1. **What is the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Small Business Enterprise Program (VSBEP)?**

The VDOT Small Business Enterprise Program has been developed to comply with 49 CFR 26.39 that requires the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program to include an element to structure contracting requirements to facilitate competition by small business concerns for participation in procurements as prime contractors/consultants.

1. **What are the benefits of the VDOT VSBEP?**

The VSBEP is a set-aside program established with the goal of awarding federally assisted contracts to small businesses. As a VSBEP approved program participant your company becomes a member of a limited group of vendors eligible to participate in selected federally assisted contract opportunities as a prime contractor/consultant.

The VSBEP provides small businesses the opportunity to compete for federally assisted contracts as a prime contractor/consultant on selected federally assisted construction and consulting contracts that have an estimated contract value of $1 million or less.

1. **What do I need to do for my firm to participate in the VSBEP?**

To be eligible to participate in the VDOT Small Business Enterprise Program a business shall:

* Possess the Virginia Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) or Virginia Small, Women, and Minority-owned Business certification;
* Meet the Small Business Administration (SBA) size standards. Average gross receipts over the firm’s previous three years must not exceed $22.41 million; and
* Meet the personal net worth threshold not to exceed $1.32 million for each business owner of the firm.
1. **How do I become DBE or SWaM certified firm in Virginia?**

The authorized agencies that certify DBE and SWaM firms in Virginia are the Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD) and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA**).** Information on how to apply for DBE and/or SWaM Certification can be found on the SBSD and MWAA websites [www.sbsd.virginia.gov](http://www.sbsd.virginia.gov) and [www.metwashairports.com](http://www.metwashairports.com).

1. **What is the definition of a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)?** Disadvantaged business enterprise or DBE means a for-profit small business concern that is at least 51 percent owned by one or more individuals who are both socially and economically disadvantaged or, in the case of a corporation, in which 51 percent of the stock is owned by one or more such individuals; and whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more of the socially and economically disadvantaged individuals who own it.
2. **What is the definition of a Small, Women, and Minority-Owned (SWaM) Business?**
* The definition of a Small Business - "Small business" means a business that is at least 51% independently owned and controlled by one or more individuals who are U.S. citizens or legal resident aliens, and together with affiliates, has 250 or fewer employees, or average annual gross receipts of $10 million or less averaged over the previous three years. One or more of these individual owners shall control both the management and daily business operations of the small business.
* The definition of a Women-Owned Business - "Women-owned business" means a business that is at least 51% owned by one or more women who are U.S. citizens or legal resident aliens, or in the case of a corporation, partnership, or limited liability company or other entity, at least 51% of the equity ownership interest is owned by one or more women who are citizens of the United States or legal resident aliens, and both the management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more women.
* The definition of a Minority Individual - "Minority individual" means an individual who is a citizen of the United States or legal resident alien and who satisfies one or more of the following definitions:
1. “African American" means a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Africa and who is regarded as such by the community of which this person claims to be a part.
2. "Asian American" means a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands, including but not limited to Japan, China, Vietnam, Samoa, Laos, Cambodia, Taiwan, Northern Mariana, the Philippines, a U.S. territory of the Pacific, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, or Sri Lanka and who is regarded as such by the community of which this person claims to be a part.
3. "Hispanic American" means a person having origins in any of the Spanish-speaking peoples of Mexico, South or Central America, or the Caribbean Islands or other Spanish or Portuguese cultures and who is regarded as such by the community of which this person claims to be a part.
4. "Native American" means a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America and who is regarded as such by the community of which this person claims to be a part or who is recognized by a tribal organization.
5. **What is the difference between DBE certification and SWaM certification?**

The **D**isadvantaged **B**usiness **E**nterprise certification program is a federal program. The purpose is to increase the participation of certified DBEs in projects funded by the United States Department of Transportation and other federal sectors.

DBE certification is a federal designation for disadvantaged business enterprises and means that a firm is certified to participate in transportation related procurements that are federally assisted in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

SWaM certification is a Commonwealth of Virginia designation that means that a firm is certified as a small business and can participate in procurements that are state funded.

1. **Why does the VSBEP application ask for personal financial information?**

The VSBEP application asks for the personal financial information of the owners of the business in order to determine possible affiliations of the business, and to ensure owners do not exceed personal net worth limitations.

1. **Will my financial information be kept confidential?**

VDOT will not share personal or business financial information with anyone

 not involved in determining the firm’s eligibility for the program. VSBEP files are kept in a secure location.

1. **Is there a cost to participate in the VSBEP?**

There are no costs associated with becoming a program participant; however, if a contract is awarded there is a vendor transaction fee assessed when a vendor receives a contract. The specific fee is based on the vendor’s registration status and small business certification as recorded in eVA ,Virginia's online electronic procurement system. This web-based vendor registration and purchasing system allows state agencies, colleges, universities and many local governments to use eVA to conduct all purchasing and sourcing activities for goods and services.

1. **How is the VSBEP different from the DBE Program?**

The VSBEP is a unique program because it allows approved participants of the program to compete and bid on selected construction and consultant contracts as a prime contractor/consultant. Selected projects will not exceed $1 million in contract value.

The VSBEP is a race-neutral program and will not have any goal requirements.

1. **How long will I be eligible to participate in the VSBEP?**

Approved firms are required to renew their VSBEP eligibility annually. The proper documentation must be submitted prior to the date of the firm’s last approval for program participation. In order to remain as an active program participant the firm must:

* Remain certified as a DBE or SWaM firm;
* Provide the owner’s personal financial statement;
* Provide the firm’s signed tax return forms for the most current year; and
* Complete the Affidavit of Continued Eligibility.
1. **If my firm is denied, when can I re-apply for the firm?**

A firm can re-apply one year from the date of the denial application.

1. **How long does the registration/application process take?**

It may take up to 30 business days after all information and documentation is received, that includes the time for reviewing the file. Most delays are caused by incomplete information or missing documentation.

1. **How will I know which procurements are for the VSBEP?**

Solicitations will be posted on the VDOT website [www.virginiadot.org/business/bu-contractingOpportunities.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/business/bu-contractingOpportunities.asp) and advertised through eVA. Program participants will also receive an email notification of upcoming procurements; therefore, it is very important to keep your firms information up to date.

1. **Does my firm have to be prequalified through VDOT to participate in VSBEP?**

Only construction firms must be prequalified through VDOT to perform work on construction projects. Use this link for more information regarding the prequalification process <http://www.virginiadot.org/business/const/prequal.asp>.

1. **How do I request assistance if I have questions?**

 For any questions or concerns regarding the Virginia Small Business Enterprise

 Program, please email VSBE@vdot.virginia.gov.