

**GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAM
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)**

Acronyms

CFR: Code of Federal Regulation

DBE: Disadvantage Business Enterprise

DOAS: Georgia Department of Administrative Services

EEO: GDOT Office of Equal Employment Opportunity

FHWA: Federal Highway Administration

GDOT: Georgia Department of Transportation

IRS: Federal Internal Revenue Service

SB: Small Business

SBA or USSBA: US Small Business Administration

SBP: GDOT Small Business Program

1. **What is a Small Business?** To be eligible as a small business concern, your business must satisfy the SBA's size standard for your industry, be operated for profit, be independently owned and operated, and be based in the U.S., making significant contributions to the U.S. economy. And under the program your Annual gross receipts cannot exceed \$22.41 million and still be considered a small business.
2. **Is this a minority or female program?** No, the program is a race and gender neutral program.
3. **Does the program have a goal?** No, the intent of the program is to facilitate prime and subcontract opportunities of a size and scope that can reasonably be performed by competing small businesses including Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs)
4. **Will this program take away from, or compete with the DBE/WBE program?** No, the focus of the SB program is to aid all program small businesses in developing and/ or expanding their businesses to competitively bid on projects as primes and subcontractors. GDOT Contracts do not have a Small Business goal.
5. **How do I benefit by registering as a Small Business with GDOT?** The department intends to aid registered small businesses through training services and bidding opportunities. This is a new program, as the program evolves so will the services.
6. **Will I be guaranteed work with GDOT?** No, it is a competitive program to aid the small business through the bidding processes.
7. **Does a DBE/WBE have to be registered as a SB?** No, a certified DBE/WBE already meets the criteria of a small business and will receive any and all benefits of the program.
8. **How do I become registered?** See also question and answer no. 10. Complete the registration application, send the notarized application along with the USSBA determination result report to :

**Georgia Department of Transportation
Office of Equal Employment Opportunities- Small Business Program
One Georgia Center
600 West Peachtree Street, 7th floor
Atlanta, Georgia 30308**

Instructions for completing the application are provided on the SBP webpage. The Department will notify you by email when the registration is complete. Questions may be directed to sbp@dot.ga.gov .

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9. **How does this process benefit suppliers?** The department intends to aid registered small businesses through training services and bidding opportunities. This is a new program, as the program evolves so will the services.
10. **How long will the Small Business registration process take?** Prior to registering with the SB Program, contractors and consultants must first be registered or prequalified through the [Office of Procurement's Transportation Services](#) Procurement Section. Suppliers must be registered with the [Georgia Department of Administrative Service](#).

Once registered with the appropriate office to do business with GDOT, the SB application may begin. The application is a very simple form that must be notarized. The Georgia Supreme Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority provides a directory of notaries across the state at <http://www.gscca.org/search/notary/search.asp> . Once the application is received, it will be reviewed and evaluated. The Department may require the Small Business to furnish any pertinent information deemed necessary to verify the statements made in the affidavit or regarding the ability, standing and general reputation of the business. If any request for additional information is requested, it will be done so within 30 days from receipt of the application. After all registration documents have been received, the Businesses will be notified, within 30 days, by email of the acceptance decision into the program.

11. **Is there a cost associated with the becoming registered?** No, there are no fees.
12. **Does a Small Business have to be bonded?** Yes, if bidding as a Prime. See the Contract Proposal and Specification 103.07. A prime may require a bond from a Subcontractor; however, no Subcontracts shall in any case release the Prime Contractor of his/her liability under the Contract and Bonds.
13. **What is the difference between a Prequalified and Registered Business/ Vendor?** All firm's/ vendors wishing to do roadway construction business with GDOT or GDOT contractors, must be registered or prequalified. Before submitting a bid in excess of \$2,000,000, the Bidder shall have been **prequalified** with the Department and received a Certificate of Qualification in accordance with the Rules and Regulations approved and adopted by the State Transportation Board. Bidders submitting bids of \$2,000,000 or less shall have been **registered** with the Department.
14. **How does a small business become registered or prequalified to do business with GDOT?** Instructions to become registered or prequalified are available through the [Office of Procurement's Transportation Services Procurement Section](#). The **Prequalification** link can be found under "[Doing Business](#)" on the GDOT webpage. Suppliers must register with DOAS by following the procedures established through the [Team Georgia Marketplace](#).
15. **How can a SB application be rejected or denied?** If the application is incomplete, has obvious errors, or there is reasonable evidence that the statements made on the application are false. The Office of Equal Opportunity maintains the right to reject the SB eligibility of any business providing a SB notification under SB regulations to qualify as a small business. If, it is determined that a business submitted a false notification, letter, or documents of its SB status, GDOT reserves the right to apply sanctions to remove the firms eligibility and other sanction which include, but not limited to, denial of bidding opportunities, suspension , or removal from GDOT bidders list. If, a determination is made to suspend or debar the business, GDOT shall provide written notice of the suspension, which shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the contractor.
16. **Will my financial records be audited?** They may be requested, only for verification purposes to ascertain the eligibility of the Business. By signing the registration application the Department reserves the right at any time to require the Small Business to furnish any pertinent information deemed necessary to verify the statements made in the affidavit or regarding the ability, standing and general reputation of the business. The Small Business acknowledges that refusal to permit such inquiries shall be grounds for denial of registration.

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17. **How long is the registration good for?** One (1) year. A directory of all small businesses will be posted on the SBP website with the firm's registration date. The registration date will be the date the firm was accepted by GDOT into the program. The expiration date will be exactly one (1) year from the registration date.
18. **How does a firm become recertified?** The firm must still be registered or prequalified to do business with GDOT. The firm will simply send in the recertification form supplied by GDOT on the SBP webpage. The Department reserves the right to require the Small Business to furnish any pertinent information deemed necessary to verify the statements made in the affidavit or regarding the ability, standing and general reputation of the business.
19. **If the firm exceeds the program, what's the process?** If a firm's average annual gross receipts over the past three (3) years exceed \$22.41 million, the firm can no longer be considered a small business under the program terms, and will be graduated from the program. The determination will be made during the annual recertification process. The firm will receive a written notice of the graduation, which shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the contractor. If at any time the firm's 3 year annual gross receipts fall below the program's current cap, the firm may reapply to the program.
20. **What if a firm has not been in business for three (3) years?** In the circumstance of a new company that has been in business less than three (3) years, the average weekly gross receipts multiplied by 52 will be accepted as the firm's Average Gross Receipts determination.
21. **Is there an appeal process?** The current program policies do not guarantee an appeal process. However, because denial into the program or graduation from the program is based on the firm's annual gross receipts, if the firm believes an error has been made in their own financial records as a result of an audit, and/or a correction made to the Internal Revenue Service, a second review of their corrected records may be granted. A correction must have been filed with the IRS prior to recertification.
22. **How does a firm obtain a copy of the contract proposals and specifications?** The Department provides current specifications, regulations, and policies through [THE SOURCE](#) located through GDOT's "[Doing Business](#)" webpage section.

If you questions have not been answered above, please contact the SBP Manager via sbp@dot.ga.gov .