

Eligibility and Qualifications – Does My Firm Qualify?

In order to qualify for certification, an applicant must successfully document, demonstrate and comply with the following:

Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) is one that is at least 51% owned by one of the minority groups identified below who also control and operate the business and are permanent residents of the State of Florida. The business must have a permanent, functioning office within the State of Florida and be lawfully licensed within the relevant jurisdiction.

Minority classifications are:

- **African American-** a person (male or female) having origins in any of the indigenous racial groups of Africa.
- **Hispanic American-** a person (male or female) of Spanish or Portuguese heritage with origins in Spain, Portugal, Mexico, South America, Central America or the Caribbean Islands, regardless of race.
- **Asian American-** a person (male or female) having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, Indian subcontinent, or Pacific Islands including the Hawaiian Islands.
- **Native American-** a person (male or female) who has origins in any of the Indian Tribes of North America.

Woman Business Enterprise (WBE) is one that:

- Is at least 51% owned by a **Caucasian Female** or females, who also
 - Control and operate the business and
 - Are permanent residents of the State of Florida
- Has a permanent, functioning office within the State of Florida
- Is lawfully licensed within its relevant jurisdiction.

Small Local Business Enterprise (SLBE) is one that:

- Has 25 or fewer permanent fulltime employees
- Has gross revenue averaged for the past three years that does not exceed \$2 million
- Is located in the Tampa Market Area (Hillsborough, Pasco, Polk, Pinellas or Manatee County)
- Is owned by individual(s) who are all permanent residents of the State of Florida
- Is without regard to ethnicity and gender
- Is independently owned and operated

All Firms Must Meet These General Requirements:

Any SLBE, MBE, or WBE must have -

- *Operated as such for **ONE YEAR** prior to application in order to be eligible to apply for certification*
- *Been operating independently of other firms*
- *A permanent, functioning office within the state of Florida that is lawfully licensed within the relevant jurisdiction (includes foreign registered corporations)*