

# New York State's WBE Program

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Did you know? New York State offers a Women's Business Enterprise Certification Program ("WBE") through Empire State Development's Division of Minority and Business Development. The WBE is designed to offer opportunities for businesses where women hold a majority ownership. The mission of WBE certification is to promote equal economic opportunities for women businesses by eliminating barriers in participating in New York State contracts.

The four initial criteria New York State considers for those considering applying are:

- 1) at least 51% of the business is owned by women;
- 2) the ownership held by women is real, substantial, and continuing;
- 3) women ownership has and exercises the authority to operate the business and make day-to-day decisions; and
- 4) the personal net worth of every woman owner does not exceed 3.5 million.

If your business meets these initial criteria, then congratulations your business may want to consider applying for a WBE.

The benefits of obtaining a WBE can have wide spread effects. For starters, every WBE certified business in New York State is included in the Directory of Certified Minority and Women-Owner Business Enterprises. Many corporations and government agencies are also required to meet annual goals of contracting and working with businesses that are WBE certified and set aside projects specifically for WBE businesses. In addition, special funding is also available to WBE certified businesses.

By becoming WBE certified, your business may be eligible for these opportunities.

Prior to beginning the WBE application the full list of rules and regulations should be reviewed to ensure WBE's benefits pertains to your business. [<http://esd.ny.gov/mwbe.html>]. Please [contact me](#) or any member of the Business and Tax Department if you would like us to discuss the WBE and its process more with you.