



Ohio Revised Code

Section 122.924 [Former R.C 123.154, amended and renumbered by H.B. 110, 134th General Assembly, effective 9/30/2021] Women-owned business enterprise program.

Effective: June 1, 2022

Legislation: Senate Bill 105

(A) As used in this section:

"Women-owned business enterprise" means any individual, partnership, corporation, or joint venture of any kind that is owned and controlled by women who are United States citizens and residents of this state or of a reciprocal state.

"Owned and controlled" means that at least fifty-one per cent of the business, including corporate stock if it is a corporation, is owned by women and that such owners have control over the day-to-day operations of the business and an interest in the capital, assets, and profits and losses of the business proportionate to their percentage of ownership. In order to qualify as a women-owned business, a business shall have been owned by such owners at least one year.

(B) The director of development shall establish a business assistance program known as the women-owned business enterprise program and shall adopt rules in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code to administer the program that do all of the following:

(1) Establish procedures by which a business enterprise may apply for certification as a women-owned business enterprise;

(2) Establish standards to determine when a women-owned business enterprise no longer qualifies for women-owned business enterprise certification;

(3) Establish a system to make publicly available a list of women-owned business enterprises certified under this section;

(4) Establish a process to mediate complaints and to review women-owned business enterprise



certification appeals;

(5) Implement an outreach program to educate potential participants about the women-owned business enterprise program;

(6) Establish a system to assist state agencies in identifying and utilizing women-owned business enterprises in their contracting processes;

(7) Implement a system of self-reporting by women-owned business enterprises as well as an on-site inspection process to validate the qualifications of women-owned business enterprises.

(C) Business and personal financial information and trade secrets submitted by women-owned business enterprise applicants to the director pursuant to this section are not public records for purposes of section 149.43 of the Revised Code, unless the director presents the financial information or trade secrets at a public hearing or public proceeding regarding the applicant's eligibility to participate in the program.

(D) The director of development, upon approval of the attorney general, may enter into a reciprocal agreement with the appropriate officials of one or more states, when the other state has a business assistance program or programs substantially similar to the women-owned business enterprise program of this state. The agreement shall provide that a business certified by the other state as a women-owned business enterprise, which is owned and controlled by a resident or residents of that other state, shall be considered a women-owned business enterprise in this state under this section. The agreement shall provide that a women-owned business enterprise certified under this section, which is owned and controlled by a resident or residents of this state, shall be considered certified in the other state and eligible for programs of that state that provide an advantage or benefit to such businesses.

(E)(1) Any person who has been certified as a women-owned business enterprise under this section may present the person's certification to a political subdivision as evidence that that person is eligible to participate in any public initiatives or strategies that the political subdivision has established to increase the participation, representation, or inclusion of women in business opportunities, and in any programs the political subdivision may have that set aside a certain amount of public contracts to



award to women-owned business enterprises.

(2) When considering this evidence, a political subdivision shall defer to the department's determination that the person is a woman, that the person owns and controls the person's business, and that the person has owned the person's business for at least one year.