

DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (DBE) POLICY CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Policy. It shall be the policy of the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) to ensure nondiscriminatory opportunity for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) to participate in the performance of all contracts and subcontracts financed with Federal funds as specified by the regulations of the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), Federal Highway Administration and as set forth below.

1. **Policy.** It is the policy of USDOT that DBEs as defined in 49 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Part 26 shall have the maximum opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts financed in whole or in part with Federal funds. Consequently, the DBE requirements of 49 CFR Part 26 and 23 CFR, Chapter 1, Part 230, Subpart b apply to this contract.
2. **DBE Obligation.** The State and its Contractors agree to ensure that DBEs as defined in 49 CFR Part 26, have the maximum opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts and subcontracts financed in whole or in part with Federal funds. **Each subcontract the prime contractor signs with a subcontractor must include this assurance:** *The contractor, sub recipient or subcontractor shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in the award and performance of this contract. The contractor shall carry out applicable requirements of 49 CFR Part 26 in the award and administration of USDOT-assisted contracts. Failure by the contractor to carry out these requirements is a material breach of this contract, which may result in the termination of this contract or such other remedy, as VTrans deems appropriate.*
3. **Sanctions for Noncompliance.** The Contractor is hereby advised that failure of the Contractor, or any Subcontractor performing work under this contract, to carry out the requirements set forth in paragraphs 1 and 2 above shall constitute a breach of contract and after the notification of the Vermont Agency of Transportation, Secretary of Transportation, may result in termination of this contract by the State or such remedy as the State deems necessary.
4. **Inclusion in Subcontracts.** The Contractor shall insert in each of its subcontracts this Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Policy and also a clause requiring its subcontractors to include this same Policy in any lower tier subcontracts which they may enter into, together with a clause requiring the inclusion of the Policy in any further subcontract that may in turn be made. This Policy shall not be incorporated by reference.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program Goals. The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) is required to set an overall DBE goal for participation in all transportation related Federal-aid projects. The goal is determined following guidelines set forth in 49 CFR 26.45, and based on the availability of ready, willing and able DBEs who submitted bids and quotes for transportation related projects, compared as a percentage of all available contractors who submitted bids and quotes for transportation related projects during the same time period. The DBE goal may be adjusted to take into account other factors impacting DBE utilization, in an effort to narrowly tailor the overall DBE goal. The detailed goal setting methodology and current overall DBE goal may be viewed on the VTrans website at:

<http://vtrans.vermont.gov/civil-rights/doing-business/dbe-center/program-goals>

VTrans currently utilizes a race/gender neutral policy to fulfill its overall DBE goals, and relies on the voluntary participation of contractors to utilize certified DBEs on every project sufficient to obtain the Agency's overall DBE goal. In order for this practice to continue, contractors must be proactive and solicit bids and quotes from certified DBEs for use when submitting their own bids, and employ certified DBEs when participating on transportation related projects. Otherwise, VTrans may have to implement specified contract goals on projects to ensure the overall DBE goals are met. VTrans may include specific DBE contract goals in certain cases to ensure DBE participation, if failure to obtain the project DBE goal would negatively impact the Agency's overall DBE goal because of the size of the contract.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Definition. A DBE is defined as a business that is owned and controlled by one or more socially and economically disadvantaged person(s). For the purposes of this definition:

- (1) "Socially and economically disadvantaged person" means an individual who is a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States and who is a Woman, Black, Hispanic, Portuguese, Native American, Asian American, or a member of another group, or an individual found to be disadvantaged by the Small Business Administration pursuant to Section 3 of the Small Business Act.
- (2) "Owned and controlled" means a business which is:
 - a. A sole proprietorship legitimately owned and controlled by an individual who is a disadvantaged person.
 - b. A partnership, joint venture or limited liability company in which at least 51% of the beneficial ownership interests legitimately is held by a disadvantaged person(s).
 - c. A corporation or other entity in which at least 51% of the voting interest and 51% of the beneficial ownership interests legitimately are held by a disadvantaged person(s).

The disadvantaged group owner(s) or stockholder(s) must possess control over management, interest in capital, and interest in earnings commensurate with percentage of ownership. Disadvantaged participation in a joint venture must also be based on the sharing of real earnings, as above. If the disadvantaged group ownership interests are real, substantial and continuing and not created solely to meet the requirements of the program, a firm is considered a bona fide DBE.

Certified DBE Directory. The current Vermont Unified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Directory is available online at: <http://vtrans.vermont.gov/civil-rights/doing-business/dbe-center/directory>. This directory contains all currently certified DBEs available for work in Vermont, and is updated continuously. Only firms listed in this directory are eligible for DBE credit on Vermont Federal-aid projects. If you have questions about DBE certification, or do not have access to the Internet, please call the DBE Program Manager at (802) 828-5858 for assistance.

Counting DBE Participation Towards Project Goals. In order for payments made to DBE contractors to be counted toward DBE goals, the DBE contractors must perform a commercially

useful function (CUF). The DBE must be responsible for execution of the work of the contract and must carry out its responsibilities by actually performing, managing, and supervising the work involved, consistent with standard industry practices.

This means that:

- The DBE must also be responsible for ordering its own materials and supplies, determining quantity and quality, negotiating price, installing (where applicable) and paying for the material itself;
- The DBE must perform work commensurate with the amount of its contract;
- The DBE's contribution cannot be that of an extra participant or a conduit through which funds are passed in order to obtain the appearance of DBE participation;
- The DBE must exercise responsibility for at least fifty percent of the total cost of its contract with its own workforce;
- None of the DBE's work can be subcontracted back to the prime contractor, nor can the DBE employ the prime's or other subcontractor's supervisors currently working on the project;
- The DBE's labor force must be separate and apart from that of the prime contractor or other subcontractors on the project. Transferring crews between primes, subcontractors, and DBE contractors is not acceptable;
- The DBE owner must hold necessary professional or craft license(s) or certification(s) for the type of work he/she performs on the project;
- The DBE may rent or lease, at competitive rates, equipment needed on the project from customary leasing sources or from other subcontractors on the project.

Allowable credit for payments made to DBEs for work performed. A contractor may take credit for payments made to a certified DBE that satisfies CUF requirements at the following rate:

- A DBE Prime Contractor: Count 100% of the value of the work performed by own forces, equipment and materials towards the DBE goals.
- An approved DBE subcontractor: Count 100% of the value of work performed by the DBE's own forces, equipment and materials, excluding the following:
 - The cost of materials/supplies purchased from a non-DBE Prime Contractor.
 - The value of work provided by non-DBE lower tier subcontractors, including non-DBE trucking to deliver asphalt to a DBE contractor.
- A DBE owner-operator of construction equipment: Count 100% of expenditures committed.

- A DBE manufacturer: Count 100% of expenditures committed. The manufacturer must be a firm that operates or maintains a factory or establishment that produces on the premises the materials or supplies obtained by the Contractor.
- A regular DBE dealer/supplier: Count 60% of expenditures committed. A regular dealer/supplier is defined as a firm that owns, operates, or maintains a store, warehouse or other establishment, in which the materials or supplies required for the performance of the contract are bought, kept in stock, and regularly sold or leased to the public in the usual course of business. A person may be a dealer in such bulk items as petroleum products, steel, cement, gravel, stone or asphalt without owning, operating or maintaining a place of business, if the person both owns and operates distribution equipment for the products, by the means of a long term agreement, and not by a contract by contract basis.
- A DBE broker: Count for DBE credit only the fees or commissions charged for assistance in the procurement, and, fees and transportation charges for the delivery of materials or supplies required at the job site, but not the cost of materials procured. A broker is defined as any person(s) or firm who arranges or expedites transactions for materials or supplies, and does not take physical possession of the materials or supplies at their place of business for resale.
- A DBE renter of construction equipment to a contractor: Count 20% of expenditures committed, with or without operator.
- A bona fide DBE service provider: Count 100% of reasonable fees or commissions. Eligible services include professional, technical, consultant, or managerial, services and assistance in the procurement of essential personnel, facilities, equipment, materials or supplies required for the performance of the contract. Eligible services also include agencies providing bonding and insurance specifically required for the performance of the contract.
- A trucking, hauling or delivery operation: Count 100% of expenditures committed when trucks are owned, operated, licensed and insured by the DBE and used on the contract and, if applicable, includes the cost of the materials and supplies. 100% of expenditures committed when the DBE leases trucks from another DBE firm including an owner-operator. 100% of reasonable fees, or commissions, the DBE receives as a result of a lease arrangement for trucks from a non-DBE, including an owner-operator.
- Any combination of the above.

Removal of Approved DBE From Transportation Related Project. Contractors may not terminate for convenience, any approved DBE subcontractor and perform the work with their own forces, without prior written consent from the VTrans DBE Program Manager or VTrans Chief of Civil Rights.

Federal-aid projects which specify a DBE contract goal. The provisions of the Vermont Agency of Transportation Supplemental Specification – Disadvantaged Business Enterprise

(DBE) Utilization (CR 160) shall apply to all VTrans Federal-aid projects which specify a DBE contract goal.

Compliance With Prompt Payment Statute. In accordance with Vermont's Prompt Payment Act and VTrans Standard Specifications for Construction, Section 107.01(g), the Contractor shall fully comply with the provisions of 9 V.S.A. Chapter 102, also referred to as Act No. 74 of 1991 or the Prompt Payment Act, as amended.

Subcontractor Payments. In accordance with VTrans Standard Specifications for Construction, Section 107.01(h), on all federal-aid and state funded contracts, the Contractor, during the life of the Contract and on a monthly basis, shall submit electronically, a listing of payments to subcontractors on the form specified by the State and made available at: <http://apps.vtrans.vermont.gov/promptpay/>. Electronic reports shall be filed with the Agency Office of Civil Rights by an authorized representative and received in the Agency Office of Civil Rights on or before the tenth working day after month end. Contractors without access to the internet shall obtain and submit manual reports to the Agency Office of Civil Rights. Manual reports shall be signed by an authorized representative, sent to the Agency Office of Civil Rights, and postmarked on or before the tenth working day after month end. There shall be no direct compensation allowed the Contractor for this work, but the cost thereof shall be included in the general cost of the work. In accordance with 9 V.S.A. Section 4003, notwithstanding any contrary agreement, payments made to subcontractors after seven days from receipt of a corresponding progress payment by the State to the Contractor, or seven days after receipt of a subcontractor's invoice, whichever is later, violate this agreement. Violations shall be reported to the Agency Office of Civil Rights for review. Failure to resolve disputes in a timely manner may result in a complaint made to the Agency Pre-qualification Committee. In this Committee's judgment, appropriate penalties may be involved for failure to comply with this specification. Penalties may include suspension, reduction or revocation of the Contractor's pre-qualification rating. This clause shall be included in the prime Contractor's Contract made with all if its subcontractors.