

## **Top 10 Tips for MBE/DBE/ACDBE/SBE Applicants**

1. Familiarize yourself with the [certification requirements](#): ownership, minority status, control, small business size standards and personal net worth thresholds.
2. Firms are certified by NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) Codes. Familiarize yourself with the [NAICS Codes](#) that may apply to your business.
3. [Submit a completed application](#) and all required supporting documents. MDOT's Office of Minority Business Enterprise (OMBE) recommends submitting the [Uniform Certification Application](#).
  - If you are seeking SBE only certification, submit the [SBE Application](#) only.
4. Although checklists are included in the application, utilize the appropriate [document checklist](#) depending on your firm's structure. Checklists are created by the Office of Minority Business Enterprise (available online) and sort the information by creating a tab for each item on the checklist.
5. Do not leave any area of the application blank. If an area does not apply to your business, indicate "N/A" or "Does Not Apply" in the space provided and include a brief explanation along with your supporting documents.
6. Sign the [Declaration of Eligibility](#) included in the application packet.
7. Copy the entire packet for your files.
8. Be responsive to requests for additional information.
9. It will take several months to go through the process after submitting a complete application packet along with all required supporting documentation.
10. Visit our website, contact us by email or call the office directly with any questions about the certification process, the application and/or the required supporting documents.

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## **Marketing Tips**

### **Register in eMaryland Marketplace Advantage**

- This is Maryland's online procurement portal – a great resource for finding contracting opportunities. <https://procurement.maryland.gov>

### **Register in the Maryland Small Business Reserve (SBR) Program**

- SBR gives small businesses the opportunity to bid on State contracts without competing with larger, more established firms. This is a race- and gender-neutral program and online registration is required. SBR registration is located on the eMaryland Marketplace website. <https://procurement.maryland.gov>

### **Identify Your Customers**

- What agencies (state, county, city) buy the products/services you sell? Check their website for information about procurements with that agency.

### **Learn the Process**

- Know your NAICS codes and learn the procurement process of each potential customer.

### **Attend Pre-bid Meetings**

- This is where you will meet the prime contractors who are most likely to bid on the contract.  
Your marketing efforts should be focused on these folks.

### **Prepare a Capabilities Statement**

- Take it everywhere you go and hand it out to everyone you meet. Be sure to include examples of previous work and contact information.

### **Copy Best Practices**

- Talk with other MBEs who are successfully working on government contracts (inside and outside of your industry) and follow suit.

### **Be Patient and Persistent**

- Developing new business relationships takes time. Don't give up! Be willing to start small in order to build a record of past performance that is relevant to prime contractors.

### **Social Media**

- Social media offers an inexpensive way to connect to potential customers. Research the applications that would best fit your business and learn how to use them effectively.

### **Ask Why!**

- If your bid does not earn you the job, ask why. This is valuable information that can help the next time around.