Frequently Asked Questions

Small, Woman-Owned, and Minority-Owned (SWaM) Program

Q: What is a SWaM Vendor?
A: A SWaM vendor is a Small, Women-owned or Minority-owned business that has been certified through the Commonwealth by Department of Minority Business Enterprise (DMBE). For more information please visit http://www.dmbe.virginia.gov/.

Q: How does a SWaM business become certified?
A: All qualifying small, women or minority owned businesses are strongly encouraged to become certified. They can be certified by completing the initial certification application and submitting required documents online at http://www.dmbe.virginia.gov/swamcert.html. The Department of Minority Business (DMBE) will contact the vendor to request additional documents or provide the SWaM certification number. Please contact to DMBE at 1-888-729-6233 for further information on certification process.

Q: Am I required to use SWaM vendors if non SWaM vendor is less expensive than SWaM vendor?
A: No. SWaM vendors shall be utilized when prices are fair and reasonable. However, all efforts shall be made to utilize a SWaM vendor.

Q: How do I find certified SWaM vendor?
A: Certified SWaM vendors are listed in Department of Minority Business Enterprise (DMBE) database. You can search for SWaM vendor by company name, NIGP commodity code description, or zip code.