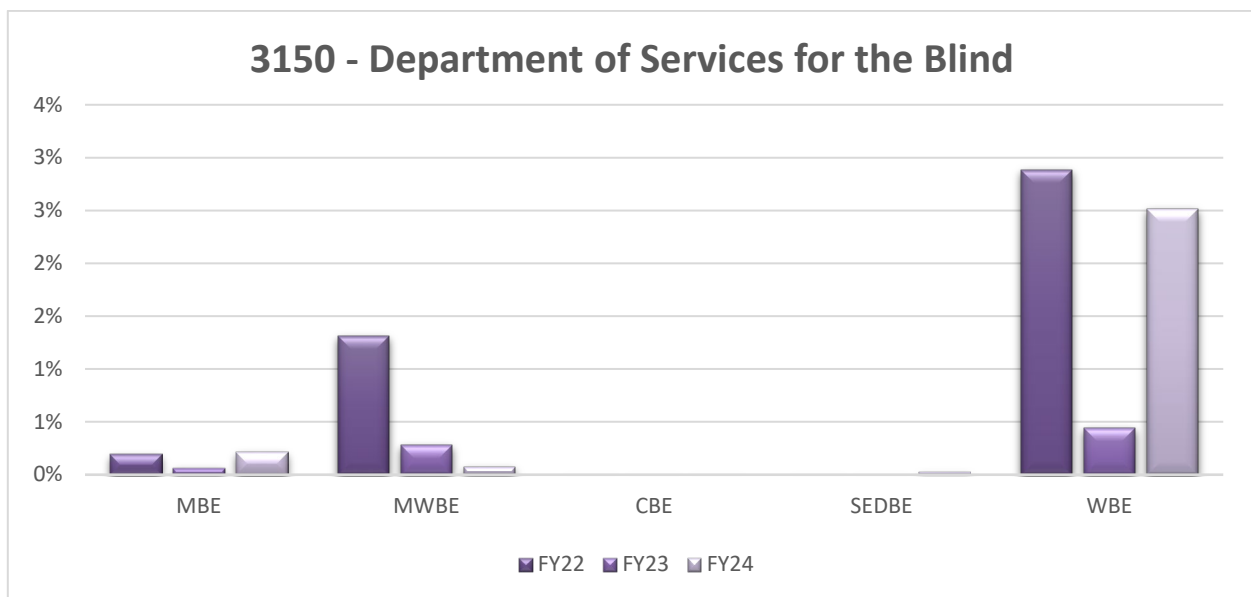




FY25 Business Diversity Spending Goal Plan – Department of Services for the Blind

[Governor's Supplier Diversity Subcabinet approved best practices](#)

(Agency graph showing spend comparison from FY23 and FY24)



FY 2023 – No spending goal established

FY 2023 – 0.77

FY24 Spending Goal – 12.96%

FY24 Actual Spend – 2.51%

FY25 Spending Goal: 2.45%

1. Summary Statement:

The Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) is committed to supporting Executive Order 22-01 and promoting business diversity. As a small agency providing services to Washingtonians that are Blind, DeafBlind or Low Vision, the majority of DSB contracts and

purchases are for client services that are being provided by businesses that are minority owned and/or owned by individuals with a significant disability that do not contribute to achieving EO 22-01. It is important to note that our continued support for this segment of the State's contractor base is critical to achieving the desired outcomes for those we serve. As for certified businesses, DSB continues to prioritize and select certified businesses for non-participant contracts by utilizing the State contracts and ensuring certified providers are given a preference when selecting a vendor. Both the fiscal and contracting team continue to provide discussion and training regarding utilization of small, minority and veteran owned businesses to staff members responsible for purchasing. This emphasis is placed on both agency and client service purchases.

2. Steps your agency has completed to prepare for forecasting and steps remaining:

DSB Operations and Contract Team regularly meet to determine future agency procurement needs.

The Contract Team routinely reviews non-client service purchases to identify available businesses to meet the anticipated needs for the next 3-6 months. This process has recently resulted in acquiring statewide consulting contractors for agency revision, brand development for our new Birth-13 program and agency web redesign. DSB's priority is to utilize certified businesses that have an existing Statewide contract as applicable.

The contract team is developing a tool for identifying certified businesses for routine purchases and continues to discuss diversity contracting during the quarterly purchasing group meetings and leadership meetings.

DSB has adopted the Supplier Diversity Forecasted Needs Report. This report will be managed by the Contract Team and shall support contracting planning.

3. How are supplier diversity efforts managed within your agency:

The DSB Contract Team continually educates staff in the process for purchasing from companies that are either a Small-, Veteran-, Women-, Minority- and/or Disability-owned business. This includes accessing DES statewide contracts, OMWBE Certification Directory or WEBS for eligible purchases.

The contract team is developing a certified business resource list for the agency to use for frequent purchases. Currently the focus has been on office and janitorial supplies.

DSB will continue to post competitive bids on OMWBE and WEBS. RFPs will include scoring that provides additional points to certified business.

Information regarding certification with OMWBE, WEBS or WDVA will be included in our contractor application pack and within any competitive bids. New vendors and contractors will be encouraged to certify if applicable. DSB continues to track client service contractors that self-report as a Small-, Veteran-, Women-, Minority- and/or Disability-owned business. Approximately half of our agency client service contractors identify as one or more of these

categories.

4. Is your agency currently using the Outreach Module in Access Equity for marketing and connecting with Diverse Businesses?

As the Outreach Module only targets non-client service purchases which is much of our agency spend, we haven't utilized the OWMBE site as of yet. We anticipate doing so with future non-client service RFPs, specifically for payroll services for VR internships.

5. Are you using the Contract Compliance module in Access Equity to report your contract & purchase orders that include subcontractors (including statewide contracts)?

We haven't yet. But, as we've identified our business consulting company as having subcontractors, the Contract Team will begin reporting those details.

6. How does your agency track efforts to notify businesses about purchasing and opportunities to bid on contracts?

Annually, our small agency posts very few competitive bids so a formalized process hasn't been developed. In the case of a recent RFP for a custom food trailer, a tracking sheet was used to tally each business that was emailed the bid.

7. Your agency plan according to EO 22-01 should already be implemented. How has your plan aided in your efforts to increase your agency plan from last year?

While our agency didn't meet the 12.9% spending goal, we did triple our spend from 2023. Our efforts to keep the conversation regarding making purchases from small and diverse business continues. Even when the purchases don't "count" as they support client services, we still aim to utilize these types of companies. Our plan to continually highlight these types of companies at purchasing meetings and in agency wide informative emails helps establish a habit of seeking out certified companies. For example, our Business Relations Team continually strives to onboard vendors and contractors for staff and customer training that meet the small and diverse business criteria.

8. Did your agency's spend decrease for FY24? If so, what was the reason(s)? What perceived barriers did you face?

While DSB's small-minority and women owned businesses spend tripled from 2023, there are limitations in our ability to increase this number. As vocational rehabilitation agency serving customers that are Blind, DeafBlind and Low Vision, most of DSB's expenditures are on client-based. Until OMWBE can track our client-based disbursements, DSB limited to agency-specific purchases such as office supplies and janitorial services. Furthermore, as an agency serving Blind, DeafBlind and Low Vision customers, we often contract with providers with shared experience. Acknowledging the importance of utilizing contractors with

disability is a topic DSB and its stakeholders cares deeply about and will continually strive to support. Even if it isn't tracked at the state level.

9. What new efforts are you going to implement to try to increase your spending with small-minority and women owned businesses?

DSB Operations and Contract Team will continue educating staff on the state's requirements for supporting EO 22-01 and purchasing from small-minority and women owned businesses.

The Contract Team will develop a plan to provide further conversation via regional meetings and quarterly emails. Furthermore, the Contract Team will continue to introduce certified companies that align with agency purchases as applicable. Additionally, agency leadership will be solicited to forecast purchasing needs in which certified vendors may be utilized.

DSB will remain committed to purchasing from small-minority, women, veteran and individual with disability owned businesses as it's our agency's to help Washingtonians to thrive and flourish.