

WBE Certification Application Process

The first step to becoming certified is completing the online application. In order to do this, you will need to go to www.wbenclink.org, and the website will guide you through the process. For companies headquartered in **Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin** your application will be assigned to the WBDC – Chicago.

Current processing fees are:

- Revenues under 1 million: \$350
- Revenues \$1 million – \$5 million \$500
- Revenues \$5 million – \$10 million \$750
- Revenues \$10 million – \$50 million \$1,000
- Revenues \$50 million + \$1,250

Once the online application package is complete, the timeframe for processing is 90 days.

For a complete list of required documentation by business type and WBENC Standards & Procedures, please visit www.wbenc.org

WBENC is an approved third party certifier for Women Owned Small Business (WOSB) certification as part of the United States SBA's WOSB Federal Contracting Program. For more information, please visit www.wbenc.org/government.

About the WBDC

The Women's Business Development Center (WBDC) is nationally recognized for its responsive, innovative and effective programs and advocacy efforts.

Established in 1986, the WBDC has assisted over 78,000 women. The WBDC serves entrepreneurs and veterans at all stages of development through targeted training, eLearning modules, professional business counseling, financial assistance, and access to information and resources. The WBDC has a yearly service base of approximately 3,500, and certifies over 1,600 women-owned businesses annually. The WBDC also offers its programs and services in Spanish to better serve the diverse spectrum of business owners.

The WBDC is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, a certifying partner of the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) and a proud partner of many corporations, foundations and contributors who help make our dreams a reality.

For more information please visit www.WBDC.org

Contact Us

Women's Business Development Center (WBDC) 8 S. Michigan Avenue, 4th Floor
Chicago, IL 60603

Ph 312.853.3477 |

Bridget Foster
Kelly Hinman
Griselda Llerenas

certification@wbdc.org
bfoster@wbdc.org
khinman@wbdc.org
gllerenas@wbdc.org

WBDC Minneapolis, MN

Natasha Fedorova nfedorova@wbdc.org

Milwaukee, WI

Jessie Leonard jleonard@wbdc.org

Kansas City, KS

Ann DeAngelo adeangelo@wbdc.org



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WOMEN'S
BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT
CENTER

Your growth is our *business*.

WBE Certification

The mission of the Women's Business Development Center (WBDC) is to support and accelerate business development and growth, targeting women and serving other underserved communities and veterans, in order to strengthen their participation in, and impact on, the economy.



What is WBE Certification?

WBE stands for Women's Business Enterprise, a certification designation sought by women-owned companies to help leverage contracts with major corporations and government agencies. The Women's Business Development Center (WBDC) provides qualified women-owned businesses with a nationally recognized WBE Certification through our partnership with the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC).

WBENC Certification is the most widely recognized and respected WBE Certification in the nation. It is accepted by over **1,000 corporations** across the country, and a number of federal, state and local government agencies. As the largest certifying partner of WBENC, the WBDC's WBE Certification Program covers a nine state Midwestern region including: **Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin.**

WBENC WBE certification can be an important marketing tool for expanding your company's visibility with procurement decision-makers.

Is Certification Right for Me?

Though there are many benefits to being certified, not all businesses are candidates for certification. Take this short self-assessment to determine if your business would benefit from WBE Certification.

1. Are you looking to do business with corporations and/or government agencies?

Typically only corporations and government entities request certification.

2. Does your business have the capacity to fulfill large contracts?

Corporate and government contracts tend to be larger than the contracts many small businesses are accustomed to fulfilling. Your business must be prepared to demonstrate the ability to deliver on these larger contracts, either independently or in alliance with another woman or minority-owned business.

3. Are you willing to share the intimate details of your business — including capital investments, tax returns and compensation records?

The certification committee must analyze proprietary documents in order to determine the eligibility of your business. All information and documents submitted by your business are kept completely confidential.

4. Do you have a clear understanding that WBE Certification is a marketing tool and does not entitle your company to corporate/government contracts?

Even if your business is certified, you will still need to invest time and energy developing a marketing campaign that targets corporations and government agencies that need your product or service.

If you answered yes to all the questions listed above, your business is a candidate for certification.

WBE Certification Criteria

All applicants seeking WBE Certification need to meet the following criteria:

1. **Ownership** — business must be at least 51% owned by a woman or women.
2. **Contribution** — female owner(s) must be able to provide proof of contribution of capital and/or expertise.
3. **Operation and Control** — female owner(s) must provide proof of management of the business (operating position, bylaws, hire-fire and other decision-making roles).
4. **Independence** — female owner(s) must be able to provide evidence that she has the ability to perform in the area of specialty or expertise without the reliance on either the finances or resources of a non-female owned firm.
5. **US Citizenship or US Resident Alien Status**

WBE Certification Benefits

As a WBENC Certified WBE, you will receive the following benefits:

- Listing as a certified WBE in the WBENCLink national database accessed by member corporations and government agencies;
- Access to supplier diversity contact information within WBENCLink for all member corporations;
- Use of the widely-recognized WBENC certified WBE seal on your company's marketing materials to designate your certification status;
- Opportunities to participate in WBENC national and regional affiliate tradeshow and events;
- Opportunity to participate in the national and local WBE Leadership Forums to serve as a voice for other WBEs; and
- Opportunity to participate in the national Done Deals™ and local Contract Connections programs, one-on-one meetings with corporate and government procurement decision-makers.