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PUERTO RICO
**HIGHWAY AND
TRANSPORTATION
AUTHORITY**



Leveling the playing field by providing small businesses owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals a fair opportunity to compete for federally funded transportation contracts.

What is the DBE Program?

It is a program designed by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) and authorized by Congress, which originated in 1980 as a minority/women's business enterprise program established by regulation under the authority of Title VI Civil Rights ACT of 1964 and other non-discrimination statutes that apply to DOT financial assistance programs. It is the DOT's most important tool, to ensure that firms competing for DOT-assisted contracts projects, are not disadvantaged by unlawful discrimination.

What rules apply?

49 CFR Part 26 and 49 CFR Part 23 (for airport concessionaires), which in turn, places primary responsibility for the certification process upon State Transportation Agencies.

Who must implement a DBE Program?

State agencies, including municipalities (in Puerto Rico) that are recipients of federal funds for transportation projects, who are part of the Unified Certification Program (UCP). All of which, must abide by the DBE Program's main objectives, to ensure remedy to ongoing and continuing effects of past discrimination in federally-assisted highway, transit, airport, and highway assistance transportation contracting markets nationwide.

WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE DBE PROGRAM?



1. To ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of DOT-assisted contracts in the Department's highway, transit, and airport assistance programs.

2. To create a level playing field on which DBEs can compete fairly for DOT-assisted contracts.

3. To ensure that the Department's DBE program is narrowly tailored in accordance with applicable law.

4. To ensure that only firms that fully meet this part's eligibility standards are permitted to participate as DBEs.

5. To help remove barriers to the participation of DBEs in DOT-assisted contracts.

6. To promote the use of DBEs in all types of federally assisted contracts and procurement activities conducted by recipients.

7. To assist the development of firms that can compete successfully in the marketplace outside the DBE program.

8. To provide appropriate flexibility to recipients of Federal financial assistance in establishing and providing opportunities for DBEs.



REQUIREMENTS

So that a small company can participate of the benefits of the DBE Program, it must seek certification from the relevant state – generally through the state Unified Certification Program (UCP).

- **The company must be owned by a socially and economically disadvantaged individual or individuals.**
- **Must meet the SBA size criteria, and not surpass the DBE size limit for the established number of years. For DBE Program airport concessions, the size limits are higher.**

“The PRHTA’s DBE Program, has given us the opportunity to open to new opportunities, clients, and increase our profits.”

-Lisher Cintrón – Owner and President – International Executive Consultant, LLC

DBE Supportive Services Program

Supportive services are activities and assistance provided to DBE certified firms, or those seeking to be certified, who conduct or are looking to conduct business with the Puerto Rico Highways and Transportation Authority (PRHTA), and other transportation related agencies part of the local UCP. These services are directed to help firms achieve proficiency in the competition for contracts or subcontracts. Its main purposes are to:

- Increase the number of certified DBEs, in the participation of DOT federally funded transportation related projects.
- Contribute to the social and economic growth, thus eventual independence, of DBE firms.

Useful Links

- USDOT - Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program | US Department of Transportation
- PRHTA - Inicio - ACT (pr.gov)
- PRHTA Civil Rights Office - Derechos Civiles - ACT (pr.gov)
- SBA Size Standards - Size standards (sba.gov)