



SMALL BUSINESS & SUPPLIER DIVERSITY

Quarterly Progress Report

APRIL - JUNE
2025



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OVERVIEW

GOVERNOR BRIAN P. KEMP'S EXECUTIVE ORDER

On July 13, 2022, Governor Brian P. Kemp issued Executive Order 07.13.22.01, affirming the State of Georgia's commitment to helping small businesses expand and create jobs. The Executive Order charged the Department of Administrative Services, the state agency responsible for administering state procurement, with several responsibilities, including identifying challenges and obstacles small businesses face when participating in the state procurement process. The Executive Order further directed the Department to issue a report with recommendations to make the state procurement process more easily accessible to small businesses.

DEPARTMENT'S REPORT & NINE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department initiated a series of actions, including engaging in dialogue with the small business community and key small business development partners in its report. The Department sought feedback on challenges and obstacles small businesses face when participating in the state procurement process, identifying three primary obstacles: (1) satisfying state requirements, (2) bid opportunity identification, and (3) readiness to bid. Initial findings include implementing nine recommendations to make the state procurement process easier to access, as further described in the October 2022 Report.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN & PROGRESS REPORTS

In the Implementation Plan published on March 31, 2023, the Department outlines key activities and related time-frames to complete the nine recommendations. Progress will be shared through the publication of quarterly reports. To view previous reports, see Appendix.

KEY PARTNERS



Federal, state, and local government, and small business development partners



Georgia Department of Economic Development



University of Georgia Small Business Development Center Specialty Programs Division



Small business community and chambers of commerce



GOAL

Make the state procurement process easier to access for small businesses



FOCUS

Minority, women and veteran-owned businesses



SBSD NINE RECOMMENDATIONS



#1 DESIGNATE SMALL BUSINESS LIAISONS

To facilitate communication and partnership at the agency level, the Department recommends that each state agency, college, and university, subject to the Department's procurement authority, designate an existing staff member to serve as the small business liaison.

Status: Complete and ongoing

DESIGNATE SMALL BUSINESS LIAISONS

Activities During Reporting Period:

- Ongoing collaboration with small business liaisons continued regarding contracting opportunities that are available with their agencies for small businesses.
- During the reporting period, the Department continued hosting its 4th annual Small Business Procurement Readiness Workshop Series in collaboration with its educational partner, the University of Georgia (UGA) Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Specialty Programs Division. The six consecutive session workshop series is geared toward helping small business owners “get ready” to do business with the state.
 - The fourth session was held on April 10, 2025, with several small business liaisons participating in a panel discussion providing information as to how business owners can do business with their entities.
 - Panel participants included small business liaisons from the Georgia Department of Community Health, the Georgia Department of Corrections, the Georgia Department of Education, the Georgia Department of Revenue, the Georgia Institute of Technology, UGA and Valdosta State University.
- Continuous updates were made to the small business liaison list during the reporting period to ensure that liaisons’ names and contact information are current on the Department’s [Small Business and Supplier Diversity website](#).

Estimated Duration: Complete as of December 2023 and ongoing.



Small Business Liaisons

State staff members were designated to facilitate communication and partnership with small businesses throughout the state.



#2 EXPAND MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CERTIFICATION

The Department recommends expanding eligibility for the state's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) certification program, expanding certification options, increasing promotion of the MBE program and through legislation, expanding small and diverse business certifications to include women-owned and veteran-owned businesses.

Status: Complete and ongoing

EXPAND MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CERTIFICATION

Implemented on January 1, 2024, in response to House Bill 128 signed into law by Governor Brian P. Kemp on April 24, 2023, the new Georgia Business Certification Program offers certification to Georgia-based, minority-owned, women-owned and veteran-owned businesses.

Activities During Reporting Period:

- On April 2, 2025, and on June 4, 2025, Department staff engaged with newly certified minority-owned businesses to discuss strategies for doing business with the State of Georgia at the Georgia Minority Supplier Development Council (GMSDC) New MBE Supplier Orientation in Atlanta. As one of the Department's certifying partners, GMSDC's certification of Georgia's minority-owned businesses provides a fast-track process to obtain the Department's certification.
- On May 7, 2025, Department staff attended the 2025 Mayor's Small Business Conference hosted by the City of Savannah's Economic Development Department. During the event, Department staff led a workshop to explain the eligibility requirements, application process and benefits of the expanded Georgia Business Certification program.
- On May 15, 2025, Department staff participated in the Clayton County Office of Economic Development's 4th Annual Small Business Open House. This event provided an opportunity to engage with local small business owners and share valuable information about the expanded Georgia Business Certification Program.
- Department staff conducted a workshop to help business owners located in Valdosta and surrounding areas understand how to get certified with the state. The workshop was hosted by the Southern Georgia Black Chambers of Commerce in Valdosta on May 21, 2025.

[Cont.]

EXPAND MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CERTIFICATION [CONT.]

Activities During Reporting Period [Cont.]:

- The Department conducted its quarterly virtual informational session for business owners interested in learning about the eligibility requirements and benefits of being certified with the state on June 3, 2025.

Estimated Duration: Complete as of December 2024 and ongoing.



Certifications

Expanding eligibility to benefit more small businesses.



#3 PILOT INFORMAL BIDDING PROCESS

The Department recommends piloting a state procurement process in which state entities, colleges, and universities would have the option to conduct an informal bidding process within established parameters.

Status: In Progress

PILOT INFORMAL BIDDING PROCESS

Activities During Reporting Period:

- Through the NextGen project, which will replace the state's existing procurement system, the Department continued its work to prepare a new procurement system to support a simplified bidding process.
- As previously reported, the Sourcing workstream designed and developed an electronic template for the informal bidding process for use within GA@WORK Marketplace. The template is configurable, and buyers participating in the pilot group will be able to create simple bids for small dollar purchases.
- During this reporting period, progress was made towards implementing the new procurement system, including conducting a second cycle of system integration testing and beginning cutover planning activities in March and April 2025. In June 2025, development began for supplier training resources.

Estimated Duration: Q3 2023 through December 2026 and then ongoing



Simplified Bidding

Establishing simplified
bidding process for
purchases under \$100,000.



#4 REVISE STATE BIDDING AND CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN PROJECTS

The Department recommends establishing a lower “tier” of insurance and bonding for certain projects and training state buyers on small business-friendly payment strategies.

Status: In progress

REVISE STATE BIDDING AND CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN PROJECTS

Activities During Reporting Period:

- During the reporting period, the Department, through its Risk Management Services Division, Legal Services Division and State Purchasing Division, finalized a comprehensive update to its existing Insurance and Bonding Guidelines. The refreshed guidelines introduce several revisions to enhance clarity, increase recommended coverage limits, and address evolving risk management needs and industry standards.
 - In its October 2022 report, the Department recommended creating lower “tiers” of insurance or bonding requirements for certain low-risk contracts under \$100,000. However, through its research of industry standards and best practices, the Department determined that utilizing contract value is a poor indicator of risk. Although the cost of a service may be low, there may still be risk of serious harm, depending on the service provided, such as bodily injury, death, property damage or loss, data breach or other loss. It is important to remember that, with the exception of some bonds, the Insurance and Bonding Guidelines are recommendations, not requirements. The Department does not have insurance requirements. A state entity may choose to require higher or lower limits on a case-by-case basis. Requiring suppliers provide adequate insurance coverage based on risk not only protects the state’s interest but also protects the business owner’s financial assets and the ongoing operations of the business. Small businesses in particular may be more vulnerable to being underinsured. On the other hand, small businesses may sometimes provide services that present a lower risk making it reasonable for a state entity require lower limits.
 - While requiring insurance in state contracts is generally necessary to protect the state’s interest and minimize risk, a state entity may tailor its requirements these requirements to the specific level of risk related to any given procurement. Therefore, to assist state entities, the Department expanded coverage recommendations to more than 30 additional service areas. Tailoring the coverage to the specific service better aligns coverage with risk while still protecting state entities and suppliers.

[Cont.]

REVISE STATE BIDDING AND CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN PROJECTS [CONT.]

Activities During Reporting Period [Cont.]:

- The revised guidelines also introduce coverage recommendations for special events, including identifying events where it may be appropriate not to require insurance.
- Unlike insurance, bonds are sometimes required by state law for certain construction contracts. These requirements are addressed in the guidelines. Other bonds may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Updates to the guidelines include an expanded glossary of terms and definitions and updated certificate of insurance recommendations.
- In June 2025, Department staff began planning activities to release the revised guidelines in the upcoming quarter.

Estimated Duration: Q3 2023 through June 2026 and then ongoing.



Contracting
Identifying small
business-friendly options



#5 IMPROVED PROMOTION OF THE DEPARTMENT'S PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS TRAINING

The Department recommends continuing its existing system training, which specifically assists businesses with searching for and receiving notifications for bid opportunities and initiating a marketing and promotion strategy.

Status: Complete and ongoing

IMPROVED PROMOTION OF THE DEPARTMENT'S PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS TRAINING

Activities During Reporting Period:

Outreach and training remain an integral part of ensuring business owners have easier access to state's procurement. The Department continues to host monthly supplier system training and partner with various community groups to conduct workshops. Below are activities during the reporting period:

- Six monthly supplier training sessions were hosted by the Department during this reporting period, with approximately 85 suppliers trained.
- To help suppliers navigate the online bidding process, the Department also offered system training during offerors' conferences for state solicitations. During the reporting period, Department staff led system training for suppliers interested in a statewide contract opportunity to provide construction and facilities equipment rental service in April 2025. Department staff also conducted system training during a conference hosted in June 2025 for suppliers interested in a statewide contract opportunity to provide biological supplies and lab equipment.
- More than 900 new Georgia small business bidder registrations within the Department's Team Georgia Marketplace™ Supplier Portal were completed during this report period.

Estimated Duration: Complete as of December 2023 and ongoing.



Bid Identification

Supporting bid opportunity identification for small businesses.



Supplier System Training

Monthly supplier system trainings held in partnership with various community groups.



#6 EXPAND MATCHMAKING OPPORTUNITIES

The Department recommends statewide and regional training, networking, and matchmaking events that help state buyers connect with small and diverse businesses and that help prime contractors connect with subcontractors.

Status: In progress

EXPAND MATCHMAKING OPPORTUNITIES

Activities During Reporting Period:

- Department staff attended the Gwinnett County Annual Supplier Networking Event on April 24, 2025. With over 700 registrants, the event offered valuable opportunities to connect with suppliers, partner agencies, and local governments.
- On May 7, 2025, Department staff attended the 2025 Mayor's Small Business Conference hosted by the City of Savannah's Economic Development Department. As part of Savannah Small Business Week, the event provided valuable networking and growth opportunities for local entrepreneurs. As a guest speaker, staff shared information on doing business with the State of Georgia as part of the general sessions.

Estimated Duration: Q2 2023 through September 2025 and then ongoing



Matchmaking

Connecting the small business community with prime contractors and state and local government buyers



#7 INCREASE OUTREACH, TRAINING AND SUPPORT TO SMALL BUSINESSES

The Department commits to further grow and create new relationships with state agencies and non-profit organizations that are better equipped to provide such development resources, including increasing procurement assistance to small businesses and continuing the Department's work with small business development partners.

Status: In progress

INCREASE OUTREACH, TRAINING AND SUPPORT TO SMALL BUSINESSES

Activities During Reporting Period:

- During the previous quarter, the Department kicked off its 4th Small Business Procurement Readiness Workshop Series in collaboration with its educational partner, the UGA SBDC Specialty Programs Division. This year's series sold out again with 22 Georgia small businesses participating.
 - This comprehensive program includes six consecutive, high-powered training sessions designed to arm business owners with dynamic skills to expand capacity, optimize performance, and increase opportunities for success. During the reporting period, the Department and the UGA SBDC Specialty Programs Division hosted the remainder of the series.
 - Throughout the series, small business attendees learned more about growth strategies and tools, marketing and networking strategies, access to capital and financial management. Insights and tips were provided through several guest presenters including the Small Business Outreach Director for the Georgia Department of Economic Development.
 - The final session held on April 24, 2025, focused on building for the future. With congratulations from the Department's Deputy Commissioner of State Purchasing, all participants received a certificate of attendance as acknowledgment of their participation in the program.
- In April 2025, the Department established a partnership with MH Miles Company (MHMC) to provide consultancy to support the work being done to assist Georgia business owners' access to state procurement opportunities.
 - MHMC is an experienced small business supportive services provider and training consultant with a successful history of providing support and training for the small business, veteran, women, and minority-owned business communities in Georgia. With over 15 years as a supportive services consultant for the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), MHMC has demonstrated a deep understanding of the unique needs and challenges faced by small businesses.

[Cont.]

INCREASE OUTREACH, TRAINING AND SUPPORT TO SMALL BUSINESSES [CONT.]

Activities During Reporting Period [Cont.]:

- MHMC has served 10 years as the GDOT State Supported Funded Program consultant. Their continued success with GDOT's supportive services program played a key role in the Department's decision to partner with MHMC to assist Georgia-based businesses with easier access to the state's procurement.
- On May 1, 2025, Department staff participated at the Fayetteville Small Business Resource Fair hosted by the Clayton State University Small Business Development Center. Staff met with suppliers to provide information on doing business with the State of Georgia government. The event provided an excellent platform to support small businesses and strengthen partnerships.
- On May 21, 2025, Department staff conducted a "Doing Business with the State Webinar" hosted by the UGA SBDC Specialty Programs Division. Participants learned about state government opportunities.

Estimated Duration: Q2 2023 through September 2025 and then ongoing.



Development Training

Building relationships with small business development partners providing essential information to help grow small business capabilities and capacity



#8 EXPAND BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS MENTORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The Department commits to increased awareness and utilization of these mentorship programs among the small business community.

Status: In progress

EXPAND BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS MENTORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Activities During Reporting Period:

- With 18 locations across the state, the University of Georgia Small Business Development Center provides a wide range of educational services for small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs. The Department is proud to continue its partnership with the UGA SBDC to provide educational opportunities, such as the Small Business Procurement Readiness Workshop series and promote the SBDC's consulting and mentoring resources to the small business community.

Estimated Duration: Q4 2022 through September 2025 and then ongoing.



Mentorship

Promoting mentorship opportunities.



#9 FACILITATE INFORMATION SHARING ON ACCESS TO CAPITAL RESOURCES

The Department recommends sharing information regarding offerings from financial institutions, governmental entities, and nonprofits that will assist small and diverse businesses with locating the capital to expand or begin businesses.

Status: In progress

FACILITATE INFORMATION SHARING ON ACCESS TO CAPITAL RESOURCES

Activities During Reporting Period:

- Access to capital and financial management is important to the success of small business owners but oftentimes can be a challenge. During the 4th annual Small Business Procurement Readiness Workshop Series, the Department and the UGA SBDC Specialty Programs Division hosted a session dedicated to this topic.
- Held on April 17, 2025, several guest speakers shared relevant information, including the Department's State Purchasing Card Program Manager, who guided small businesses in understanding the benefits of accepting the state's P-Card for faster payment.

Estimated Duration: Q4 2022 through December 2025 and then ongoing.



Access to Capital

Sharing information to assist small businesses connect with financial resources.



ONGOING STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

A.

The Department commits to improving data collection and integrity for analysis, decision-making and transparency

Status: In progress

Activities During Reporting Period:

- During the reporting period, the Department continued NextGen project activities. The NextGen initiative is a transformation initiative intended to replace the state's legacy Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, including its procurement system, with a modern tool. Through the NextGen initiative, the Department seeks to improve data collection and tracking related to business size, ownership and participation in the procurement process.
- During April 2025, project staff completed a second round of system integration testing for supplier management functions. Integration is critical to ensure data passes successfully amongst the various systems. In May 2025, working sessions were continued related to integrations between the new ERP and separate systems utilized by the Department, including the Georgia Procurement Registry and the Department's tool for receiving and processing business certification applications.
- Throughout the reporting period, efforts continued to clean-up and improve supplier profiles and contact information. On average, the help desk received approximately 80 tickets per day related to supplier data clean-up.

Estimated Duration: Q3 2022 through March 2026 and then ongoing.



Data Collection

The Department commits to improving data collection and integrity for analysis, decision-making and transparency.

B.

In addition, the Department will facilitate engagement of existing communication channels to enhance partnerships with key stakeholders

Status: Complete and ongoing

Activities During Reporting Period:

The Department continues to utilize the communications and social media platforms available to garner attention and promote networking opportunities with key stakeholders and the small business community. Below are activities undertaken during the reporting period:

- The Department continued development of short video clips, as well as electronic graphic designed pieces in email campaigns and on social platforms to promote the Small Business and Supplier Diversity and Georgia Business Certification programs and to engage with the public.

Estimated Duration: Complete as of June 2024 and ongoing.



Social Media

In addition, the Department will facilitate engagement of existing communication channels to enhance partnerships with key stakeholders.



APPENDIX

SMALL BUSINESS AND SUPPLIER DIVERSITY PROGRAM QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT APPENDIX

- [Access the October 2022 – September 2023 Small Business and Supplier Diversity Program Report on the Department's website.](#)
- [Access the October 2023 – December 2023 Small Business and Supplier Diversity Program Report on the Department's website.](#)
- [Access the January 2024 – March 2024 Small Business and Supplier Diversity Program Report on the Department's website.](#)
- [Access the April - December 2024 Small Business and Supplier Diversity Program Report on the Department's website.](#)
- [Access the January - March 2025 Small Business and Supplier Diversity Program Report on the Department's website.](#)



SNAPSHOTS

SNAPSHOTS



Senior SBSD Specialist Crystal Langley (left) and SBSD Communications and Supplier Outreach Specialist III Lanique Bradley (right) participated in the Gwinnett County Annual Supplier Networking Event on April 24, 2025. The event provided an excellent opportunity to engage with suppliers, partner agencies and local governments.



On May 1, 2025, SBSD Manager Julian Bailey (right) and Senior SBSD Specialist Crystal Langley (left) participated in the Fayetteville Small Business Resource Fair. They engaged with Georgia small business owners and government agencies, sharing the value of the Georgia Business Certification and strategies for doing business with the State of Georgia.

SNAPSHOTS



The City of Savannah's Economic Development Department, in partnership with Mayor Van R. Johnson II, hosted the 2025 Mayor's Small Business Conference on May 7, 2025, at the Savannah Civic Center. SBSD Manager Julian Bailey (left) led a certification workshop while SPD Deputy Division Director Mary Chapman (right) represented the Department and presented on Doing Business with the State of Georgia.



SBSD Manager Julian Bailey (left) conducted a workshop to help business owners in Valdosta and surrounding areas understand how to get certified with the state. The workshop was hosted by the Southern Georgia Black Chambers of Commerce in Valdosta on May 21, 2025.

SNAPSHOTS



On June 4, 2025, Senior SBSD Specialist Crystal Langley (left) represented the Department in a presentation to newly certified MBEs. She highlighted the process of doing business with the State of Georgia and the advantages of Georgia Business Certification.



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