

## Frequently Asked Questions

**What is certification?** An application procedure completed by a business enterprise to participate as a minority, women, or small business enterprise under the M/W/SBE program.

**What is a Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)?** A for-profit Business Enterprise that is at least fifty-one percent (51%) owned by one or more persons who are members of one of minority groups set forth. For purposes of this program minority business enterprises must reside within Shelby County and possess a Shelby County, Tennessee business license.

**What is a Woman Business Enterprise (WBE)?** A for-profit Business Enterprise that is at least fifty-one percent (51%) owned by one or more persons who are female. For purposes of this program woman business enterprises must reside within Shelby County and possess a Shelby County, Tennessee business license.

**What is a Small Business Enterprise (SBE)?** Business that meets the federal small business size standards and is independently owned and operated, is organized for profit, and is not dominant in its field. Size standards based on an industry-by-industry basis. (See 13 CFR 121). Small business size standards matched to industry NAICS codes are published by the Small Business Administration and are available at <http://www.sba.gov/content/table-small-business-size-standards>. For purposes of this program small business enterprises must be located within the Shelby County and possess a Shelby County, Tennessee business license.

**How do I apply for a MBE, WBE, or SBE certification?** The Shelby County Schools MWSBE Office does not certify M/W/SBE businesses. You must complete your certification with an official certifying agency. You can find the list of certifying agencies [here](#).

**How long does the certification process take?** Each certification agency has a separate process; it generally takes approximately 60-90 days once a completed certification application is received.

**How much does a certification cost?** The cost of certifying your business depends on the agency. You can find out more information about each certifying agency we accept [here](#).

**Why are there so many types of certifications?** Just as there are different types of businesses, each certifying body has different criteria according to its primary focus. Prior to seeking certification, you

should thoroughly examine your business and its target markets to determine which, if any, certifications can provide more opportunities to your company.

**As a SBE, will I be required to submit personal net worth documentation?** The SBE applicant must demonstrate that the net worth of each owner does not exceed \$1,320,000, exclusive of principal residence and the value of the owner's interest in the certified SBE.

**What types of contracting opportunities are available with Shelby County Schools?**

- Architectural and Engineering Services
- Construction
- Goods and Supplies
- Non-Professional Services
- Professional Services

**Do certifications expire?** Yes. The certifying agency will inform the applicant of the certification expiration date.