

# Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and Small Businesses (SB)

## **Q. What is a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)?**

**A.** A DBE is a for-profit small business concern that is at least 51 percent owned by one or more individual(s) who are both socially and economically disadvantaged. Also, the management and daily business operations of a DBE business must be controlled by one or more of the socially and economically disadvantaged individuals who own it.

## **Q. What are the DBE Program objectives?**

- A.** Key DBE Program objectives are:
- > To ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of federally-funded contracts in Caltrans highway, transit, and airport financial assistance programs
  - > To create a level-playing field on which DBEs can compete fairly for federally-funded contracts
  - > To ensure that only firms that fully meet this part's eligibility standards are permitted to participate as DBEs
  - > To help remove barriers to the participation of DBEs in federally funded contracts; to assist the development of firms that can compete successfully in the marketplace outside the DBE Program
  - > To promote the use of DBEs in all types of federally-assisted contracts and procurement activities conducted by recipients

## **Q. What steps are required to become a certified DBE?**

- A.**
1. Obtain a certification application form from the CUCP's website at: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/civil-rights/dbe-certification-information>
  2. Complete and submit notarized application form and supporting documents to a CUCP certifying agency in your region. Refer to the application to locate the nearest CUCP certifying agency.
  3. The CUCP certifying agency will determine whether a firm qualifies for DBE certification after a thorough review of the firm's application, documentation and information obtained from an on-site visit.

### **Q. How do I locate certified DBEs and SBs?**

- A.** Certified DBEs can be found on the CUCP's website at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/civil-rights/dbe-search>  
Certified SBs can be found on the California E-Procure website at <https://www.caleprocure.ca.gov/pages/sbdvbe-index.aspx>

### **Q. What is the DBE Supportive Services Program?**

- A.** Caltrans DBE Supportive Services Program offers free assistance to DBEs or Potential DBEs including training, technical assistance and an extensive 6-month Business Development Program. More information can be found at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/civil-rights/supportive-services>

### **Q. What are the benefits of being a certified DBE?**

- A.** Some advantages to being a DBE firm include:
- > DBEs may be used to satisfy a DBE goal on any project with funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation (i.e. cities, counties, airports, transit agencies). DBEs receive statewide exposure for contracting opportunities through the DBE Directory, which provides one list of all DBE firms certified in the State of California. Prime contractors and consultants are strongly encouraged to use the DBE Directory to identify subcontractors/sub-consultants for their projects
  - > DBEs may participate in a variety of supportive services such as training and technical assistance if they are construction and consulting firms involved in a road, highway or bridge construction or maintenance related business. Many of these services are at no cost or reduced cost to certified DBEs

Access Services offers several different business opportunities, open to all businesses and vendors. Access encourages collaboration with DBEs/SBs. Such partnerships increases the overall economic viability of small and disadvantaged businesses, allowing them an opportunity to perform on Federally-assisted contracts and projects.



**Q. Does Access Services have a DBE Contract Goal?**

**A.** The Race-Neutral DBE goal for all FTA funded contracts is 1.5%. This is an overall agency goal. There is no contract-specific goal for any particular project.

**Q. How do I locate Access Services DBE Program and Goals?**

**A.** [www.accessla.org/doing\\_business\\_with\\_us/dbe\\_program.html](http://www.accessla.org/doing_business_with_us/dbe_program.html)

**Q. How do I access current and upcoming business opportunities?**

**A.** To access current business opportunities with Access Services register at [www.accessla.org/cms/user/register](http://www.accessla.org/cms/user/register)

**Q. How can DBEs, SBs and other diverse businesses participate in Access Projects?**

**A.** There are many areas where DBEs, SBs and other diverse businesses can participate. These may include:

- > Car washing services
- > Uniforms
- > Fueling services
- > Various project consulting
- > DOJ/Livescans background checks services
- > Janitorial services
- > Training services
- > IT services
- > Administration