

Port of Portland Disparity Study Frequently Asked Questions



The Port of Portland (Port) is conducting a Disparity Study to ensure that disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE), airport concession disadvantaged business enterprise (ACDBE), and minority, women and service disabled veteran businesses (MWVESB) have equal access to contracting opportunities and that the Port's current programs remain legally defensible and administratively successful.

What is a "Disparity Study"?

A disparity study involves compilation of evidence to determine whether the Port has a strong basis for implementing race- and gender-conscious contracting remedies and narrowly tailoring any race- and gender-conscious remedies. This includes statistical evidence of disparities, if any, between the availability of DBEs, ACDBEs and MWVESBs and their utilization on Port contracts and related subcontracts and throughout the area economy as a whole.

The study will further examine factors necessary for entrepreneurial success, such as access to business capital, bonding, networks, suppliers, etc. The study also will gather anecdotal evidence of any continuing effects of past or present race and sex discrimination, and the impact of the current DBE, ACDBE and MWVESB, programs. Finally, the study will review the Port's current programs and activities and make recommendations for future initiatives and enhancements.

Who is conducting the study?

Colette Holt & Associates (CHA), a nationally recognized expert team on disparity studies and DBE, ACDBE and MWB programs, in conjunction with local partner, F.M. Burch & Associates.

Will the study determine the Port's DBE, ACDBE MWVB, goals?

The study will provide a determination of the availability of DBEs, ACDBEs and MWVESBs as a percentage of all firms in the Port's industry and geographic market areas, as well as other relevant statistical and anecdotal data. This information can be used to assist the Port in setting its project-specific and overall goals.

How can business owners and other interested parties be involved?

The participation of business owners and other interested parties (trade associations, advocacy groups, community organizations, etc.) is critical to the study's outcomes in two important ways. The study team will contact businesses to confirm information on specific contracts and/or to receive additional contract information that is currently not available to the Port. The Study team will also conduct interviews with business owners and host public meetings to collect information regarding discriminatory barriers and the Port's DBE, ACDBE and MWVESB programs.

How will public meetings and business owner interviews be conducted and how do I participate?

CHA will host public meetings to introduce the study methodology and process. Small group interviews of business owners will be conducted in multi-session meetings. Participants who are unable to attend the meetings or the interviews but who would like to provide input to the Study are encouraged to submit written statements at the study email: portofportland_study@mwbelaw.com.

When will the study be completed?

The study is anticipated to be completed Spring 2018.

Where can I find additional information?

For additional information, visit the study website at portofportland.disparity-study.com.

Who do I contact with questions?

You may contact the Study team via portofportland_study@mwbelaw.com or you may contact Kimberly Mitchell-Phillips, Small Business Development Program Manager, DBELO/ACDBELO, Port of Portland and Study Manager, Kimberly.Mitchell-Phillips@portofportland.com or (503) 415-6587.