



Small Business & Supplier Diversity

July - December 2025

Quarterly Progress Report



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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 to prepare 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



**Georgia
Department of
Economic
Development**



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



**Small business
community and
chambers of
commerce**



**University of Georgia
Small Business
Development Center
Specialty Programs
Division**



Goal

**Make the state
procurement
process easier
to access for
small businesses**



Focus

**Minority, women
and
veteran-owned
businesses**

9

SBSD

Recommendations





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.

#1 Designate Small Business Liaisons

#1 Designate Small Business Liaisons

Activities During Reporting Period:

- During the reporting period, the Department formed an advisory group of ten small business liaisons from different state entities to offer insights, opinions and strategic advice.
 - On July 24, 2025, the Department hosted the first advisory group meeting, seeking input on the development of an online, interactive map of resources available to small businesses.
 - Participants shared feedback on the design and development of this new resource, helping to ensure that the directory is user-friendly, connects small businesses with a variety of resources available within the community, and reflects the real needs and opportunities within the Georgia procurement ecosystem.
 - In September 2025, Department staff developed a prototype of the interactive map and began compiling data for small business resources to be included in the map.
- Small business liaisons from Augusta University, Columbus State University, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Education, the Department of Revenue, and the University of Georgia supported the Department's launch of its new regional training workshop series at Clayton State University on Nov. 18, 2025. More information about the new workshops is detailed in Recommendation #7.

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#1 Designate Small Business Liaisons (Cont.)

Activities During Reporting Period (Cont.):

- Continuous updates were made to the small business liaisons' list during the reporting period to ensure that liaisons' names and contact information are current on the Department's Small Business and Supplier Diversity Program 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.



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.

#2 Expand Minority Business Enterprise Certification

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Activities During Reporting Period:

Implemented on Jan. 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 is offering certification to Georgia-based, minority-owned, women-owned and veteran-owned businesses. The following activities were undertaken during the reporting period:

- Department staff conducted a certification workshop hosted by the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce on Aug. 21, 2025, in Macon, Georgia. Attendees were provided with information on how to become certified through the Department's Georgia Business Certification program.
- The Department conducted its quarterly Virtual Informational Session for business owners interested in learning about the Georgia Business Certification Program on Sep. 9, and Dec. 9, 2025.
- The Department engaged with newly certified Minority Business Enterprise suppliers 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 on Nov. 5, 2025. GMSDC is one of the Department's certification partners for the Georgia Business Certification program.
- On Nov. 13, 2025, Department staff joined the Greater Women's Business Council (GWBC) 25th Anniversary Luncheon, celebrating the organization's 25 years of empowering women entrepreneurs and small business owners in Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina. GWBC is one of the Department's certification partners for the Georgia Business Certification Program.

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#2 Expand Minority Business Enterprise Certification (Cont.)

Activities During Reporting Period (Cont.):

- On Dec. 31, 2025, the Department submitted its annual report of certified small and minority-owned, women-owned, and veteran-owned businesses to the Georgia Department of Revenue, documenting more than 440 businesses eligible to subcontract with prime contractors on state contracts seeking tax adjustments through Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.) Section 48-7-38.

Estimated Duration: Complete as of December 2024 and ongoing.

Certification

Expanding to benefit more small businesses.





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.

#3 Pilot Informal Bidding Process

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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. The Department will pilot the new informal bidding process through the new GA@WORK Marketplace sourcing module with a select group of state entities upon Go-Live of the new system.

Activities During Reporting Period:

- The Sourcing Workstream continued work to support the launch of the new sourcing module, including system testing and adjustments to solicitation templates. The NextGen project Go-Live date was moved to July 1, 2026.

Estimated Duration: Q3 2023 through March 2027 and then ongoing.

Simplified Bidding

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





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.

#4 Revise State Bidding and Contracting Requirements for Certain Projects

#4 Revise State Bidding and Contracting Requirements for Certain Projects

Activities During Reporting Period:

- On Aug. 13, 2025, the Department's State Purchasing Division (SPD) released Official Announcement #26-01, publishing a comprehensive update to SPD-SP048 Insurance and Bonding Guidelines.
 - The guidelines serve as a non-mandatory, informational resource to state buyers when determining the appropriate bonding and insurance requirements to include in state procurement and contracting opportunities. The guidelines also help suppliers in understanding and anticipating the coverage required based on the goods or services provided.
 - The refreshed guidelines introduce several revisions to enhance clarity, increase recommended coverage limits, and address evolving risk management needs and industry standards. A summary of the revisions is outlined in the March 2025 – June 2025 Small Business and Supplier Diversity Program Report (see Appendix).

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#4 Revise State Bidding and Contracting Requirements for Certain Projects (Cont.)

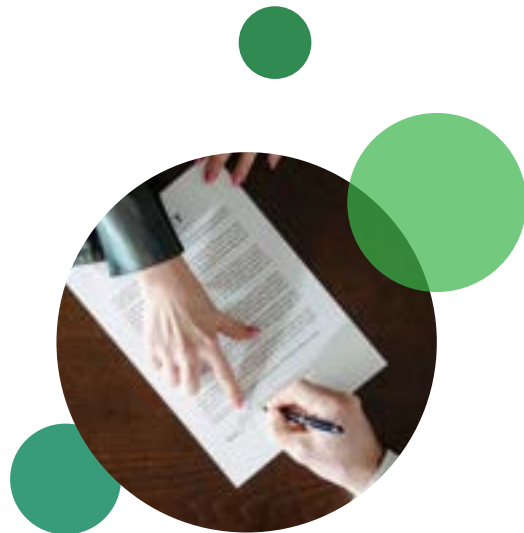
Activities During Reporting Period (Cont.):

- A webinar was held on Aug. 20, 2025, with more than 260 participants attending live to hear from representatives of the Department's Risk Management Division, State Purchasing Division, and Office of General Counsel as they discussed the new Insurance and Bonding Guidelines.

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

CONTRACTING

Identifying small
business-friendly
options





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.

#5 Improved Promotion of the Department's Procurement Systems Training

#5 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 procurement opportunities. The Department continues to host monthly supplier orientation and supplier system training sessions virtually. In addition, the Department partners with various community groups and stakeholders to conduct workshops and offer supplier training throughout the state. Below are activities completed during the reporting period:

- 12 monthly supplier orientation and supplier system training sessions were hosted by the Department during this reporting period, with approximately 314 suppliers trained.
- To help suppliers navigate the online bidding process, the Department conducts 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 for discounted retail walk-in building supplies in July 2025.
- Department staff joined the UGA Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Specialty Programs Division for its "Doing Business with the State" sessions hosted on Sep. 30, 2025, and Nov. 6, 2025, to share more information about getting registered to do business.

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#5 Improved Promotion of the Department's Procurement Systems Training (Cont.)

Activities During Reporting Period (Cont.):

- More than 1,800 new Georgia small business bidder registrations within the Department's Team Georgia Marketplace™ Supplier Portal were completed during this reporting 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.





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: Complete and ongoing.

#6 Expand Matchmaking Opportunities

#6 Expand Matchmaking Opportunities

Activities During Reporting Period:

- GWBC hosted a Matchmaking and Speed Coaching event on Aug. 21, 2025, in Atlanta. Department staff served as one of the matching coaches and provided information on the procurement process and available bid opportunities with the State of Georgia.
- On Sep. 26, 2025, Department staff participated in the MogulCon's Business Matchmaking event. Staff members served on a panel with other government officials to respond to questions relating to procurement, in addition to meeting with business owners to provide information on doing business with the state.
- On Oct. 28, 2025, Department staff joined the GT APEX Accelerator Training Expo 2025 to conduct a training workshop and participate in the expo. The conference provided attendees with federal marketplace insights, government and prime contractor matchmaking opportunities, and small business support tools and resources.

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#6 Expand Matchmaking Opportunities (Cont.)

Activities During Reporting Period (Cont.):

- On Nov. 13, 2025, Department staff joined the Cobb County Small Business Forum, hosted by Chairwoman Lisa Cupid. The event offered networking opportunities with private industry and local, state and federal government and insights into upcoming projects, contracting opportunities, funding resources and more.

Estimated Duration: Complete as of September 2025 and ongoing.

Matchmaking

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





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: Complete and ongoing.

#7 Increase Outreach, Training, and Support to Small Businesses

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Activities During Reporting Period:

- On July 15, 2025, Department staff conducted a “Get Procured” workshop hosted by Our Village United, Inc. in Atlanta. Attendees were provided with information on doing business with the State of Georgia.
- Department staff participated in the National Contract Management Association (NCMA) networking event in Atlanta on Aug. 21, 2025. This was a great opportunity to meet and connect with business owners interested in doing business with the state.
- Department staff attended the Perfect Pitch Competition organized by GWBC and hosted by Georgia Power Company on Sep. 16, 2025. This event provided an opportunity for Department staff to meet business owners interested in doing business with the state.
- GMSDC hosted the annual Spirit of Alliance Award on Sep. 19, 2025, to recognize minority business owners, advocates and organizations helping minority businesses grow and succeed. During the Golden Anniversary edition, the Department was awarded the “Rising Star Award” in recognition for the work that it has been doing with minority businesses.
- On Nov. 3, 2025, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) hosted the 8th Annual Small Business Industry Forum at Sandy Springs City Hall. Department staff joined a panel discussion to share insights on how to do business with the State. Department staff met with suppliers and provided information on how to obtain the Georgia Business Certification, and how to navigate the procurement process.

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#7 Increase Outreach, Training, and Support to Small Businesses (Cont.)

Activities During Reporting Period [Cont.]:

- In partnership with its small business consultant, MH Miles Company, the Department launched its new Georgia Procurement Workshop regional training series. The workshop series is designed to connect small businesses to opportunities throughout the state.
 - The first workshop launched on Nov. 18, 2025, at Clayton State University, in partnership with the Clayton State University SBDC and with more than 200 registrants.
 - The workshop featured speakers from the Department, MH Miles, JPMorgan Chase, and the Clayton State University SBDC as well as a panel discussion amongst attending small business liaisons.
 - During the morning and afternoon networking sessions, attendees met with Department staff, small business liaisons, the Small Business Administration Georgia District Office and several of the Department's certification partners, including GMSDC.
- On Nov. 20, 2025, Department staff joined a panel discussion and exhibit opportunity during the NCMA Veteran Business Summit at Georgia State University. This event featured networking opportunities with government agencies, corporate partners and veteran-focused organizations to empower veteran-owned businesses.

Estimated Duration: Complete as of September 2025 and ongoing.

Development Training

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





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

Status: Complete and ongoing.

#8 Expand Business-to-Business Mentorship Opportunities

#8 Expand Business-to-Business Mentorship Opportunities

Activities During Reporting Period:

- During the reporting period, the Department continued to promote and support mentorship programs to create opportunities for less-experienced business owners to learn from industry professionals.
- Department staff participated in multiple sessions led by the Clayton State University SBDC during the Clayton County B2G Roundtables. This is a yearly mentor protégé program sponsored by Clayton County Central Services. It is an interactive business readiness, development and growth webinar series with actionable insights, strategies, and practices from business-to-government (B2G) procurement, business, and subject matter experts — for construction, engineering, and support sector-focused state, county, and municipal opportunities. Department staff joined sessions on Sep.3, Sep. 17, Oct. 8, Oct. 22, Nov. 5, and Nov.19, 2025.

Estimated Duration: Complete as of September 2025 and ongoing.

Mentorship

Promoting mentorship opportunities.





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: Complete and ongoing.

#9 Facilitate Information Sharing on Access to Capital Resources

#9 Facilitate Information Sharing on Access to Capital Resources

Activities During Reporting Period:

- On Oct. 16, 2025, Department staff conducted an in-person “Procurement Palooza Panel” during the 2025 Venture Atlanta conference. Venture Atlanta connects companies with capital in support of the Southeast’s most promising tech companies.
- On Oct. 16, 2025, Department staff visited the Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs (ACE) Women’s Business Center to conduct a session on doing business with the State of Georgia. ACE Women’s Business Center is an economic development program that supports all small businesses, with a specific focus on empowering women through financial education and training.
- On Oct. 23, 2025, during the “TAG Invest Connect: Meet, Pitch and Partner” program event, Department staff joined the Procurement Pathway Driving Growth and Innovation Panel. This program is a part of the Technology Association of Georgia’s Education Collaborative, which is on a mission to make Georgia a global hub of innovation by developing its tech workforce, supporting entrepreneurs, publishing research, and creating new pathways to leadership.
- During the Department’s Georgia Procurement Workshop hosted on Nov. 18, 2025, a special guest speaker from JPMorgan shared information with attending businesses on capital resources.

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#9 Facilitate Information Sharing on Access to Capital Resources (Cont.)

Activities During Reporting Period (Cont.):

- In Dec. 2025, the Department added a new “Financial Resources” tab to its Small Business and Supplier Diversity webpage to share information with small businesses. Currently, the website provides information on the State Small Business Credit Initiative, Georgia Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Loans, and Georgia Green Loans. Additionally, the webpage connects businesses with information on business loans and grants available through other organizations and programs, such as the City of Atlanta, Cobby County Entrepreneurship Grants, Athens Downtown Development Authority Grants, and ACE.

Estimated Duration: Complete as of December 2025 and ongoing.

Access to Capital

Sharing information to assist small businesses connect with financial resources.



2

Ongoing Strategic Initiatives





Status: In Progress

Data Collection

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



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 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.
- From July - Sep. 2025, project staff completed end user acceptance testing for supplier management and supplier contracts modules, continued work on system integrations, and conducted end-to-end supplier integrations working sessions to review all system processes related to suppliers. Work continued to resolve system errors identified during testing.
- From Oct. – Dec. 2025, project staff continued work towards supplier data clean-up. During this same period, work continued to finalize supplier training materials and conduct Train-the-Trainer sessions with training facilitators. Project staff revised and updated the system cutover plan and began planning for hypercare support, which will begin following Go-Live.

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

B



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:

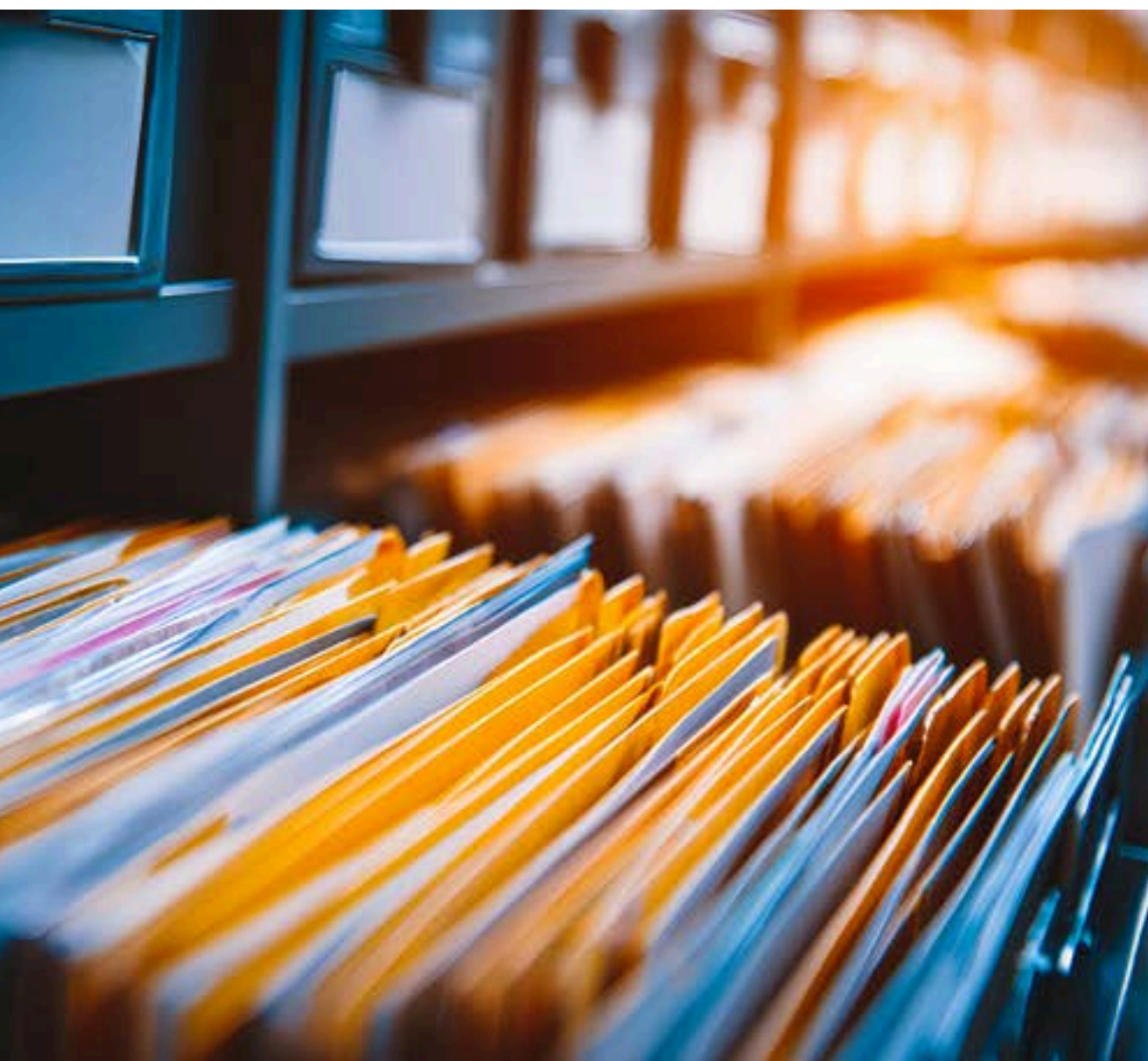
- The Department continued the use of existing communications platforms such as email blasts, newsletters and communications alerts to keep the flow of information going to our outreach partners, business owners and procurement professionals.
- The use of social media platforms such as LinkedIn and Instagram to share information continued.
- Staff developed new marketing materials for the Georgia Procurement Workshop series, including promotional flyers and hand-out materials.

Estimated Duration: Complete as of June 2024 and ongoing.

Status: 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.](#)
- [Access the April - June 2025 Small Business and Supplier Diversity Program Report on the Department's website.](#)



Snapshots

Snapshots



Small Business and Supplier Diversity Manager, Julian Bailey, serves as a panelist with other government representatives at the MogulCon's Business Match-making event on Sep. 26, 2025.



Communications and Outreach Specialist, Lanique Bradley, meets with a business owner at the MogulCon's Business Match-making event on Sep. 26, 2025.



Small Business and Supplier Diversity Manager, Julian Bailey (right), and Communications and Outreach Specialist, Lanique Bradley (center), with President/CEO of the Georgia Minority Supplier Development Council, Stacey Key, in attendance at the GMSDC Spirit of Alliance Award Ceremony on Sep. 19, 2025. Bailey and Bradley received the "Rising Star Award" on behalf of the Department for the work being done with minority business owners.

Snapshots



Sr. Small Business and Supplier Diversity Specialist, Crystal Langley (left), Georgia Education Foundation Executive Director, Vanessa Lane (center), and Small Business and Supplier Diversity Manager, Julian Bailey, in attendance at the certification workshop hosted by the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with the Georgia Education Foundation on Aug. 21, 2025.



Members of the Department pose with representatives from MH Miles Company, the Department's new Strategic Consultant. Front Row (left to right): SPD Deputy Division Director Mary Chapman, Senior Small Business and Supplier Diversity Specialist Crystal Langley; MH Miles Program Manager Carol Phelps, MH Miles Vice President Cherese Myree, SPD Deputy Commissioner Carrie Steele, Small Business and Supplier Diversity Manager Julian Bailey, Communications and Supplier Outreach Specialist Lanique Bradley. Back Row (left to right): Communications Manager Cassie Alston and Program Manager Terrence Crawford.



Sr. Small Business and Supplier Diversity Specialist, Crystal Langley (front), discusses the state's certification process at the certification workshop hosted by the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with the Georgia Education Foundation on Aug. 21, 2025.

Snapshots



Communications and Supplier Outreach Specialist, Lanique Bradley and Small Business and Supplier Diversity Manager, Julian Bailey meet with business owner at the MogulCon Business Event held on Friday, Sep. 26, 2025. Suppliers and state and local government partners attended the event.



Sr. Small Business and Supplier Diversity Specialist, Crystal Langley, and Small Business and Supplier Diversity Manager, Julian Bailey, conduct a workshop hosted by ACE Business Center and held at the Russel Innovation Center for Entrepreneurs (RICE) Center on Oct. 16, 2025. Business owners learn how to navigate the procurement process in Georgia, as well as how to get certified.

Snapshots



Communications and Supplier Outreach Specialist, Lanique Bradley, and Sr. Small Business and Supplier Diversity Specialist, Crystal Langley, meet with suppliers and provide information on how to obtain the Georgia Business Certification, and how to navigate the state's procurement process at the Georgia Department of Transportation 8th Annual Small Business Industry Forum held on Nov. 3, 2025.



Sr. Small Business and Supplier Diversity Specialist, Crystal Langley, meets with business owners on Nov. 13, 2025, at the Cobb County Chairwoman Lisa Cupid's 2025 Small Business Forum.



Deputy Division Director, Mary Chapman, speaks to business owners at the first regional Georgia Procurement Workshop hosted by Clayton State University on Nov. 18, 2025.

Snapshots



SBSD staff members, Small Business Liaison, and representatives from MH Miles Company, and Clayton State University SBSD program in attendance at the Georgia Procurement Workshop held at Clayton State University on Nov. 18, 2025.



SBDC Area Director at Clayton State University, Govantez Lowndes (left), provides information to an event attendee at the Georgia Procurement Workshop held at Clayton State University on Nov. 18, 2025.



On Nov. 20, 2025, Small Business and Supplier Diversity Manager Julian Bailey served as a panelist at the NCMA Atlanta Veterans Business Summit held at Georgia State University. She responds to questions about the procurement process in the State of Georgia and provides information on the state's certification available to veteran-owned companies.



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