

Pinellas County SBE Program

Eligibility

Pinellas County's Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program: The SBE Program includes a sheltered market created for qualified vendors that allows small businesses to place bids for County purchases from \$5,000 up to \$100,000. In addition, goals will be placed on procurement opportunities for Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) and Consultants' Competitive Negotiation Act (CCNA) contracts. The program *is non-specific to gender or race* and benefits all small businesses principally located in the geographical boundaries identified in eligibility below. The business must have been in business for at least six months. To be eligible for certification, the Small Business must also meet the following criteria.

- 1) The business must be located in Pinellas, Hillsborough, Pasco, or Manatee counties. A current tax receipt or Sunbiz Articles of Incorporation from at least one of Pinellas County's 24 municipalities or, Hillsborough, Pasco, or Manatee counties (A post office box is not acceptable as a business address).
- 2) The business must serve a commercially useful function.
- 3) The number of employees averaged over the previous three (3) years must not exceed 50 full-time employees.
- 4) Annual Sales does not exceed the maximum 3-year average **gross** revenues of three (3) million dollars or less for businesses providing selective goods and services or **gross revenues** not exceeding eight (8) million dollars for construction service providers.
- 5) Participate in business development education and consultation to include workshops such as – Doing Business with Pinellas County, SBE Contract Compliance Software, Respond to Quotations, Pricing your Service, etc.

To be considered, you must complete **BOTH** the SBE Program application and the Pinellas County procurement vendor registration application. Effective May 7, 2019

Questions: Please email Dr. Cynthia Johnson, Senior Manager of Business Assistance at Businesshelp@pinellascounty.org or phone (727) 453-7200.

SBE Certification Process

To qualify as a certified SBE, a company must be an independently owned, operated and controlled business that is not dominant in its field of operation and is a provider of supplies, services or construction. The business must have been in operation for at least **six months** and must serve a commercially useful function. All SBE applicants must complete Pinellas County's procurement vendor registration and the SBE application located at <https://pinellascounty.sbecompliance.com/>The vendor number will be used for the SBE certification verification. The SBDC Director, or designee, shall verify the business qualifies as an SBE. All certifications are effective for a period of **three years** from the date of notification of certification or following completion of the re-certification procedure. If during the certification period, the SBE experiences changes in ownership, sales volume, number of employees, control, or location, it is the company's responsibility to report such changes to the SBE department. Failure to report, change policy shall constitute just cause to deny certification and/or re-certification for a period of one year.

Applications for certification must be accompanied by the following:

- 1) Vendor Registration at www.onvia.com/demandstar by selecting the FREE or paid subscription options to download solicitations and receive bid notifications.
- 2) The SBE Program will recognize certification by local (Pinellas County's 24 municipalities, Hillsborough, Pasco, Manatee, and the State of Florida's Office of Supplier Diversity (OSD) subject to Pinellas County's other eligibility criteria.
- 3) Existing certified SBEs and disadvantaged businesses will remain certified until their current certifications expire. At such time these enterprises must be re-certified pursuant to this policy.
- 4) Additional information includes:
 - a. A copy of the business certification (provided by one of the approved government entities) must be provided, if applicable.
 - b. Verification that the business is in existence and operational at least six months i.e. SunBiz.org, Articles of incorporation and/or by-laws.
 - c. Business tax license, if applicable.
 - d. Any other pertinent documentation requested by the SBE Office to properly evaluate the application.
- 5) Participation in business development education and consultation to include workshop such as – Doing Business with Pinellas County, SBE Contract Compliance Software, Respond to Quotations, Pricing Your Service, etc.
 - Less than 4 years & up to 3 employees - 6 hours of professional development
 - Less than 4 years & 3 or more employees - 4 hours of business development services (inclusive of training and consulting)
 - 4 years or more - One business development consultation - purpose to assess match of business delivery and county need.
- 6) Any application that does not meet the requirements for filing will be rejected. The application review process may include an on-site inspection and educational requirements are a onetime requirement.

The SBE office will maintain a current directory of certified SBEs. This directory will be available to all bidders and prospective contractors to assist them in their efforts. For more information and access to the directory visit <https://pinellascounty.sbecompliance.com/>

