

Montgomery County Commission Minority and Women-Owned Business Initiative

Policy Statement

The Montgomery County Commission (MCC) is committed to:

- increase participation by Minority and Women-Owned Businesses (M/WBs) in the contracting and procurement processes in Montgomery County;
- ensure equal opportunity for M/WBs to participate in the contracting and procurement processes;
- prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or veteran status in the contracting and procurement processes; and
- achieve a minimum of 30% participation (as contractors and/or subcontractors) by M/WBs in the awarding and execution of county contracts and to increase M/WBs participation in the bidding process in Montgomery County.

Policy Implementation

The Montgomery County Commission will engage and/or hire a M/WB Liaison to assist Montgomery County in developing and executing a plan to implement the M/WB Initiative in compliance with federal and state laws and Montgomery County purchasing procedures. The plan will include, but not be limited to, steps to accomplish the following:

- disseminate information on available business opportunities to ensure M/WBs are provided an equal opportunity to participate in the contracting and procurement processes;
- maintain and update a directory of M/WBs;
- make prospective contractors and vendors aware of the MCC's M/WB Initiative;
- attend pre-bid/pre-proposal conference(s) to explain M/WB Initiative objectives and to respond to questions;
- review requests for bids/proposals prior to formal advertising or solicitation to make sure that proper instructions are included regarding the MCC's M/WB Initiative objectives;
- maintain accurate and up-to-date records demonstrating M/WB Liaison's efforts and accomplishments; and
- monitor and track the status of W/MB participation as it relates to the goal of 30% minimum participation in the county's contracting and purchasing processes.

The plan will also establish procedures to ensure equal opportunity to compete in MCC's contracting and procurement processes such as:

- arrange solicitations, time for submission of bids/proposals, quantities, specifications, and deliveries to better facilitate the participation of M/WBs;
- implement informational programs on opportunities and procedures;
- assist and provide information on avenues of access on items such as the inability to obtain insurance, bonding, financing, and technical assistance;
- include the MCC's M/WB Initiative policy and objectives in requests for bids and proposals; and

- provide information and communication on contracting procedures, specifications and RFPs to M/WBs in a timely manner.

Recognition of M/WBs

To ensure that the MCC's M/WBs policy benefits businesses which are owned and controlled in both form and substance by minority individuals or women, the MCC shall recognize M/WB certification by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) or Federal 8-A certification.

ADECA eligibility requirements for certification by ADECA include but are not limited to the following:

1. A business must be at least 51 percent minority/woman-owned, controlled and operated on a daily basis
2. Must have been in operation for at least one year prior to applying for minority business certification status
3. Must have a legal presence (license) to operate in Alabama
4. Majority owner(s) must be a legal resident of the United States by birth or naturalization
5. Must be **socially disadvantaged** (defined as those individuals who have been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice, sexual or cultural bias because of their identity as a member of a group without regard to their individual qualities)
6. Must be **economically disadvantaged** (defined as those individuals whose ability to compete in the free enterprise system has been impaired due to diminished capital and credit opportunities)
7. Must be a member(s) of an officially designated **socially disadvantaged group** such as African-American, Native American or Alaskan Native, Hispanic-American, Women, Asian-Pacific American, and Asian-Indian American.

Nothing in this policy and its implementation is to be construed to require MCC to award a bid and/or contract to any bidder other than the lowest responsible bidder or to require contractors to award subcontracts to or make purchases from M/WBs who do not submit the lowest responsible sub-bid.