



WOMEN'S
BUSINESS
COUNCIL
—
SOUTHWEST

Are you a woman business owner?

Do you own, control and operate 51 percent or more of your business? If you do, learn how becoming a certified Women's Business Enterprise (WBE) can help grow your business!

The Women's Business Council – Southwest (WBCS) administers the national Women's Business Enterprise National Council's (WBENC) certification. WBENC certification is the most widely recognized and respected certification in the United States for women's business enterprises (WBE).

WBCS is a membership organization composed of over 1,000 women-owned businesses and major corporations throughout the southwest. ***Its mission is to grow certified women-owned businesses.***

Utilizing WBENC's national standard for certification, the WBCS administers the certification within our four-state region including the central and north Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Arkansas. The annual cost of certification processing and membership is based on the annual revenue amount submitted on the application:

- Revenue <1M \$300
- Revenue \$1 to \$5M \$500
- Revenue \$5 to \$10M \$750
- Revenue >\$10M \$1,000

The online application and a review of the certification standards and procedures can be accessed at the WBENC website, www.wbenc.org. In order for a business to meet the WBENC standard for certification the business must be at least 51 percent owned, controlled and operated by women.

Consider how certification and membership can benefit your business:

- Certification and membership in the WBCS can result in added business with existing customers as well as new relationships with over 80 corporate members of the WBCS. In addition, your company is listed in an online national database utilized by thousands of corporations and government entities throughout the nation who accept the WBENC certification.
- Provide value add to your customers. As an established, successful woman-owned business, you have broad knowledge in securing business with large corporations and/or the government. Certification of your business allows you to provide added value to your customers by enabling them to "count" you in their supplier diversity spend goals and contractual obligations.
- It's an added marketing tool for you. Membership enables a "warm" call versus a "cold" call. Most corporations are familiar with the national WBE certification. This provides you with a conversation starter that you are a certified WBE.
- The national WBENC conference and business fair and other WBENC recognition events provide opportunities to showcase your company nationally.
- You can help other women business owners be successful through sharing your knowledge and experience.
- You can develop (or expand) your own supplier diversity program of purchasing from women-owned businesses and gain access to other certified women owned firms in virtually all industries.



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WBE Certification Self- Assessment

Though there are many benefits to being Women's Business Enterprise (WBE) certified, not all businesses are ready to start the certification process.

Take this short self-assessment to determine if your business is ready for certification.

1) Is your company target market other businesses or is it individual buyers?

Mainly, other corporations (usually large national) and government agencies request WBE certification. If your target customer base is mostly individual buyers, WBE certification may not be beneficial to you.

2) Does your business have the capacity to provide large contracts with quality services and/or products on a timely basis?

Corporate and government contracts open to WBEs may be larger than the contracts many small businesses are used to fulfilling. Your business must be prepared to deliver on larger contracts in a timely and qualitative manner.

3) Are you willing to divulge proprietary information about your business including start-up investment sources, tax returns and compensation records?

The certification application process is a voluntary analysis of your business and not intended to be a personal invasion but it may feel like one. The WBCS certification committee must analyze proprietary documents in order to determine the eligibility of your business. Requiring these documents also speaks to the credibility of the certification. All information and documents received are confidential.

4) Do you have the time and resources to make WBE certification work for your company?

WBE certification is a marketing tool. It does not "entitle" your company to corporate and government contracts. Once your business is certified you will then need to invest time and energy into developing a marketing campaign that targets corporations that need your product or service. Attending other WBCS events and educational events after you are certified will also help you to network and meet some of the corporate representatives that target women owned businesses. But it all takes time and some resources.

If you answered yes to the questions above, then want to learn more go to our Web site at www.wbcswest.org or call (817)299-0566 or Toll Free (866)451-5997

Direct any certification questions to the WBCS Certification Team
Anita Steele – asteel@wbcswest.org (817)299-0566, Ext 206
Kelly Francis – kfrancis@wbcswest.org (817)299-0566 Ext 210



Frequently Asked Questions about WBE Certification

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What is it? Why do I need it?

Many of the nation's private and public corporations and government entities have a Woman Business Enterprise (WBE) Goals program. WBE's must meet a standard and be certified as such before contracts with them can be counted towards meeting the program goal. As a "Certified" WBE you have an additional marketing tool to get you in the door for consideration by major corporations throughout the country. WBCS has an agreement with the Texas Building & Procurement Commission whereby we screen our certification applicants for HUB (Historically Underutilized Business) certification in addition to our WBE certification. This is a giant step forward in streamlining the certification process for women business owners. WBEs interested in doing business with the State of Texas are now able to apply for the required HUB certification through the WBCS at no additional cost along with the national WBE certification that we already provide.

What are the qualifications for certification?

1. The business must be at least 51% Owned, Operated, and Managed by a woman (or women) at the time of application.
2. It's highly recommended the business be open for at least six months at the time of application.
3. The business owner must be a U.S. citizen or Legal Resident alien.

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. The certification criteria is established by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC). WBENC provides a national certification standard and an Internet accessible database of certified women's business enterprises and private sector corporations throughout the United States. WBEs interested in doing business with the State of Texas are now able to apply for the required HUB certification through the WBCS at no additional cost along with the national WBE certification that we already provide.

How long is the WBENC certification process?

If the application is complete the process can take from 60 to 90 days. If firms fail to submit complete information it delays the process. Actual site visits are conducted the first year and then every other year thereafter upon recertification.

How long is WBENC certification in effect?

Certification must be renewed annually. Members are sent a recertification packet 60 days prior to expiration.



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What can WBCS membership provide for me?

WBCS Certification is nationally recognized by more than 500 private sector corporations (such as American Airlines, Southwest Airlines, Hewlett-Packard, Frito-Lay, IBM, Xerox, TI, Verizon, etc), and is required by many corporations before they can extend a contract to you as a woman business owner. This certification serves as an opportunity for you to access corporations and government entities, including many public entities like the City of Dallas. WBEs interested in doing business with the State of Texas are now be able to apply for the required HUB certification through the WBCS at no additional cost along with the national WBE certification that we already provide.

Through membership, you also have the opportunity to network with over 80 local Sustaining Corporate Members, as well as other member women business owners. Our annual education programs, such as Harvesting Partnerships and Power to Potential provide solutions and resources for you to use in growing your business.

All certified WBE Members are listed in our national database, which is accessed by corporate purchasers and buyers, as well as WBEs. The database allows its users to compile information on qualified suppliers, thus promoting your business to those who are specifically interested in your services. WBE members, who are also certified as HUBs, will also be listed in the Texas Building & Procurement Commission database.

How can I become certified?

Go to our Web site at www.wbcsouthwest.org and click on "certification" to be linked to the WBENC Web site where you can start and complete your application online. The certification process includes an application review, site visit and final recommendation. Processing / membership fees are based on annual revenue submitted on your application.

The following non-refundable, annual fees apply:

Revenue less than \$1M	\$300
Revenue \$1M to \$5M	\$500
Revenue \$5M to \$10M	\$750
Revenue greater than \$10M	\$1,000

Once we receive your completed application, please allow 60-90 days for processing. If you have additional questions, please contact the Certification Team

- Anita Steele (asteele@wbcsouthwest.org), (817)299-0566, ext 206
- Kelly Francis (kfrancis@wbcsouthwest.org), (817)299-0566, ext 210

Our Toll Free number is (866)451-5997.



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WBCS Annual Events

In addition to the following Annual Events, the Council hosts numerous educational programs, as well as monthly "table topic" luncheons for its members. In outlying areas (like Austin, Arkansas, El Paso, Oklahoma and New Mexico) quarterly networking events are being planned for members and non-members.

❖ ***Parade of Stars Awards Gala – January 27, 2011***

The Council honors its best and brightest at this elegant event. Join the celebration and find out who will be the winners of our eight prestigious awards.

❖ ***Southwest Women's businessWORKS! – April 5, 2011***

Southwest Women's *businessWORKS!*, held at the Irving Convention Center in Irving, Texas, is an event designed for endless opportunities. This one-day event features a unique "WBE Showcase", a trade fair where our WBEs are the exclusive exhibitors. This format allows suppliers/buyers/corporations to zero in on you at a more focused level. There is also a chance to meet with major corporations in the afternoon to discuss their procurement engagement process. Don't miss out on the breakfast and networking reception.

❖ ***Harvesting Partnerships – September 8, 2011***

Harvesting Partnerships, held at the Hyatt Regency DFW Airport Hotel, is our educational symposium featuring panel discussions and seminars on issues facing WBEs and corporations. A networking luncheon gives WBEs the opportunity to sit with the corporation of their choice.

❖ ***Power to Potential – November 2011***

Power to Potential is the Council's "Procurement Event of the Year" giving women business owners more of what they want ... BUSINESS! The event features industry sessions, Suppliers to Buyer appointments, Done Deals™ Celebration, Annual Meeting and a networking reception.

Visit our web site at www.wbcswest.org for information and to register



Women's Business Council - Southwest Committee Opportunities

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As a WBE member of WBCS, serving on a committee is one of the best ways to fully utilize your membership, meet fellow members and serve the Council. By noting an interest in one of the WBCS committees, a staff member will contact you with more information.

WBCS General Committees

Certification

Reviews application and supporting documents for WBE certification; conducts site visits and makes recommendations on the files reviewed; ensures the integrity of the certification process.

Time commitment: Monthly 3+ hours committee meeting and monthly assigned site visits 3+ hours

Done Deals™

Tracks the growth of business between Corporate sustaining members and WBE members; encourages participation in Done Deals programs throughout the year; fine-tune criteria on Done Deals, presents recognition award, and increase Done Deal reporting.

Time commitment: 4 hours quarterly.

Education

Develops educational and networking programs, and monitors member satisfaction; plans existing and new programs for WBE members.

Time commitment: 1 ½ hour monthly

Niche Recruitment

Develops ways to recruit WBEs in the Summit niche (revenue >\$15 million) and women of color niche.

Time commitment: 8 hours quarterly

Regional

Provides input regarding regional presence, business development and partnering opportunities outside of the DFW area.

Time commitment: 3-4 hours quarterly

Sustaining Member Retention

Develops programs on retaining current sustaining members.

Time commitment: 3-4 hours quarterly

Welcoming

Contacts new members to greet and provide overview of membership opportunities on a one-on-one basis; acts as Greeter upon, request, at other WBCS events and meetings.

Time commitment: 6+ hours quarterly

Special Event Committees

All event committees serve to brainstorm about new ideas for each event. They also organize the event and work in areas such as sponsorship, volunteers, workshop organization, silent auction / donations, publicity and various other logistical needs. On average the time commitment consists of one meeting every three to four weeks for up to two hours and additional work of 30 minutes a week. Committee meetings begin no more than six months prior to the event.

Parade of Stars Awards Gala

Evening reception and awards program that celebrates the outstanding members of the Council, in January.

Southwest Women's businessWORKS!

Half-day WBE exhibit, Corporate Mixer, and evening reception with a breakfast and luncheon in April.

Harvesting Partnerships

Educational seminar for WBE's with a networking luncheon, workshops in September.

Power to Potential

The procurement event of the year. Business forum (with nearly 50 corporations represented), Supplier to Buyer appointments and networking reception.