



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Spring 2020

Spring has arrived and while many of life's moments are being put on hold in order to protect ourselves and our loved ones from COVID-19, I want you to know that all of us at OMWBE share in a continued commitment to providing services to minority, women, and veteran owned businesses. Even though our office is temporarily closed to the public, staff are working remotely and available via email at

technicalassistance@omwbe.wa.gov and by phone at 360-664-9750.

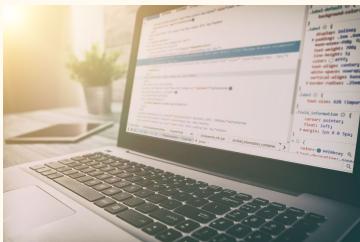


The coronavirus pandemic is affecting small businesses in a variety of ways. Things are changing fast during the COVID-19 outbreak and businesses are being forced to adapt. Minority and women owned business are being hit even harder and it is important to support them now, more than ever.

As OMWBE receives information and notices on services available to small businesses during this unprecedented time, we will continue to email our certified firms as well as post information on social media and our [website](#). Speaking of social media--are we friends yet--like and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) to stay current and connected!

OMWBE has accomplished a great deal over the last few months and I am proud to share this update with you.

--Lisa



COVID-19 RESOURCES

We understand your business may be facing economic impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. Below are links to several helpful resources.

[COVID-19 Business Resources](#)

[Small Business Resiliency Assistance](#)

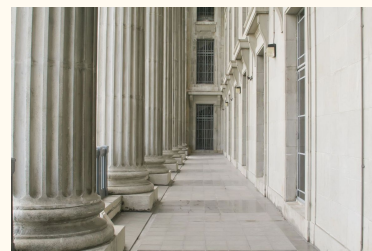
[Greater Seattle Business Association](#)

[Washington State Coronavirus Response Portal](#)

[Washington State Department of Commerce](#)

2020 LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP

The [2020 Legislative Session](#) was an important year for equity. 2019 ushered in the most [diverse legislative body](#) in state history and we are encouraged by the focus this Legislature has brought to equity issues, including in public contracting and procurement.



Bills that Passed:

HB 1783 Office of Equity was passed creating the Washington State Office of Equity. The Office will focus on coordination of the many efforts for diversity, equity, and inclusion at our state agencies, and work in partnership with the ethnic

commissions already in existence.

HB 1521 Government Contracting Transparency requires that agencies conduct an analysis prior to deciding whether to contract outside state government to complete work that has historically been conducted by state employees. The analysis does not apply to contracts with WSDOT or those contracts valued at less than \$20K and more than \$500K.

SB 5457 Naming of Subcontractors focuses on bid shopping that can occur through the naming of subcontractors when prime contractors bid on a public contract.

In addition to a successful session, OMWBE welcomed a new member to the legislative team in January. Joanna Eide is our new Assistant Director of Legislative Affairs. Joanna will also serve as the Tribal Liaison and Small Business Liaison for the agency. Before joining our team, Joanna was the Legislative Director at the Department of Natural Resources, where she developed, managed, and oversaw all legislative affairs for the agency. Prior to DNR, she was the Policy and Rules Coordinator and Tribal Liaison at the Liquor and Cannabis Board. Joanna's years of legislative, tribal affairs, policy, and regulatory experience will serve our agency well. Welcome to the team, Joanna!



Joanna Eide



Call us @ 360-664-9750

WE'RE HERE FOR YOU!

The certification team continues to process applications as efficiently as possible while delivering outstanding customer service. The team is available for all your certification questions and is returning calls within 24 hours or less. You can also email us anytime at

technicalassistance@omwbe.wa.gov. Additionally, we've compiled a list of [FAQs](#) regarding certification amidst COVID-19 that may be helpful to you.

Many of you responded to the survey we sent out following certification - we are so grateful for your participation. Your input helps us improve processes and our service to you. We also love reading about how our Certification team has helped you and your business.

Check out some of the notes of appreciation we have received...



I called with a question once or twice and I was impressed with how kind, responsive, and helpful the person was.

You are doing a great job with a user friendly and self-explanatory application process. The support your analysts are providing is helping small business a lot in attaining success.

I'm so impressed with your organization. I was just telling a friend that if all government agencies were run so well, we'd be in great shape. Thank you for your commitment to service that you rarely find in government agencies.

OUTREACH HAS GONE VIRTUAL

Like the rest of Washington, we are adhering to the Governor's [Stay Home, Stay Healthy Order](#) during the COVID-19 outbreak. As such, all in person outreach events are on hold for the time being. We will be back conducting events once the quarantine lifts, in the meantime we are conducting virtual workshops on certification and using our [Directory of Certified Firms](#) for variety of different groups including state agencies, contractors, non-profits, and community groups. If you or your organization is interested scheduling a virtual workshop, please contact Caleb McInville at calebm@omwbe.wa.gov, or at 360-664-9751.



Keep an eye out on our [website](#) for more developments, and links to coronavirus resources.



LINKED DEPOSIT LOAN RATE ADJUSTMENT

The Linked Deposit program can save your business money, and help you reduce your expenses on existing loans. With the reduction in interest rates on deposits, the Linked Deposit Loan Program cannot provide the full 2% interest rate reduction it once did. However, the program can still save your business money,

and help you limit your expenses on existing loans. Our funding limit is \$175 million in loans, so there is room left for many businesses to take advantage of the savings.

To learn more about the [Linked Deposit](#) loan program or to find a participating financial institution, contact Caleb McInville at CalebM@omwbe.wa.gov.

BUSINESS DIVERSITY SUBCABINET IMPLEMENTS NEW DATA COLLECTION SYSTEM AND WELCOMES NEW TEAM MEMBER



OMWBE has begun to implement the electronic data collection system (the “Washington State Business Diversity Management System”) recommended in the [2019 Statewide Disparity Study](#). This data collection system will measure and track progress towards inclusion of diverse businesses certified by the Office of Minority and Women’s Business Enterprises and Department of Veterans Affairs. As described in the study, this system is the foundation for increasing opportunities for diverse businesses in Washington.

We are in the phase of planning now, which includes the onboarding of agencies and educational institutions into the system. We plan to kick the project off in early July and begin onboarding agencies over the following 12 months.



Prabh Kaur

We are pleased to welcome Prabhjot "Prabh" Kaur to the OMWBE team. Prabh's role is to manage the implementation of the Washington State Business Diversity Management System. Prabhjot comes to us from WSDOT, where she was a Lead IT Project Manager. Prabh has managed many complex IT projects using her PMP and PMI-ACP certifications, Lean Six Sigma Certified Green Belt, and Certificate in Project Management from University of Washington. She started her career as a developer, so she has good knowledge and understanding of technical issues related to large scale IT projects and has spent the last ten years managing enterprise level IT projects.

SUPPLIER DIVERSITY INCLUSION

PLANNING UNDERWAY

Each year state agencies and colleges report on the amount of money they spend with certified firms. State agencies also submit plans for how they will increase that amount of money in the next year. OMWBE received all but one of the 2020 OMWBE Inclusion Plans with an 84% on-time submission rate!



Supplier Diversity Program staff have met with a third of reporting agencies for annual inclusion planning with the remaining agency meetings taking place soon. These inclusion planning meetings have sparked new ideas and partnership opportunities. In this time of COVID-19, we are very grateful that we are able to move to virtual meetings and experience the level of engagement we have from agencies, truly making inclusion planning a priority in this unprecedented time.

We've developed a [Supplier Diversity FAQ](#) for State Agencies & Higher Education Institutions containing useful supplier diversity information in one handy document, making it easier and more clear for agencies and their customers.

SPRING HAPPENINGS



Asian-Pacific Heritage Month

May 1-30

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month celebrates the culture, traditions, and history of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States.

National Small Business Week

May 16-22

National Small Business Week recognizes the critical contributions of America's entrepreneurs and small business owners.

Memorial Day

May 25 (OMWBE closed)

LGBTQ Pride Month

June 1-30

First Day of Summer

June 20



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