

# Doing Business with the State of Indiana: A Guide to Web Resources

[www.in.gov/idoa/vendor.html](http://www.in.gov/idoa/vendor.html)

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## A Step-by-Step Outline of Navigating the Process

The State of Indiana requires individuals and businesses who seek to do business with the State to register with a number of different State agencies and offices prior to bidding on contracts and receiving a contract award. Prior to utilizing scarce resources to undertake these processes it is important that businesses determine if State government is a strong market. Minority and Women Businesses that complete the various registrations and certifications could reap great benefits from the M/WBE program, however, they must work to market their firm to the correct audiences in order to be successful. The following is an outline of web tools that will assist throughout the process.

### Step 1: Research the Market

The State of Indiana buys a wide range of goods and services. It is important to determine if the State buys what you sell and if there are any restrictions or preferences placed upon it.

**Resource people:** <http://www.in.gov/idoa/proc/personnel.html>

The State publishes a list of those responsible for buying good and services. Firms can contact these individuals to learn if their products can meet State needs, how much the State will likely purchase, and when and how it will possibly be purchased next.

**Active contracts:** <http://www.in.gov/idoa/proc/active.html>

Another key resource is the list of current contracts. It will inform readers of what the State is currently purchasing under contract, how much is being paid, and when the contract expires.

**Public Works Projects:** <http://www.in.gov/idoa/pwd/>

State construction projects are planned well in advance. Learn about upcoming opportunities and ongoing projects by visiting these two websites.

Project List: [http://www.in.gov/idoa/pwd/docs/cp\\_05-07.pdf](http://www.in.gov/idoa/pwd/docs/cp_05-07.pdf)

Project Status: [http://www.in.gov/idoa/pwd/docs/cp\\_05-07.pdf](http://www.in.gov/idoa/pwd/docs/cp_05-07.pdf)

**Buy Indiana:** <http://www.in.gov/idoa/proc/buyindiana.html>

On his first day in office, Governor Daniels issued an Executive Order directing State government to spend the vast majority of its buying power with Indiana companies. Read about the benefits of the Buy Indiana initiative.

**Pricing Preferences:** IC 5-22-15

Indiana Businesses receive 5% differential in bid pricing because they are Indiana companies. Indiana Small Businesses receive a 15% differential in bid pricing because they are a small business that is based in Indiana. This means that if your business is a small business and you bid on a contract as well as your competitors, you will have an advantage on your quote because those in procurement will subtract 15% from your original quote when it comes time to compare for low bids.

**Special Purchasing Programs:** The General Assembly has placed in statute two programs which require State officials to purchase certain goods and services almost exclusively from the disabled or PEN Products. M/WBEs that sell these items might not find a market at the State due to these requirements.

State Use Program: <http://www.inarf.org/State%5fuse/>

PEN Products: [http://www.in.gov/idoa/proc/pen\\_products.html](http://www.in.gov/idoa/proc/pen_products.html)

### **Step 2: Register with the Indiana Secretary of State**

**Indiana Secretary of State:** [www.in.gov/sos](http://www.in.gov/sos)

Every business that seeks to provide products or services to any State agency must register with the Indiana Secretary of State's office. To successfully register with the Secretary of State's office, your business must be in good standing with the Indiana Department of Revenue and the Indiana Department of Workforce Development.

### **Step 3: Register with the appropriate State agency and department as determined by your business offerings.**

**IDOA Procurement Bidder Registration:** [http://www.in.gov/idoa/proc/bidder\\_reg.html](http://www.in.gov/idoa/proc/bidder_reg.html)

The Indiana Department of Administration Procurement Division manages the purchasing and contracting process for all State agencies except the Indiana Department of Transportation. A good rule of thumb: If you want to sell to Indiana State Government, register with the Department of Administration.

**IDOA Public Works:** [www.in.gov/idoa/pwd/](http://www.in.gov/idoa/pwd/)

All building designers and planners and all building contractors and subcontractors working on projects valued at over \$150,000, must be pre-qualified (registered) by Indiana Department of Administration Public Works Division.

Contractors and Subcontractors: <http://www.in.gov/idoa/pwd/contractors.html>

Architects and Designers: [http://www.in.gov/idoa/pwd/contact\\_architects.html](http://www.in.gov/idoa/pwd/contact_architects.html)

**Minority and Women's Business Enterprises:** [www.in.gov/idoa/M/WBE](http://www.in.gov/idoa/M/WBE)

All minority and women business enterprises that wish to provide commodities or services, including construction services, to State agencies, with the exception of certain businesses that seek to do business with the Indiana Department of Transportation, should be certified by the Minority and Women's Business Enterprise Division to receive certain benefits. Please note: Businesses must also register with the Indiana Department of Administration Procurement Division (above) before M/WBE certification can be awarded.

**Indiana Department of Transportation:** [www.in.gov/dot/business](http://www.in.gov/dot/business)

The Department of Transportation manages contractors and vendors for INDOT projects. Many of its processes and procedures are different from that of other State agencies. It is important to review INDOT contracting methods if a firm wishes to be successful with INDOT. Additionally, INDOT manages the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Certification for those businesses deemed disadvantaged that would like to bid on INDOT's federally funded work. Note: A M/WBE that would like an INDOT contract should also seek certification as a DBE with INDOT. INDOT uses IDOA certified MBEs and WBEs for State funded projects and INDOT certified DBEs for federally funded projects.

DBE Program: <http://www.in.gov/dot/div/legal/DBE/>

#### **Step 4: Review the Ethics Guide**

**Ethics Guide for Contractors:** <http://www.in.gov/ethics/laws/>

Compiled by the State Ethics Commission, the Ethics Guide for Contractors outlines prohibited contractor action.

#### **Step 5: Register as an Executive Branch Lobbyist**

**Executive Branch Lobbyist Registration:** <http://www.in.gov/idoa/eblr/>

Vendors and contractors who seek to do business with the State and who are not responding to a specific solicitation must register as an executive branch lobbyist.

#### **Step 6: Secure any related DNR/IDEM training or licenses**

**Environmental Management:** <http://www.in.gov/ai/appfiles/permitwizard/>

Use IDEM's permit wizard to determine if IDEM training or permits are required prior to beginning a Public Works or INDOT construction project.

**Natural Resources:** [http://www.in.gov/dnr/water/permits/permit\\_application/](http://www.in.gov/dnr/water/permits/permit_application/)

DNR may require permits for Public Works and INDOT construction projects.

#### **Step 7: Market Your Firm**

##### **Return to Step 1 Resources**

Stay in contact with the relevant buyers to learn about upcoming opportunities and express an interest. Regularly review the contracts and projects to make long term planning determinations.

##### **Regularly Review Current Solicitations**

The State publishes most solicitations to the Internet regularly. Most successful M/WBEs review these websites at least two times per week to identify potential opportunities. Please remember that opportunities emailed by the Procurement Division, as part of your business registration, are based on the prime contractor specifications. The M/WBE program operates best at the sub-contracting level. Potential M/WBE subcontractors must monitor solicitations outside of their field to identify opportunities to subcontract their skills or products to prime vendors.

IDOA Procurement: <http://www.in.gov/cgi-bin/idoa/cgi-bin/bidad.pl>

IDOA Public Works: [http://www.in.gov/serv/dapw\\_bviewer](http://www.in.gov/serv/dapw_bviewer)

Indiana Stadium and Convention Center: <http://www.in.gov/iscba/>

##### **Attend Meetings Regarding Specific Solicitations**

Many of the solicitation documents viewed at the links above include information about meetings held for interested respondents. These meetings are sometimes called Pre-Bid meetings, RFI meetings, Bidders conferences or Pre-RFP meetings. They are all very similar and critical for successful subcontractors. This is the M/WBE firm's opportunity to meet with agency buyers and prime contractors to network, discuss their firm's qualifications and ask questions about the project. M/WBE firms that attend these meetings are far more likely to obtain the contract than firms that do not. A list of attendees is maintained by the State and can be obtained for follow-up contact information if your firm is unable to attend. This list can be obtained from the appropriate buyer. In addition to the solicitation links above, the Procurement

Division maintains a separate listing for Pre-RFP meetings at <http://www.in.gov/idoa/proc/pre-rfp/index.html>.

### **Step 8: Maintain Registrations and Contact Information**

**Buy Indiana Directory:** <http://www.in.gov/idoa/vendor.html>

The Buy Indiana Directory provides a list of companies that are registered with the State of Indiana and that have been designated as Indiana companies (as defined by IC 5-22-15-20-5). Review this listing to ensure proper designation.

**IDOA Business Registration:** [http://www.in.gov/idoa/proc/bidder\\_reg.html](http://www.in.gov/idoa/proc/bidder_reg.html)

Firms maintain their Business Registration on-line by using the password established at the time of initial registration. It is important to maintain updated contact information at this location.

**IDOA Minority and Women's Business Enterprises** [www.in.gov/idoa/mwbe](http://www.in.gov/idoa/mwbe)

Certified M/WBE firms should apply for a certification amendment if there is any expansion in the business' product line. Also, firms must notify the M/WBE Division immediately if there are any changes in contact information, ownership, or control of the firm. State law also requires that certified firms submit annually, on the certification anniversary date, the Affidavit of Continuing Eligibility or "ACE" form attesting to the firm's continued eligibility for the program. Every three years, firms are required to reapply for certification. All documents needed to complete these processes are obtained at this website under the "certification" link.

#### **Know the Rules**

State contracting and the M/WBE program can be complicated and confusing. The M/WBE Division offers consultations with office staff to assist with understanding the processes. In addition, key resources are available on the web.

**IDOA M/WBE Laws and Procedures:** <http://www.in.gov/idoa/M/WBE/laws.html>

**IDOA Procurement Vendor Handbook:** <http://www.in.gov/idoa/proc/bidding.html>

(Click on vendor handbook on the right side of the page).

**IDOA Public Works Forms and Manuals:** <http://www.in.gov/idoa/pwd/forms.html>