

**Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning  
IHL Executive Office**

**Section: Administrative Policies**

**Subject: Small Business, Women & Minority Owned  
Businesses**

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Date	November, 2010
Supersedes	January, 2008

**Purpose**

To establish guidelines for the utilization of minority-owned, women-owned and small businesses in the procurement activities of IHL Executive Office.

**Overview**

IHL Executive Office is committed to the establishment, preservation and strengthening of small, women- and minority-owned businesses. These businesses will be solicited and encouraged to participate in the procurement activities of the IHL Executive Office, and records will be maintained documenting such solicitation efforts and participation. Further, the IHL Executive Office will encourage its contractors to provide for the participation of small businesses and businesses owned by women and minorities through partnerships, joint ventures, subcontractors, and other contractual opportunities.

**Small Business**

For the purposes of classification and reporting, a small business is defined as a concern, including affiliates, which is independently owned and operated, is not dominant in the field of operation in which it is contracting, and it can further qualify under the criteria concerning number of employees, average annual receipts, or other criteria, as is or may be prescribed by the United States Small Business Administration.

**Women-owned Business**

For the purpose of classification and reporting, a woman-owned business is defined as a concern that is at least 51 percent owned by a woman or women who also control and operate it. In this context, “control” means exercising the power to make policy decisions, and “operate” means being actively involved in the day-to-day management.

**Minority-owned Business**

For the purpose of classification and reporting, a minority-owned business is defined as a concern that is at least 51 percent owned, and also controlled and operated by a person or people in designated socially and economically disadvantaged groups. These groups are African Americans, Hispanic

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Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, Eskimos, Aleuts, and other individuals found to be socially disadvantaged by the United States Small Business Administration under Section 8(a) of the Small Business Act (15USC637(a)). In this context, “control” means exercising power to make policy decisions and “operate” means being actively involved in the day-to-day management.

**Procedures for Providing Business Opportunities**

The Office of Purchasing and Property identifies and registers small, women- and minority-owned businesses on the IHL Executive Office vendor database. The database is maintained and available to all buying staff and user departments with delegated purchasing authority for the purpose of soliciting quotes, bids and proposals from these firms. In order to expand its minority business database, the IHL Executive Office uses lists provided by:

- Mississippi Development Authority;
- U. S. Small Business Administration;
- Mississippi Contract Procurement Center.

Procurement procedure for increasing bidding opportunities for minority - and women-owned businesses requires the buying staff to solicit these firms as defined below:

- quotations obtained under \$5,000 should include minority- and women-owned businesses to the extent practicable;
- departments have delegated authority to make purchases up to \$5,000 (noncompetitive threshold) and are encouraged to involve minority- and women-owned businesses in their procurement activities;
- solicitations between \$5,000 and \$50,000 should include a minimum of two minority- and/or women-owned businesses where practicable, provided there is adequate registration by commodity.

Any solicitation wherein the aforementioned number of minority- and/or women-owned businesses will not be solicited requires advance written approval from the Director of Purchasing.

A copy of all Requests for Advertised Sealed Bids must be mailed to the **Mississippi Contract Procurement Center**. This center maintains a minority and small business data base from all over the U. S. and sends bid copies to those on their data base.

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The Office of Purchasing and Property staff will participate in events that focus on developing business relationships between governmental agencies/institutions and small, women- and minority-owned businesses. The staff are members of the Mississippi Association of Governmental Purchasing Agents. This association promotes utilization of minority-owned, women-owned, and small businesses. These staff members will meet representatives of small, women- and minority-owned businesses to encourage them to register with the Procurement Center and to educate these firms on the IHL Executive Office procurement policies and procedures.

The buying staff will encourage all vendors, through negotiations and/or through explicit procurement diversity goals stated in the solicitation, to establish partnerships and/or subcontractors with small, women- and minority-owned businesses.

User departments at the IHL Executive Office are encouraged to support procurement diversity using their \$5,000 delegated purchasing authority. This encouragement/ education is provided to departments through formal fiscal training classes and regularly scheduled departmental visits conducted by the buying staff. Small, women- and minority-owned businesses are encouraged to establish business relationships with user departments that may require products and or services from their firm.

**Goal Setting, Monitoring, and Reporting**

The IHL Executive Office's goal is to increase its annual expenditures with minority- and women-owned businesses each fiscal year. The Procurement Center monitors progress towards achieving these expenditure goals through a collection and analysis of current fiscal year-to-date minority- and women-owned business expenditures. Current fiscal year-to-date expenditures are compared with the prior fiscal year-to-date period, historical spending trends and the current fiscal year expenditure goals. Expenditures to these firms will be through direct payments from the IHL Executive Office, and payments made using the Corporate Purchasing Card.

The IHL Executive Office is committed to increasing its expenditures with minority- and women-owned businesses and to meeting its annual expenditure goals with these businesses. To achieve this goal, the Procurement Center performs the following: 1) ensures its procurement officers are active participants in minority business outreach organizations and events in order to develop business relationships and to identify additional minority sources; 2) demonstrates a commitment to providing business opportunities to minority- and women-owned businesses; 3) explicitly encourages prime contractors to subcontract to minority- and women-owned businesses on Board contracts; 4) evaluates buyers' performance on involving minority- and women-owned businesses in procurement opportunities.