



# CITY OF HOUSTON

OFFICE  
of  
BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

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## Our Mission

The Office of Business Opportunity (OBO) is committed to cultivating a competitive and diverse economic environment in the City of Houston by promoting the success of small businesses and developing Houston's workforce, with special emphasis on historically underutilized businesses and disenfranchised individuals.

To achieve this mission, OBO connects businesses and individuals with educational and technical resources and creates policies and programs that support their development.

## Our Services

**Certification** - Creates a supplier diversity pipeline for government and private sector contracting needs. OBO administers the following certifications: Minority Business Enterprise (MBE); Women Business Enterprise (WBE); Small Business Enterprise (SBE) - Construction Related Firms Only; Person with Disabilities Business Enterprise (PDBE); Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE); and Airport Concessionaire Disadvantaged Business Enterprise. On behalf of the State of Texas, OBO facilitates Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) certifications. The Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender Business Enterprise (LGBTBE), administered by the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC), is also included in the City of Houston's Certified Firm Directory.

**Contract Compliance** - Monitors and enforces Prevailing Wage Rate, MWSDBE and EEO compliance on City of Houston projects pursuant to mandates by City, State and Federal governments.

**External Affairs & Workforce Development** - Increases the reach and visibility of OBO through outreach efforts and fostering relationships with community partners and stakeholders. Assists local small businesses in navigating the City's procurement process. Administers development programs such as Turnaround Houston Job and Readiness Fairs.

**Business Development** - OBO collaborates with community partners to administer Build Up Houston, the Interagency Mentor Protégé Program, Turnaround Entrepreneurship Program, Turner School of Construction, Ascend Houston, Houston Small Business Legal Consultations Program, and the Liftoff Houston Startup Business Plan Competition. These programs provide business education resources, opportunities for mentorship, and specialized business development services. Through 1-1 business development counseling, OBO's Business Development Manager assists small businesses, regardless of certification, with operational and financial readiness to help them succeed in securing contract opportunities and growing their capacity. These initiatives increase the number of certified companies that regularly and successfully participate in the government procurement process.

**OBO Solutions Center** - This is a "one stop shop" for people wishing to start or operate a business in the Houston Metropolitan Area. Services include free resource guides containing information on relevant permits and licenses; technical assistance; access to capital; the provision of business management counseling courtesy of SCORE; loan financing and loan packaging assistance courtesy of CDFIs; and the creation of business workshops and programs on a number of business-related topics. OBO's weekly e-blast of networking and procurement opportunities are produced by the OBO Solutions Center.

**Title VI Compliance** - Coordinates with City departments to ensure non-discrimination in the City's activities and its delivery of programs and services.



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