

**1. BUY AMERICA REQUIREMENTS § 635.410**

- A. The provisions of this section shall prevail and be given precedence over any requirements of this subpart which are contrary to this section. However, nothing in this section shall be construed to be contrary to the requirements of § 635.409(a) of this subpart.
  
- B. No Federal-aid highway construction project is to be authorized for advertisement or otherwise authorized to proceed unless at least one of the following requirements is met:
  - 1. The project either: (i) Includes no permanently incorporated steel or iron materials, or (ii) if steel or iron materials are to be used, all manufacturing processes, including application of a coating, for these materials must occur in the United States. Coating includes all processes which protect or enhance the value of the material to which the coating is applied.
  - 2. The State has standard contract provisions that require the use of domestic materials and products, including steel and iron materials, to the same or greater extent as the provisions set forth in this section.
  - 3. The State elects to include alternate bid provisions for foreign and domestic steel and iron materials which comply with the following requirements. Any procedure for obtaining alternate bids based on furnishing foreign steel and iron materials which is acceptable to the Division Administrator may be used. The contract provisions must (i) require all bidders to submit a bid based on furnishing domestic steel and iron materials, and (ii) clearly state that the contract will be awarded to the bidder who submits the lowest total bid based on furnishing domestic steel and iron materials unless such total bid exceeds the lowest total bid based on furnishing foreign steel and iron materials by more than 25 percent.
  - 4. When steel and iron materials are used in a project, the requirements of this section do not prevent a minimal use of foreign steel and iron materials, if the cost of such materials used does not exceed one-tenth of one percent (0.1 percent) of the total contract cost or \$2,500, whichever is greater. For purposes of this paragraph, the cost is that shown to be the value of the steel and iron products as they are delivered to the project.
  
- C.
  - 1. A State may request a waiver of the provisions of this section if;
    - i. The application of those provisions would be inconsistent with the public interest; or
    - ii. Steel and iron materials/products are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities which are of a satisfactory quality.
  - 2. A request for waiver, accompanied by supporting information, must be submitted in writing to the Regional Federal Highway Administrator (RFHWA) through the FHWA Division Administrator. A request must be submitted sufficiently in advance of the need for the waiver in order to allow time for proper review and action on the request. The RFHWA will have approval authority on the request.

3. Requests for waivers may be made for specific projects, or for certain materials or products in specific geographic areas, or for combinations of both, depending on the circumstances.
4. The denial of the request by the RFHWA may be appealed by the State to the Federal Highway Administrator (Administrator), whose action on the request shall be considered administratively final.
5. A request for a waiver which involves nationwide public interest or availability issues or more than one FHWA region may be submitted by the RFHWA to the Administrator for action.
6. A request for waiver and an appeal from a denial of a request must include facts and justification to support the granting of the waiver. The FHWA response to a request or appeal will be in writing and made available to the public upon request. Any request for a nationwide waiver and FHWA's action on such a request may be published in the **Federal Register** for public comment.
7. In determining whether the waivers described in paragraph (c)(1) of this section will be granted, the FHWA will consider all appropriate factors including, but not limited to, cost, administrative burden, and delay that would be imposed if the provision were not waived.

D. Standard State and Federal-aid contract procedures may be used to assure compliance with the requirements of this section.

## **2. SANCTIONS AND PENALTIES FOR BREACH OF CONTRACT**

Contracts for more than the simplified acquisition threshold currently set at \$150,000, which is the inflation adjusted amount determined by the Civilian Agency Acquisition Council and the Defense Acquisition Regulations Council (Councils) as authorized by 41 U.S.C. 1908, must address administrative, contractual, or legal remedies in instances where contractors violate or breach contract terms, and provide for such sanctions and penalties as appropriate.

## **3. ADVERTISING FOR BIDS AND PROPOSALS**

Each bidder shall file a statement executed by, or on behalf of the person, firm, association, or corporation submitting the bid certifying that such person, firm, association, or corporation has not, either directly or indirectly, entered into any agreement, participated in any collusion, or otherwise taken any action, in restraint of free competitive bidding in connection with the submitted bid. Failure to submit the executed statement as part of the bidding documents will make the bid nonresponsive and not eligible for award consideration.

## **4. ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

Mandatory standards and policies relating to energy efficiency which are contained in the state energy conservation plan issued in compliance with the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6201).

## **5. PROCUREMENT OF RECOVERED MATERIALS**

A non-Federal entity that is a state agency or agency of a political subdivision of a state and its contractors must comply with section 6002 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. The requirements of Section 6002 include procuring only items designated in guidelines of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at 40 CFR part 247 that contain the highest percentage of recovered materials practicable, consistent with maintaining a satisfactory level of competition, where the purchase price of the item exceeds \$10,000 or the value of the quantity acquired by the preceding fiscal year exceeded \$10,000; procuring solid waste management services in a manner that maximizes energy and resource recovery; and establishing an affirmative procurement program for procurement of recovered materials identified in the EPA guidelines.

**6. EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONNEL OF PUBLIC AGENCIES**

The Contractor shall not employ any person or persons in the employ of the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, or of the State of Arizona or any of its boards, agencies, or commissions, for any work required by the terms of this Contract, without prior written permission of the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Railroad Administration or of the State.

**7. RETENTION OF RECORDS**

The contractor and any sub-consultant/subcontractor/contractor shall keep and maintain all books, papers, records, accounting records, files, accounts, reports, costs proposals with backup data, and all other material relating to the contract and related project(s), and shall make all such material available at any reasonable time during the term of work on the contract and related project(s) and for five (5) years from the date of final payment to the contractor for auditing, inspection, and copying upon the State's request, or at the request of the Federal Highway Administration or any other authorized representative of the Federal Government.

The contractor shall insert in each of its subcontracts the above requirement and also a clause requiring its subcontractors to include the above requirement in any lower-tier subcontracts or purchase orders.

**8. DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE**

**1.0 Policy:**

The Arizona Department of Transportation (hereinafter the Department) has established a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program in accordance with the regulations of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), 49 CFR Part 26. The Department has received Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation and as a condition of receiving this assistance, the Department has signed an assurance that it will comply with 49 CFR Part 26.

It is the policy of the Department to ensure that DBEs, as defined in Part 26, have an equal opportunity to receive and participate in USDOT-assisted contracts. It is also the policy of the Department:

1. To ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of USDOT-assisted contracts;
2. To create a level playing field on which DBEs can compete fairly for USDOT-assisted contracts;
3. To ensure that the DBE program is narrowly tailored in accordance with applicable law;

4. To ensure that only firms that fully meet 49 CFR Part 26 eligibility standards are counted as DBEs;
5. To help remove barriers to the participation of DBEs in USDOT-assisted contracts;
6. To assist in the development of firms that can compete successfully in the market place outside the DBE program; and
7. To promote the use of DBEs in all types of federally-assisted contracts and procurement activities.

It is also the policy of the Department to facilitate and encourage participation of Small Business Concerns (SBCs), as defined herein, in USDOT-assisted contracts. The Department encourages contractors to take reasonable steps to eliminate obstacles to SBCs' participation and to utilize SBCs in performing contracts.

### **2.0 Assurances of Non-Discrimination:**

The contractor, subrecipient, or subcontractor shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin or sex in the 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 the state deems appropriate, which may include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Withholding monthly progress payments;
- (2) Assessing sanctions;
- (3) Liquidated damages; and/or
- (4) Disqualifying the contractor from future bidding as non-responsible.

The contractor, subrecipient, or subcontractor shall ensure that all subcontract agreements contain this non-discrimination assurance.

### **3.0 Definitions:**

- (A) Commercially Useful Function (CUF):** Commercially Useful Function is defined fully in 49 CFR 26.55 which definition is incorporated herein by reference.
- (B) Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE):** a for-profit small business concern which meets both of the following requirements:
  - (1) Is at least 51 percent owned by one or more socially and economically disadvantaged individuals or, in the case of any publicly owned business, at least 51 percent of the stock is owned by one or more such individuals; and,
  - (2) Whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more of the socially and economically disadvantaged individuals who own it.
- (C) Joint Check:** a two-party check between a subcontractor, DBE and/or non-DBE, a prime contractor and the regular dealer of material supplies.

- (D) **Joint Venture:** an association of a DBE firm and one or more other firms to carry out a single, for-profit business enterprise, for which parties combine their property, capital, efforts, skills and knowledge, and in which the DBE is responsible for a distinct, clearly defined portion of the work of the contract and whose share in the capital contribution, control, management, risks, and profits of the joint venture are commensurate with its ownership interest.
- (E) **NAICS Code:** The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is the standard used by Federal statistical agencies in classifying business establishments for the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data related to the US business economy.
- (F) **Non-DBE:** any firm that is not a DBE.
- (G) **Race Conscious:** a measure or program is one that is focused specifically on assisting only DBEs, including women-owned DBEs.
- (H) **Race Neutral:** a measure or program is one that is, or can be, used to assist all small businesses. For the purposes of this part, race-neutral includes gender-neutrality.
- (I) **Small Business Concern:** a business that meets all of the following conditions:
- (1) Operates as a for-profit business
  - (2) Operates a place of business primarily within the U.S., or makes a significant contribution to the U.S. economy through payment of taxes or use of American products, materials, or labor;
  - (3) Is independently owned and operated;
  - (4) Is not dominant in its field on a national basis; and
  - (5) Does not have annual gross receipts that exceed the Small Business Administration size standards average annual income criteria for its primary North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code.
- (J) **Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals:** any individual who is a citizen (or lawfully admitted permanent resident) of the United States and who is:
- (1) Any individual who is found to be a socially and economically disadvantaged individual on a case-by-case basis.
  - (2) Any individual in the following groups, members of which are reputedly presumed to be socially and economically disadvantaged:
    - (i) "Black Americans," which includes persons having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa;

- (ii) "Hispanic Americans," which includes persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish or Portuguese culture or origin, regardless of race;
- (iii) "Native Americans," which includes persons who are American Indians, Eskimos, Aleuts, or Native Hawaiians;
- (iv) "Asian-Pacific Americans," which includes persons whose origins are from Japan, China, Taiwan, Korea, Burma (Myanmar), Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia (Kampuchea), Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Brunei, Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands (Republic of Palau), the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, Macao, Fiji, Tonga, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Nauru, Federated States of Micronesia, or Hong Kong;
- (v) "Subcontinent Asian Americans," which includes persons whose origins are from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives Islands, Nepal or Sri Lanka;
- (vi) "Women;"
- (vii) Any additional groups whose members are designated as socially and economically disadvantaged by the Small Business Administration (SBA), at such time as the SBA designation becomes effective.

#### **4.0 Working with DBEs:**

The Department works with DBEs and assists them in their efforts to participate in the highway construction program. All bidders should contact the Business Engagement and Compliance Office by phone, through email, or at the address shown below, for assistance in their efforts to use DBEs in the highway construction program of the Department. BECO contact information is as follows:

Arizona Department of Transportation  
Business Engagement and Compliance Office  
1801 W. Jefferson St., Ste. 101, Mail Drop 154A Phoenix, AZ 85007  
Phone (602) 712-7761  
FAX (602) 712-8429  
Email: [contractorcompliance@azdot.gov](mailto:contractorcompliance@azdot.gov)  
Website: [www.azdot.gov/bec](http://www.azdot.gov/bec)

#### **4.01 Mentor-Protégé Program:**

The Department has established a Mentor- Protégé program as an initiative to encourage and develop disadvantaged businesses in the highway construction industry. The program encourages prime contractors to provide certain types of assistance to certified DBE subcontractors. ADOT encourages contractors and certified DBE subcontractors to engage in a Mentor-Protégé agreement under certain conditions. Such an agreement must be mutually beneficial to both parties and to ADOT in fulfilling requirements of 49 CFR Part 23. For guidance regarding this program refer to the Mentor-Protégé Program Guidelines available on the BECO website.

The Mentor-Protégé program is intended to increase legitimate DBE activities. The program does not diminish the DBE rules or regulations, and participants may not circumvent these rules.

**5.0 Applicability:**

The Department has established an overall annual goal for DBE participation on Federal-aid contracts. The Department intends for the goal to be met with a combination of race conscious efforts and race neutral efforts. Race conscious participation occurs where the contractor uses a percentage of DBEs, as defined herein, to meet the contract-specified goal. Race neutral efforts are those that are, or can be, used to assist all small businesses or increase opportunities for all small businesses. The regulation, 49 CFR 26, describes race neutral as when a DBE wins a prime contract through customary competitive procurement procedures or is awarded a subcontract on a prime contract that does not carry a DBE contract goal.

The provisions are applicable to all bidders including DBE bidders.

**6.0 Certification and Registration:**

**6.01 DBE Certification:**

Certification as a DBE shall be predicated on:

- (1) The completion and execution of an application for certification as a "Disadvantaged Business Enterprise".
- (2) The submission of documents pertaining to the firm(s) as stated in the application(s), including but not limited to a statement of social disadvantage and a personal financial statement.
- (3) The submission of any additional information which the Department or the applicable Arizona Unified Certification (UCP) agency may require to determine the firm's eligibility to participate in the DBE program.
- (4) The information obtained during the on-site visits to the offices of the firm and to active job-sites.

Applications for certification may be filed online with the Department or the applicable UCP agency at any time through the Arizona Unified Transportation Registration and Certification System (AZ UTRACS) website at <https://utracs.azdot.gov/Home>.

DBE firms and firms seeking DBE certification shall cooperate fully with requests for information relevant to the certification process. Failure or refusal to provide such information is a ground for denial or removal of certification.

ADOT is a member of the AZ Unified Certification Program (AZUCP). Only DBE firms that are certified by the AZUCP are eligible for credit on ADOT projects. A list of DBE firms certified by AZUCP is available on the internet at <https://utracs.azdot.gov/Home>. The list will indicate contact information and specialty for each DBE firm, and may be sorted in a variety of ways. However, ADOT does not guarantee the accuracy

and/or completeness of this information, nor does ADOT represent that any licenses or registrations are appropriate for the work to be done.

The Department's certification of a DBE is not a representation of qualifications and/or abilities only that the firm has met the criteria for DBE certification as outlined in 49 CFR Part 26. The contractor bears all risks of ensuring that DBE firms selected by the contractor are able to perform the work.

**6.02 SBC Registration:**

To comply with 49 CFR Part 26.39 ADOT's DBE Program incorporates contracting requirements to facilitate participation by Small Business Concerns (SBCs) in federally assisted contracts. SBCs are for-profit businesses registered to do business in Arizona that meet the Small Business Administration (SBA) size standards for average annual revenue criteria for its primary North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code.

While the SBC component of the DBE program does not require utilization goals on projects, ADOT encourages contractors to utilize small businesses that are registered in AZ UTRACS on their contracts, in addition to DBEs meeting the certification requirement. The contractor may use the AZ UTRACS website to search for certified DBEs and registered SBCs that can be used on the contract. However, SBCs that are not DBEs will not be counted toward DBE participation.

SBCs can register online at the AZ UTRACS website. The Department's registration of SBCs is not a representation of qualifications and/or abilities. The contractor bears all risks of ensuring that SBC firms selected by the contractor are able to perform the work.

**7.0 DBE Financial Institutions:**

The Department thoroughly investigates the full extent of services offered by financial institutions owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals in its service area and makes reasonable efforts to use these institutions. The Department encourages prime contractors to use such institutions on USDOT assisted contracts. However, use of DBE financial institutions will not be counted toward DBE participation.

The Department encourages prime contractors to research the Federal Reserve Board website at [www.federalreserve.gov](http://www.federalreserve.gov) to identify minority-owned banks in Arizona derived from the Consolidated Reports of Condition and Income filed quarterly by banks (FFIEC 031 and 041) and from other information on the Board's National Information Center database.

**8.0 Time is of the Essence:**

TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE IN RESPECT TO THE DBE PROVISIONS.

**9.0 Computation of Time:**

In computing any period of time described in this DBE special provision, such as calendar days, the day from which the period begins to run is not counted, and when the last day of the period is a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal or State holiday, the period extends to the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal or State holiday. In circumstances where the



Department's offices are closed for all or part of the last day, the period extends to the next day on which the Department's offices are open.

**10.0 Contractor and Subcontractor Requirements:**

**10.01 General:**

Each contractor shall establish a program that will ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of contracts and subcontracts.

Agreements between the bidder and a DBE in which the DBE promises not to provide subcontracting quotations to other bidders are prohibited.

**10.02 DBE Liaison:**

The contractor shall designate a DBE Liaison responsible for the administration of the contractor's DBE program. The name of the designated DBE Liaison shall be included in the DBE Intended Participation Affidavit Summary.

**11.0 DBE Goals**

The Department has not established contract goals for DBE participation in this contract. Contractors are still encouraged to employ reasonable means to obtain DBE participation. Contractors must retain records in accordance with these DBE specifications. The contractor is notified that this record keeping is important to the Department so that it can track DBE participation where only race neutral efforts are employed.

**12.0 Payment Reporting:**

The contractor shall report the amounts paid to any DBE subcontractors, of all tiers, working on the project.

(5) Payment Reporting and Sanctions:

For the purposes of this subsection "Reportable Contracts" means any subcontract, of any tier, DBE, by which work shall be performed on behalf of the contractor and any contract of any tier with a DBE material supplier.

The requirements of this subsection apply to all Reportable Contracts.

Payment Reporting for all Reportable Contracts shall be done through the Department's web-based DBE System. The DBE System can be accessed from the Department's BECO website. UPON PAYMENT, the contractor shall log into the Department's web based DBE System and enter or verify the name, contact information, and subcontract amounts for Reportable Contracts on the project.

The contractor shall report the amounts actually paid and the dates of each payment under any Reportable Contract on the project. In addition, the contractor shall require that all DBE participants in

any Reportable Contract electronically verify receipt of payment on the contract - and the contractor shall actively monitor the Department's DBE System to ensure that the verifications are input. The contractor shall proactively work to resolve any payment discrepancies in the DBE System between payment amounts it reports and payment confirmation amounts reported by others.

The contractor shall ensure that all Reportable Contract activity is reported to the Department. This includes all lower-tier Reportable Contracts.

The contractor shall maintain records for each payment explaining the amount requested by the subcontractor, and the amount actually paid pursuant to the request, which may include but are not limited to, estimates, invoices, pay requests, copies of checks or wire transfers, and lien waivers in support of the - payments in the DBE System.

The contractor shall provide information for payments made on all Reportable Contracts. If the contractor does not pay the full amount of any invoice from a subcontractor, the contractor shall note that and provide the reasons in the comment section of the Monthly Payment Audit of the DBE System.

For each Reportable Contract on which the contractor fails to submit timely and complete payment information the Department will retain \$1,000.00 as liquidated damages, from the monies due to the contractor. Liquidated damages will be deducted each month for each Reportable Contract on which the contractor fails to submit payment information until the contractor provides the required information as described herein. After 90 consecutive days of non-reporting, the liquidated damages will increase to \$2,000.00 for each subsequent month, for each Reportable Contract on which the contractor fails to report until the information is provided. These liquidated damages shall be in addition to all other retention or liquidated damages provided for elsewhere in the contract.

The contractor shall ensure that a copy of this Subsection is included in every Reportable Contract of every tier.

**13.0 Crediting DBE Participation:**

**13.01 General Requirements:**

To count toward DBE participation, the DBE firm must be certified in each NAICS code applicable to the kind of work the firm will perform on the contract. NAICS for each DBE can be found on the AZ UTRACS under the Firm Directory. General descriptions of all NAICS codes can be found at [www.naics.com](http://www.naics.com).

The entire amount of a contract that is performed by the DBE's own forces, including the cost of supplies and materials purchased by the DBE for the work on the contract and equipment leased by the DBE will be credited toward DBE participation. Supplies and equipment the DBE subcontractor purchases or leases from the prime contractor or its affiliate will not be credited toward DBE participation.

The contractor bears the responsibility to determine whether the DBE possesses the proper contractor's license(s) to perform the work.

The Department's certification is not a representation of a DBE's qualifications and/or abilities. The contractor bears all risks that the DBE may not be able to perform its work for any reason.

A DBE may participate as a prime contractor, subcontractor, joint venture partner with either a prime contractor or a subcontractor, or as a vendor of materials or supplies. A DBE joint venture partner shall be responsible for a clearly defined portion of the work to be performed, in addition to meeting the requirements for ownership and control.

The dollar amount of work to be accomplished by DBEs, including partial amount of a lump sum or other similar item, shall be on the basis of subcontract, purchase order, hourly rate, rate per ton, etc., as agreed to between parties.

With the exception of bond premiums, all work must be attributed to specific bid items. Where work applies to several items, the DBE contracting arrangement must specify unit price and amount attributable to each bid item. DBE credit for any individual item of work performed by the DBE shall be the lesser of the amount to be paid to the DBE or the prime contractor's bid price. If the amount bid by the DBE on any item exceeds the prime contractor's bid amount, the prime contractor may not obtain credit by attributing the excess to other items.

Where more than one DBE is engaged to perform parts of an item (for example, supply and installation), the total amount payable to the DBEs will not be considered in excess of the prime contractor's bid amount for that item.

Bond premiums may be stated separately, so long as the arrangement between the prime contractor and the DBE provides for separate payment not to exceed the price charged by the bonding company.

DBE credit may be obtained only for specific work done for the project, supply of equipment specifically for physical work on the project, or supply of materials to be incorporated in the work. DBE credit will not be allowed for costs such as overhead items, capital expenditures (for example, purchase of equipment), and office items.

If a DBE performs part of an item (for example, installation of materials purchased by a Non-DBE), the DBE credit shall not exceed the lesser of (1) the DBE's contract or (2) the prime contractor's bid for the item, less a reasonable deduction for the portion performed by the Non-DBE.

When a DBE performs as a partner in a joint venture, only that portion of the total dollar value of the contract which is clearly and distinctly performed by the DBE's own forces can be credited.

The contractor may credit second-tier subcontracts issued to DBEs by non-DBE subcontractors. Any second-tier subcontract to a DBE must meet the requirements of a first-tier DBE subcontract.

A prime contractor may credit the entire amount of that portion of a construction contract that is performed by the DBE's own forces. The cost of supplies and materials obtained by the DBE for the work of the contract can be included so long as that cost is reasonable. Leased equipment may also be included. No credit is permitted for supplies purchased or equipment leased from the prime contractor or its affiliate(s).

When a DBE subcontracts a part of the work of its contract to another firm, the value of the subcontract may be credited towards DBE participation only if the DBE's subcontractor is itself a DBE and performs the work with its own forces. Work that a DBE subcontracts to a non-DBE firm does not count towards DBE participation.

A prime contractor may credit the entire amount of fees or commissions charged by a DBE firm for providing a bona fide service, such as professional, technical, consultant, or managerial services, or for providing bonds or insurance specifically required for the performance of a USDOT-assisted contract, provided the fees are reasonable and not excessive as compared with fees customarily allowed for similar services.

**13.02 Effect of Loss of DBE Eligibility:**

If a DBE is deemed ineligible (decertified) or suspended by the Department in accordance with 49 CFR 26.87 and 26.88, the DBE may not be considered to count toward DBE participation on a new contract, but may be considered to count toward DBE participation under a subcontract that was executed before the DBE suspension or decertification is effective.

When a DBE firm or a DBE prime contractor loses its DBE eligibility and a subcontract or contract has not been executed before a decertification notice is issued to the DBE firm by its certifying agency, the ineligible firm does not count toward DBE participation. When a subcontract is executed with the DBE firm before the Department notified the firm of its ineligibility, the contractor may continue to receive DBE participation credit for the firm's work on the contract.

**13.03 Notifying the Contractor of DBE Certification Status**

Each DBE contract of any tier shall require any DBE subcontractor or supplier that is either decertified or certified during the term of the contract to immediately notify the contractor and all parties to the DBE contract in writing, with the date of decertification or certification. The contractor shall require that this provision be incorporated in any contract of any tier in which a DBE is a participant.

**13.04 Commercially Useful Function:**

A prime contractor can credit expenditures to a DBE subcontractor only if the DBE performs a commercially useful function (CUF) on the contract.

A DBE performs a CUF when it is responsible for execution of the work of a contract and is carrying out its responsibilities by actually performing, managing, and supervising the work involved. To perform a commercially useful function, the DBE must also be responsible, with respect to materials and supplies on the contract, for negotiating price, determining quality and quantity, ordering the material, and installing (where applicable) and paying for the material itself that it uses on the project. To determine whether a DBE is performing a commercially useful function, the Department will evaluate the amount of work subcontracted, industry practices, whether the amount the firm is to be paid under the contract is commensurate with the work it is actually performing and the DBE credit claimed for its performance of the work, and other relevant factors.

A DBE will not be considered to perform a commercially useful function if its role is limited to that of an extra participant in a transaction, contract, or project through which funds are passed in order to obtain the appearance of DBE participation. In determining whether a DBE is such an extra participant, the Department will examine similar transactions, particularly those in which DBEs do not participate.

If a DBE does not perform or exercise responsibility for at least 30 percent of the total cost of its contract with its own work force, or if the DBE subcontracts a greater portion of the work of a contract than would be expected on the basis of normal industry practice for the type of work involved, the Department will presume that the DBE is not performing a commercially useful function.

When a DBE is presumed not to be performing a commercially useful function as provided above, the DBE may present evidence to rebut this presumption. The Department will determine if the firm is performing a CUF given the type of work involved and normal industry practices.

The Department will notify the contractor, in writing, if it determines that the contractor's DBE subcontractor is not performing a CUF. The contractor will be notified within seven calendar days of the Department's decision.

Decisions on CUF may be appealed to the Chief Procurement Officer (CPO). The appeal must be in writing and personally delivered or sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the CPO. The appeal must be received by the CPO no later than seven calendar days after the decision of BECO. BECO's decision remains in effect unless and until the CPO reverses or modifies BECO's decision. The CPO will promptly consider any appeals under this subsection and notify the contractor of the CPO's findings and decisions. Decisions on CUF matters are not appealable to USDOT.

The Department will conduct project site visits on the contract to confirm that DBEs are performing a CUF. The contractor shall cooperate during the site visits and the Department's staff will make every effort not to disrupt work on the project.

**13.05 Trucking:**

The Department will use the following factors in determining whether a DBE trucking company is performing a commercially useful function. The DBE must be responsible for the management and supervision of the entire trucking operation for which it is responsible on a particular contract

The DBE must itself own and operate at least one fully licensed, insured, and operational truck used on the contract on every day that credit is to be given for trucking.

The contractor will receive credit for the total value of transportation services provided by the DBE using trucks it owns, insures and operates, and using drivers it employs.

The DBE may lease trucks from another DBE firm, including an owner-operator who is certified as a DBE. The DBE who leases trucks from another DBE receives credit for the total value of the transportation services.

The DBE may also lease trucks from a non-DBE firm, including an owner-operator. The DBE who leases trucks with drivers from a non-DBE is entitled to credit for the total value of the transportation services

provided by non-DBE leased trucks with drivers not to exceed the value of transportation services on the contract provided by DBE-owned trucks or leased trucks with DBE employee drivers. Additional participation by non-DBE owned trucks with drivers receives credit only for the fee or commission paid to the DBE as a result of the lease agreement.

Example: DBE Firm X uses two of its own trucks on contract. It leases two trucks from DBE Firm Y and six trucks from non-DBE firm Z. DBE credit would be awarded for the total value of transportation services provided by Firm X and Firm Y, and may also be awarded for the total value of transportation services provided by four of the six trucks provided by Firm Z. In all, full credit would be allowed for the participation of eight trucks. DBE credit could be awarded only for the fees or commissions pertaining to the remaining trucks Firm X receives as a result of the lease with Firm Z.

The DBE may lease trucks without drivers from a non-DBE truck leasing company. If the DBE leases trucks from a non-DBE leasing company and uses its own employees as drivers, it is entitled to credit for the total value of these hauling services.

Example: DBE Firm X uses two of its own trucks on a contract. It leases three additional trucks from non-DBE Firm Z. Firm X uses its own employees to drive the trucks leased from Firm Z. DBE credit would be awarded for the total value of the transportation services provided by all five trucks.

For purposes of this section, a lease must indicate that the DBE has exclusive use of and control over the truck. This does not preclude the leased truck from working for others during the term of the lease with the consent of the DBE, so long as the lease gives the DBE absolute priority for use of the leased truck. Leased trucks must display the name and identification number of the DBE. DBE participation will be allowed only for those lease costs related to the time each truck is devoted to the project.

DBE credit for supplying paving grade asphalt and other asphalt products will only be permitted for standard industry hauling costs, and only if the DBE is owner or lessee of the equipment and trucks. Leases for trucks must be long term (extending for a fixed time period and not related to time for contract performance) and must include all attendant responsibilities such as insurance, titling, hazardous waste requirements, and payment of drivers.

### **13.06 Materials and Supplies:**

The Department will credit expenditures with DBEs for material and supplies as follows. If the materials or supplies are obtained from a DBE manufacturer, 100 percent of the cost of the materials or supplies is credited. A manufacturer is defined as a firm that operates or maintains a factory or establishment that produces, on the premises, the materials, supplies, articles, or equipment required under the contract, and of the general character described by the specifications.

If the materials or supplies are purchased from a DBE regular dealer, 60 percent of the cost of the materials or supplies is credited. A DBE regular dealer is defined as a firm that owns, operates, or maintains a store or warehouse or other establishment in which the materials, supplies, articles, or equipment of the general character described by the specifications and required under the contract are bought, kept in stock, and regularly sold or leased to the public in the usual course of business. To be a regular dealer, the firm must be an established, regular business that engages, as its principal business and under its own name, in the purchase and sale or lease of the products in question. A firm may be a

regular dealer in such bulk items as petroleum products, steel, cement, stone or asphalt without owning, operating, or maintaining a place of business, as provided above, if the person both owns and operates distribution equipment for the products. Any supplementing of regular dealers' own distribution equipment shall be by a long-term lease agreement, and not on an ad-hoc or contract-by-contract basis. Packagers, brokers, manufacturers' representatives, or other persons who arrange or expedite transactions are not regular dealers within the meaning of this paragraph and the paragraph above.

With respect to materials or supplies purchased from a DBE which is neither a manufacturer nor a regular dealer, the Department will credit the entire amount of the fees or commissions charged by the DBE for assistance in the procurement of the materials and supplies, or fees or transportation charges for the delivery of materials or supplies required on a job site, toward DBE goals, provided the fees are determined to be reasonable and not excessive as compared with fees customarily allowed for similar services. The cost of the materials and supplies themselves may not be counted toward the DBE participation.

The Department will credit expenditures with DBEs for material and supplies (e.g. whether a firm is acting as a regular dealer or a transaction expediter) towards the DBE participation on a contract-by-contract basis. The fact that a DBE firm qualifies under a classification (manufacturer, regular dealer or supplier) for one contract does not mean it will qualify for the same classification on another contract.

#### **14.0 Joint Checks:**

##### **14.01 Requirements:**

A DBE subcontractor and a material supplier (or equipment supplier) may request permission for the use of joint checks for payments from the prime contractor to the DBE subcontractor and the supplier. Joint checks may be issued only if all the conditions in this subsection are met.

1. The DBE subcontractor must be independent from the prime contractor and the supplier, and must perform a commercially useful function. The DBE subcontractor must be responsible for negotiating the price of the material, determining quality and quantity, ordering the materials, installing (where applicable), and paying for the material. The DBE subcontractor may not be utilized as an extra participant in a transaction, contract, or project in order to obtain the appearance of DBE participation.
2. The use of joint checks will be allowed only if the prime contractor, DBE subcontractor, and material supplier establish that the use of joint checks in similar transactions is a commonly recognized business practice in the industry, particularly with respect to similar transactions in which DBE's do not participate.
3. A material or supply contract may not bear an excessive ratio relative to the DBE subcontractor's normal capacity.
4. There may not be any exclusive arrangement between one prime and one DBE in the use of joint checks that may bring into question whether the DBE is independent of the prime contractor.

5. Any arrangement for joint checks must be in writing, and for a specific term (for example, one year, or a specified number of months) that does not exceed a reasonable time to establish a suitable credit line with the supplier.
6. The prime contractor may act solely as the payer of the joint check, and may not have responsibility for establishing the terms of the agreement between the DBE subcontractor and the supplier.
7. The DBE must be responsible for receiving the check from the prime contractor and delivering the check to the supplier.
8. The prime contractor cannot require the DBE subcontractor to use a specific supplier, and the prime contractor may not participate in the negotiation of unit prices between the DBE subcontractor and the supplier.

**14.02 Procedure and Compliance:**

1. The Business Engagement and Compliance Office must approve the agreement for the use of joint checks in writing before any joint checks are issued. The prime contractor shall submit a DBE joint check request form, available from the BECO website, along with the joint check agreement, to BECO through email within seven calendar days from the time the subcontract is executed.
2. After obtaining authorization for the use of joint checks, the prime contractor, the DBE, and the supplier must retain documentation to allow for efficient monitoring of the agreement.
3. Copies of canceled checks must be submitted with the payment information for the period in which the joint check was issued. Certificates of payment must indicate whether or not joint checks were used.
4. Any failure to comply will be considered by the Department to be a material breach of this contract and will subject the prime contractor, DBE, and supplier to contract remedies and, in the case of serious violations, a potential for termination of the contract, reduction or loss of prequalification, debarment, or other remedies which may prevent future participation by the offending party.

**15.0 Certification of Final DBE Payments:**

DBE participation on the contract is measured by actual payments made to the DBEs. The contractor shall submit the "Certification of Final DBE Payments" form for each DBE firm working on the contract. This form shall be signed by the contractor and the relevant DBE, and submitted to the Engineer no later than 30 days after the DBE completes its work.

The contractor will not be released from the obligations of the contract until the "Certification of Final DBE Payments" forms are received and deemed acceptable by the Engineer and BECO.

**16.0 False, Fraudulent, or Dishonest Conduct:**



In addition to any other remedies or actions, the Department will bring to the attention of the US Department of Transportation any appearance of false, fraudulent, or dishonest conduct in connection with the DBE program, so that USDOT can take steps such as referral to the Department of Justice for criminal prosecution, referral to the USDOT Inspector General for possible initiation of suspension and debarment proceedings against the offending parties or application of "Program Fraud and Civil Penalties" rules provided in 49 CFR Part 31.

**9. CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, INELIGIBILITY AND VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION**

This provision is applicable to all Federal-aid construction contracts, design-build contracts, subcontracts, lower-tier subcontracts, purchase orders, lease agreements, consultant contracts or any other covered transaction requiring FHWA approval or that is estimated to cost \$25,000 or more – as defined in 2 CFR Parts 180 and 1200.

1. Instructions for Certification – First Tier Participants:

- a. By signing and submitting this proposal, the prospective first tier participant is providing the certification set out below.
- b. The inability of a person to provide the certification set out below will not necessarily result in denial of participation in this covered transaction. The prospective first tier participant shall submit an explanation of why it cannot provide the certification set out below. The certification or explanation will be considered in connection with the department or agency's determination whether to enter into this transaction. However, failure of the prospective first tier participant to furnish a certification or an explanation shall disqualify such a person from participation in this transaction.
- c. The certification in this clause is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when the contracting agency determined to enter into this transaction. If it is later determined that the prospective participant knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the contracting agency may terminate this transaction for cause of default.
- d. The prospective first tier participant shall provide immediate written notice to the contracting agency to whom this proposal is submitted if any time the prospective first tier participant learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.
- e. The terms "covered transaction," "debarred," "suspended," "ineligible," "participant," "person," "principal," and "voluntarily excluded," as used in this clause, are defined in 2 CFR Parts 180 and 1200. "First Tier Covered Transactions" refers to any covered transaction between a grantee or subgrantee of Federal funds and a participant (such as the prime or general contract). "Lower Tier Covered Transactions" refers to any covered transaction under a First Tier Covered Transaction (such as subcontracts). "First Tier Participant" refers to the participant who has entered into a covered transaction with a grantee or subgrantee of Federal funds (such as the prime or general contractor).

“Lower Tier Participant” refers any participant who has entered into a covered transaction with a First Tier Participant or other Lower Tier Participants (such as subcontractors and suppliers).

- f. The prospective first tier participant agrees by submitting this proposal that, should the proposed covered transaction be entered into, it shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by the department or agency entering into this transaction.
  - g. The prospective first tier participant further agrees by submitting this proposal that it will include the clause titled "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion-Lower Tier Covered Transactions," provided by the department or contracting agency, entering into this covered transaction, without modification, in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions exceeding the \$25,000 threshold.
  - h. A participant in a covered transaction may rely upon a certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that is not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction, unless it knows that the certification is erroneous. A participant is responsible for ensuring that its principals are not suspended, debarred, or otherwise ineligible to participate in covered transactions. To verify the eligibility of its principals, as well as the eligibility of any lower tier prospective participants, each participant may, but is not required to, check the Excluded Parties List System website (<https://www.epls.gov/>), which is compiled by the General Services Administration.
  - i. Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require the establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the certification required by this clause. The knowledge and information of the prospective participant is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.
  - j. Except for transactions authorized under paragraph (f) of these instructions, if a participant in a covered transaction knowingly enters into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency may terminate this transaction for cause or default.
2. Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion – First Tier Participants:
- a. The prospective first tier participant certifies to the best of its knowledge and belief, that it and its principals:

- (1) Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participating in covered transactions by any Federal department or agency;
  - (2) Have not within a three-year period preceding this proposal been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;
  - (3) Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (a)(2) of this certification; and
  - (4) Have not within a three-year period preceding this application/proposal had one or more public transactions (Federal, State or local) terminated for cause or default.
- b. Where the prospective participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.
3. Instructions for Certification - Lower Tier Participants:
- (Applicable to all subcontracts, purchase orders and other lower tier transactions requiring prior FHWA approval or estimated to cost \$25,000 or more - 2 CFR Parts 180 and 1200)
- a. By signing and submitting this proposal, the prospective lower tier is providing the certification set out below.
  - b. The certification in this clause is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was entered into. If it is later determined that the prospective lower tier participant knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department, or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.
  - c. The prospective lower tier participant shall provide immediate written notice to the person to which this proposal is submitted if at any time the prospective lower tier participant learns that its certification was erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.
  - d. The terms "covered transaction," "debarred," "suspended," "ineligible," "participant," "person," "principal," and "voluntarily excluded," as used in this clause, are defined in 2 CFR Parts 180 and 1200. You may contact the person to which this proposal is submitted for assistance in obtaining a copy of those regulations. "First Tier Covered Transactions" refers to any covered transaction between a grantee or subgrantee of

Federal funds and a participant (such as the prime or general contract). "Lower Tier Covered Transactions" refers to any covered transaction under a First Tier Covered Transaction (such as subcontracts). "First Tier Participant" refers to the participant who has entered into a covered transaction with a grantee or subgrantee of Federal funds (such as the prime or general contractor). "Lower Tier Participant" refers any participant who has entered into a covered transaction with a First Tier Participant or other Lower Tier Participants (such as subcontractors and suppliers).

- e. The prospective lower tier participant agrees by submitting this proposal that, should the proposed covered transaction be entered into, it shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by the department or agency with which this transaction originated.
  - f. The prospective lower tier participant further agrees by submitting this proposal that it will include this clause titled "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion-Lower Tier Covered Transaction," without modification, in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions exceeding the \$25,000 threshold.
  - g. A participant in a covered transaction may rely upon a certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that is not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction, unless it knows that the certification is erroneous. A participant is responsible for ensuring that its principals are not suspended, debarred, or otherwise ineligible to participate in covered transactions. To verify the eligibility of its principals, as well as the eligibility of any lower tier prospective participants, each participant may, but is not required to, check the Excluded Parties List System website (<https://www.epls.gov/>), which is compiled by the General Services Administration.
  - h. Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the certification required by this clause. The knowledge and information of participant is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.
  - i. Except for transactions authorized under paragraph e of these instructions, if a participant in a covered transaction knowingly enters into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.
4. Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion--Lower Tier Participants:

- a. The prospective lower tier participant certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participating in covered transactions by any Federal department or agency.
- b. Where the prospective lower tier participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

**10. CERTIFICATION REGARDING USE OF CONTRACT FUNDS FOR LOBBYING**

This provision is applicable to all Federal-aid construction contracts and to all related subcontracts which exceed \$100,000 (49 CFR 20).

1. The prospective participant certifies, by signing and submitting this bid or proposal, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:
  - a. No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any Federal agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
  - b. If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any Federal agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.
2. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by 31 U.S.C. 1352. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.
  - a. The prospective participant also agrees by submitting its bid or proposal that the participant shall require that the language of this certification be included in all lower tier subcontracts, which exceed \$100,000 and that all such recipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.