



# MBE/DBE/ACDBE/SBE Certification Overview

## One Certification Agency:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) is the official certification agency for the State

## Two Areas of Contracting Opportunities:

1. Contracts awarded by any Maryland agency and most counties, cities, and municipalities
2. Federal projects with whole or partial funding by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)

## Four Types of Certification:

1. **Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)**  
State funded contracts
2. **Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)**  
USDOT funded projects administered by the MDOT State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA), MDOT Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA), MDOT Maryland Aviation Administration (MDOT MAA), and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)
3. **Airport Concessions Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (ACDBE)**  
Airport concessions contracts administered by MDOT MAA
4. **Small Business Enterprise (SBE)**  
USDOT funded projects administered by MDOT SHA, MDOT MTA, and MDOT MAA

## Four Steps to Certification:

1. **Application** – applicant submits completed application and supporting documentation to OMBE
2. **Investigation** – OMBE staff reviews submitted documentation and conducts an on-site/job-site visit during which the applicant is interviewed
3. **Evaluation** – MBE Advisory Committee (MBEAC) reviews the application and documentation to evaluate whether the firm meets the MBE/DBE/ACDBE/SBE program requirements
4. **Determination** – MBEAC Chairperson issues a written determination
  - Approved*: letter is sent listing the approved NAICS codes
  - Denied*: letter is sent detailing the evidence in the record that supports each reason for the denial (firm may appeal the denial and/or reapply in 5 months after denial for MBE and 12 months for DBE)

## Five Eligibility Standards:

1. **Ownership** – applicant firm must have at least 51% ownership
  - \*\*MBE/DBE/ACDBE: 51% ownership must be by one or more socially and economically disadvantaged individual(s)\*\*
2. **Minority Status** – members of certain groups are presumed to be socially disadvantaged: Women, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Subcontinent Asian Americans, Disabled Persons (MBE Program only)
  - \*\*NOT APPLICABLE TO SBE\*\*
3. **Control** – the minority applicant(s) 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 seeking certification
  - \*\*NOT APPLICABLE TO SBE\*\*
4. **Personal Net Worth** – each minority owner must fall below the personal net worth cap established for the State and federal programs (required of 51% ownership)
  - MBE: \$1,771,564 (adjusted annually)
  - DBE/ACDBE/SBE: \$1,320,000
5. **Size** – applicant firms must meet the small business size standards established by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)
  - DBE and SBE firms ONLY: a firm's three year average gross receipts cannot exceed SBA size standard of \$23.98 million
  - ALL firms: NAICS standards are measured by a three year average of annual gross receipts or number of employees
  - \*\*ACDBE firms: other size standards apply\*\*

For more information about MBE/DBE/ACDBE/SBE certification, contact the OMBE at 410-865-1269 or [mbe@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:mbe@mdot.maryland.gov)

For information on MDOT's **free** monthly Application Assistance Workshop, contact the Office of Small and Minority Business Policy at [mdotmbeoutreach@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:mdotmbeoutreach@mdot.maryland.gov)