart.

(2) Applicable findings in enforcement proceedings are binding on all DOT offices.

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§26.105 What enforcement actions apply in FAA programs?

(a) Compliance with all requirements of this part by airport sponsors and other recipients of FAA financial assistance is enforced through the procedures of Title 49 of the United States Code, including 49 U.S.C. 47106(d), 47111(d), and 47122, and regulations implementing them.

(b) The provisions of §26.103(b) and this section apply to enforcement actions in FAA programs.

(c) Any person who knows of a violation of this part by a recipient of FAA funds may file a complaint under 14 CFR part 16 with the Federal Aviation Administration Office of Chief Counsel.

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§26.107 What enforcement actions apply to firms participating in the DBE program?

(a) If you are a firm that does not meet the eligibility criteria of subpart D of this part and that attempts to participate in a DOT-assisted program as a DBE on the basis of false, fraudulent, or deceitful statements or representations or under circumstances indicating a serious lack of business integrity or honesty, the Department may initiate suspension or debarment proceedings against you under 2 CFR parts 180 and 1200.

(b) If you are a firm that, in order to meet DBE contract goals or other DBE program requirements, uses or attempts to use, on the basis of false, fraudulent or deceitful statements or representations or under circumstances indicating a serious lack of business integrity or honesty, another firm that does not meet the eligibility criteria of subpart D of this part, the Department may initiate suspension or debarment proceedings against you under 2 CFR parts 180 and 1200.

(c) In a suspension or debarment proceeding brought under paragraph (a) or (b) of this section, the concerned operating administration may consider the fact that a purported DBE has been certified by a recipient. Such certification does not preclude the Department from determining that the purported DBE, or another firm that has used or attempted to use it to meet DBE goals, should be suspended or debarred.

(d) The Department may take enforcement action under 49 CFR Part 31, Program Fraud and Civil Remedies, against any participant in the DBE program whose conduct is subject to such action under 49 CFR part 31.

(e) The Department may refer to the Department of Justice, for prosecution under 18 U.S.C. 1001 or other applicable provisions of law, any person who makes a false or fraudulent statement in connection with participation of a DBE in any DOT-assisted program or otherwise violates applicable Federal statutes.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 76 FR 5101, Jan. 28, 2011]

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§26.109 What are the rules governing information, confidentiality, cooperation, and intimidation or retaliation?

(a) *Availability of records.* (1) In responding to requests for information concerning any aspect of the DBE program, the Department complies with provisions of the Federal Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts (5 U.S.C. 552 and 552a). The Department may make available to the public any information concerning the DBE program release of which is not prohibited by Federal law.

(2) Notwithstanding any provision of Federal or state law, you must not release any information that may reasonably be construed as confidential business information to any third party without the written consent of the firm that submitted the information. This includes applications for DBE certification and supporting information. However, you must transmit this information to DOT in any certification appeal proceeding under §26.89 of this part or to any other state to which the individual's firm has applied for certification under §26.85 of this part.

(b) *Confidentiality of information on complainants.* Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (a) of this section, the identity of complainants shall be kept confidential, at their election. If such confidentiality will hinder the investigation, proceeding or hearing, or result in a denial of appropriate administrative due process to other parties, the complainant must be advised for the purpose of waiving the privilege. Complainants are advised that, in some circumstances, failure to waive the privilege may result in the closure of the investigation or dismissal of the proceeding or hearing. FAA follows the procedures of 14 CFR part 16 with respect to confidentiality of information in complaints.

(c) *Cooperation.* All participants in the Department's DBE program (including, but not limited to, recipients, DBE firms and applicants for DBE certification, complainants and appellants, and contractors using DBE firms to meet contract goals) are required to cooperate fully and promptly with DOT and recipient compliance reviews, certification reviews, investigations, and other requests for information. Failure to do so shall be a ground for appropriate action against the party involved (e.g., with respect to recipients, a finding of noncompliance; with respect to DBE firms, denial of certification or removal of eligibility and/or suspension and debarment; with respect to a complainant or appellant, dismissal of the complaint or appeal; with respect to a contractor which uses DBE firms to meet goals, findings of non-responsibility for future contracts and/or suspension and debarment).

(d) *Intimidation and retaliation.* If you are a recipient, contractor, or any other participant in the program, you must not intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual or firm for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by this part or because the individual or firm has made a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this part. If you violate this prohibition, you are in noncompliance with this part.

[64 FR 5126, Feb. 2, 1999, as amended at 68 FR 35556, June 16, 2003; 76 FR 5101, Jan. 28, 2011]

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