

# COOK COUNTY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

As the certification and compliance authority for Cook County, The Office of Contract Compliance (“OCC”) maintains the highest commitment to diversity, equity and transparency while continuously expanding resources and programs that empower small businesses to become involved in contracting opportunities. We have an obligation in government to ensure that all firms have an opportunity to participate in contracts that are paid for with taxpayer dollars. OCC manages the certifications of over 600 firms throughout the Chicagoland marketplace (Cook, Kane, DuPage, McHenry, Will and Lake counties) that are minority-owned, women-owned, veteran-owned, service-disabled veteran-owned, and business enterprises owned or operated by people with disabilities. Through strategic initiatives and partnerships, we are investing in our local communities and growing businesses throughout Cook County.

## TYPES OF CERTIFICATIONS

- ✓ Minority-Owned Business Enterprise (MBE)
- ✓ Women-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE)
- ✓ Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise (VBE)
- ✓ People with disabilities Business Enterprise (PDBE)
- ✓ Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise (SDVBE)

## BASIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ **Ownership:** At least 51% of the business entity must be owned by one or more women or minority groups. Independence: Must demonstrate the ability to independently perform in the firm’s area of specialty/expertise.
- ✓ **Control:** Must exercise control over the management and daily business operations of the firm.
- ✓ **Expertise:** Must demonstrate prior experience and expertise in the desired specialty area (i.e., training, licenses, certifications, or academic credentials).
- ✓ **Location:** Principal office must be located in the Illinois counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Will, Lake, McHenry
- ✓ **Size:** Firm’s gross receipts must not exceed 1.5x the maximum dollar threshold value (as applicable by industry) averaged over 7 years, under the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) size standards.

## BENEFITS OF COOK COUNTY CERTIFICATION

- ✓ **Certifications that do not expire\***
- ✓ **An Increased Small Business Size Standard\***
- ✓ **Revised Personal Net Worth Calculation\***
- ✓ Reciprocity with the City of Chicago
- ✓ Listing in the Cook County and City of Chicago Certified Firms Directory

**\*Denotes 2023 revision to Certification programmatic criteria**

## HOW TO APPLY

- ✓ Visit [www.cookcounty.diversitycompliance.com](http://www.cookcounty.diversitycompliance.com)
- ✓ Certification applications are accepted **ONLINE** only, [www.cookcounty.diversitycompliance.com](http://www.cookcounty.diversitycompliance.com), **Apply Here**



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