



U.S. Small Business  
Administration

In summer 2020, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) will publish a final rule that will provide a free online application process for women-owned small businesses to be certified and eligible to participate in SBA's Women-Owned Small Business Federal Contract Program for access to federal contracts restricted for Women-Owned Small Businesses (WOSBs) or Economically Disadvantaged Women-Owned Small Businesses (EDWOSBs).

The new certification program will bolster the number of federal contract awards to WOSB and EDWOSB-certified businesses and better empower agencies to meet the 5 percent federal contracting goal for women-owned small businesses. In preparations for this new rule, SBA is notifying all firms that have made a designation of WOSB or EDWOSB.

When the new rule is finalized, the WOSB and EDWOSB repository will transition to a new online platform for program applicants that will include many technical improvements. SBA will have an operational platform in May.

**All Firms Will Have To:**

- All firms, whether self-certified or certified by a third-party certifier (TPC), will need to create a new profile.
- Firms certified by a TPC will be able to upload their TPC certificate in order to get SBA-certified.
- Documents in [certify.sba.gov](https://certify.sba.gov) will not transfer to the new platform. Firms with documentation in [certify.sba.gov](https://certify.sba.gov) should download their documents, make the necessary updates, and prepare to create a new application.

NOTE: Firms that choose not to participate in SBA's WOSB Contracting Program may continue to identify as a women-owned small business in SAM.gov for the purposes of competing for other contracts. However, they WILL NOT be eligible to pursue federal contracts restricted for SBA-certified WOSBs and/or EDWOSBs.

To review eligibility requirements for the WOSB Federal Contract Program firms can visit the [WOSB Ready website](#) to see if they qualify.

**Firms With Other Certifications:**

SBA also will accept other certifications from approved programs and sources. Outlined below are currently accepted certifications:

**Third-Party Certification (TPC):** TPCs may certify firms at a cost. Firms certified by third-party certifying entities as a WOSB or EDWOSB are only required to submit their TPC certificate to the WOSB Repository. Please note that SBA only accepts certification from one of the following approved certifying entities: El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, National Women Business Owners Corporation, U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce, and Women's Business Enterprise National Council.

**Other Federal Government Entities:** Firms certified by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Center for Verification and Evaluation (CVE) can submit their CVE certificate along with evidence that they are owned and controlled by one or more women to demonstrate eligibility for the WOSB Program. CVE-certified firms seeking EDWOSB status will have to complete an additional application with SBA for EDWOSB certification.

**8(a)-Certified Firms:** Women-owned and controlled firms that participate in the 8(a) Business Development Program qualify as EDWOSBs and WOSBs. 8(a)-certified firms are required to provide their initial approval letter and most recent annual review letter from SBA if they have participated in the 8(a) Program for at least a year. Until the final rule is published, a firm must continue to maintain required self-certification documents in [certify.sba.gov](https://certify.sba.gov) to be eligible for WOSB/EDWOSB set-asides. Notice will be issued to all firms when the new platform is available to receive applications for certification. To see a detailed explanation of documents required of your firm, [please visit this link](#).

Please note, the current eligibility requirements to qualify as a WOSB or an EDWOSB are defined in [Title 13 Part 127 Subpart B of the Code of Federal Regulations](#) (CFR). You also can get a preliminary assessment of whether you qualify at the [SBA's Certify website](#).

Should you have any specific questions about this process or the required documentation, please email [wosb@sba.gov](mailto:wosb@sba.gov) with your firm's name and DUNS.

Sincerely,

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