



# MBE/DBE/ACDBE/SBE Certification Overview



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

## Four Steps to Certification:

1. **Application** – applicant submits completed application and supporting documentation to **Office of Minority Business Enterprise (OMBE)**
2. **Investigation** – OMBE staff reviews submitted documentation and conducts an on-site/job-site visit during which the applicant is interviewed
3. **Evaluation** – The application and supporting documentation is evaluated to determine whether the firm meets the MBE/DBE/ACDBE/SBE program requirements. The MBE Advisory Committee (MBEAC) evaluates whether the applicant firm meets Maryland's MBE program requirements.
4. **Determination** – A written determination is issued from OMBE  
-*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 held by one or more socially and economically disadvantaged individual(s)\*\*
2. **Minority Status** – members of the following groups are presumed to be socially disadvantaged: Women, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian-Pacific 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 individual owner must certify economic disadvantage by completing the personal net worth form.  
-MBE: \$2,073,412 (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 the USDOT statutory cap of \$30.40 million.  
-ACDBE- a firm's three-year average gross receipt cannot exceed the SBA size standard of \$56.42.  
-MBE/DBE/SBE: NAICS code standards are measured by a five-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)