1. **What types of certification do you offer?**

   The City of Hartford maintains a stand alone database of eligible small contractors and minority and women business enterprises:

   - 1. Small Contractors- SC

2. **What is the process to apply for certification?**

   1. Access our website at www.hartford.gov/procurement
   2. On the left panel, select “Supplier Diversity”
   3. Then, select “Online Application”
   4. You will be directed to the online system. Select “New Vendor Registration”
   5. Complete the vendor profile by inputting the required information for each tab:
      a. Company Info (username and password should be created first)
      b. Additional Addresses
      c. Classifications/Licenses
      d. Other Business Info
      e. Category/Description
      f. Supplier Diversity Certification (This section must be completed in one sitting; you will not be able to save and exit for this portion.)

3. **My business is owned equally (50/50) by me and my spouse. I am an eligible minority or woman, but my spouse is not. Is our business eligible for certification?**

   The applying party must control and own at least 51% of the company.
4. **Am I required to have a professional license to be certified?**

   If the State requires a professional license to do the type of work your firm wants to be certified for, the eligible owner must possess the applicable professional license.

   For example, in order for a firm to be certified to do electrical work, the eligible owner must be a licensed electrician. However, if a firm wants to be certified to provide IT Consulting services, the eligible owner does not need to possess any professional licenses because Connecticut does not require an IT Consultant to be professionally licensed.

   This rule also applies if a professional license is required to operate any equipment necessary for the firm’s activities. For example, the eligible owner of a dump trucking firm must possess a Commercial Driver’s License.

5. **How do I determine if my business qualifies as small?**

   Presently, the gross revenue threshold is $10,000,000.00.

6. **I was certified at one time, but am reapplying. Can the Procurement Office make copies of supporting documents from my old file?**

   No. Any time you submit a new application to the Procurement Office, you must provide all of the required documentation requested in the application. **Important note:** The Procurement Office cannot proceed with an incomplete application. If you do not answer all the application questions and upload all the required documentation, your entire application will not be processed and will be delayed.

7. **How often will I have to renew and what does it cost?**

   Our certification program requires that you complete a recertification application every two years. You will receive an email directly from PlanetBids 30 days prior to your renewal date. There is no cost.
8. **Do I have to be in business for a certain length of time before I apply for certification? What must I do before I can apply for certification?**

In order to apply for certification, your business must have been in business for one (1) year and be ready to operate. What this means is that your business must be fully and properly licensed to conduct business in the State of Connecticut, and you must have any equipment, insurance, and any other resources that your business would need if it were to be awarded a contract today.

9. **I am from out of state am I eligible to apply?**

No, you must have been in business and maintained your principal place of business in the State of Connecticut for a period of at least one year to the date of application for certification.

10. **Who has access to the information I provide with my application?**

Applications and supporting documentation submitted to the Procurement Office are maintained in locked files. Financial documents are not subject to Freedom of Information laws.

11. **How long will it take for my application to be processed?**

The Procurement Office processes applications on a first come, first served basis. Our goal is to process an application within 30 days. Because of the complexity of certification applications, it is impossible to provide for an exact timeframe in which an application will be processed.
12. Can I expedite my application?

Applications are only expedited when it is deemed necessary by the Procurement Office to further the intent of the certification program. It is considered in the following circumstances:

- A state agency or a representative from the Hartford School Building Committee submits a written request for expediting
- The Office determines that expediting is the only way to ensure opportunities for certified firms to offer a particular product/service, or to meet other priority interests of the City.

13. Can applications be submitted electronically?

Yes, all applications must be submitted via the PlanetBids e-procurement system.

14. I don’t have two years of taxes. What should I do?

- If you have been in business for less than two years, you are only required to submit taxes for the years you have been in business.
- If you have filed an extension for taxes with the IRS, submit a copy of the filed extension in lieu of the filed tax return. Note: You will be required to submit a copy of the filed tax return once it is filed.
- If you haven’t filed taxes and haven’t filed an extension for taxes, submit a signed statement explaining your situation.

15. What documentation is accepted to prove my ethnicity?

For M/WBE certification, you must provide legal identification which shows race. Examples include:

- Certificate of Naturalization
- Birth Certificate
• Parents’ birth certificates
• Tribal Card
• Marriage License
• Court decree or government document

16. What happens after the Procurement Office receives my application?

When applications arrive at the Procurement Office, they are pre-screened for completeness. Any application packet that does not include a complete application, all required supporting documentation, the applicant is contacted and informed of missing information or documents.

Once an application is determined to be complete, it is reviewed by the Analyst to determine if it satisfies all of the program eligibility criteria. The review process may include an on-site interview, job site visit, and interviews with third parties to verify the information submitted. The applicant may be asked to provide additional information/documentation at any time while the application is being processed.

17. How soon after I am certified will I receive a contract?

Certification does not guarantee that you will receive a contract. You are responsible for marketing your business and finding and bidding on contracts. The Procurement Office will post information about your company in its certified vendors database.

We strongly recommend that suppliers register on the State DAS site and enable automatic notifications of bids.

The State contracting portal engine allows you to search state and municipal contracts (Hartford) for BID/RFP DOCUMENTS – which is available on the Department of Administrative Services web site at http://das.ct.gov/cr1.aspx?page=12.
18. How do I get work as a certified firm? How do I use the certification to get work?

- Advertise that your business is certified in your marketing materials.
- Register your firm in the States SBE System or DOT. Indicate that your firm is certified with the City of Hartford.
- Find other certified firms in the Directory of Certified Firms to partner or joint venture with. (Joint ventures with certified firms are okay!)
- Attend business networking events.
- Attend project walk troughs.

19. How do I request new codes be assigned to my certification?

Submit your request to the Procurement Office in writing. Specify what type of new work your firm is performing and include documentation that shows the firm is performing this work and has the equipment necessary to perform this work. Be specific! We need details in order to accurately code your new type of work and make sure your firm’s business description matches the codes assigned to you.

Examples of documentation include copies of signed bids, contracts, work orders, etc. You must also submit proof that the eligible owner has the technical expertise and/or professional licenses required to perform the new type of work. The Procurement Office may elect to perform an onsite visit to verify that your firm is performing the new work and has the equipment necessary to perform the work. You may also need to supply updated resumes and equipment lists.

20. Does the Procurement Office offer training to businesses?

Yes. The Procurement Office offers free training to small businesses. Notification is generally made through local newspapers and the procurement website.

21. How do I start and license a business?

You can contact:
22. How do I find available grants and loans?

Visit the State’s business website at [www.business.wa.gov](http://www.business.wa.gov) and click on Grow a Business.

- The Business Resource Center
  - 15 Lewis St Suite #204
  - Hartford, CT
  - (860) 527-1100
- Spanish American Merchants Association - Small Business Specialist
  - 95 Park Street
  - Hartford, CT
  - (860) 278-5825
- Internet: [www.ct-clc.com](http://www.ct-clc.com) - Connecticut Licensing Info Center

- A commercial bank is also an avenue to consider