

Abra Water Company Inc policy is to eliminate discrimination, promote diversity, and advance equity across Abra Water Companies agreements; to strengthen our ability to create opportunities for the improvement of companies, individuals and contractors that have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality. Abra Water Company encourages all Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) to submit bids.

## Definition of a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise

DBEs are for-profit small business concerns where socially and economically disadvantaged individuals own at least a 51% interest and also control management and daily business operations.

African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Asian-Pacific and Subcontinent Asian Americans, and women are presumed to be socially and economically disadvantaged. Other individuals can also qualify as socially and economically disadvantaged on a case-by-case basis.

### Requirements for DBE Participation

To participate in the DBE program, a small business owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals must receive DBE certification from the relevant state— generally through the state Unified Certification Program (UCP).

To be regarded as economically disadvantaged, an individual must have a personal net worth that does not exceed \$1.32 million. To be seen as a small business, a firm must meet SBA size criteria AND must not have average annual gross receipts, over the previous 3 years, in excess of [the DBE size limit](#). [Size limits for the airport concessions DBE program](#) are higher.

### Roles and Responsibilities of State and Local Transportation Agencies

As recipients of DOT financial assistance, state and local transportation agencies are responsible to:

- Certify the eligibility of DBE firms to participate in their DOT-assisted contracts;
- Establish narrowly-tailored goals for the participation of disadvantaged entrepreneurs; and
- Evaluate their DOT-assisted contracts throughout the year and establish contract-specific DBE subcontracting goals as necessary to achieve the overall goal of the agency.

- The level of DBE subcontracting goals may vary; however, by the end of the year, the amount of contract/subcontract awards to DBEs must be consistent with the overall goal.

## Roles and Responsibilities of U.S. DOT

The Department is responsible for:

- Developing the rules and regulations for the national DBE program;
- Providing guidance and conducting oversight to make sure that these rules and regulations are followed by the recipients of DOT funds; and
- Considering appeals from state/local certification decisions.

### Already Certified as a DBE?

Visit [Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization \(OSDBU\)](#) to learn about contracting and subcontracting opportunities. OSDBU also offers a bonding education program, short-term lending assistance, small business mentoring and counseling services, and a wealth of other resources.