



# California Public Utilities Commission

Date: January 3, 2014

## General Order 156 – What is Certification?

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### What is General Order 156?

General Order 156 is a CPUC supervised voluntary procurement program. The program encourages active participation of the Investor-Owned Utilities (IOUs) to procure or contract goods and services from Women – Minorities – and Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (WMDVBE).

### What is certification?

Certification is one tool that may lead to meeting majority companies in the private sector and government agency's seeking to do business with WMBEs

### What are the benefits of certification?

- Official recognition of your Women- or Minority-owned business enterprise (WMBE) status
- Promotion and visibility to the CPUC and thirty four major utilities that participate in the CPUC supplier diversity program
- Involvement frequent marketing and bid announcement events

### Why is certification important?

- Utilities can only include purchases with CPUC certified MWDVBE suppliers in its annual filings.
- Provides third party verification of ownership/control of businesses and protects both the supplier and the utility
- All Utilities utilize the CPUC Clearinghouse database when searching for diversity suppliers to include in bid opportunities
- Local, regional and national referrals of minority, women and disabled veteran owned businesses among utilities
- Access to utility sponsored educational/business development seminars, workshops, business development training.

### What are the eligibility requirements for certification?



- At least 51% owned by a WMBE
- The management-and daily business operations are controlled by one or more of those individuals

### **How long is the certification process?**

- Upon receipt of all required documents, the process takes approximately 45 days to 90 days. Factors that delay the process include:
  - Which Verification Process the applicant will use;
  - Missing documents required in the verification process;
  - Questionable or inconsistent information on the application that may require supplemental documents;
  - Whether an on-site visit is necessary, or in the case of applicants outside of California, in lieu of an onsite visit, whether a comprehensive telephone interview with the applicant is necessary

### **What is the fee for certification?**

- There is no fee for certification.

### **How long is my certification valid?**

- Up to three years.

### **Certification vs. Qualification**

Certification: Businesses verified by the Supplier Clearinghouse as a genuine diverse business enterprise.

Qualification: WMBE's who can successfully provide capabilities which could include, (but not limited to) a business plan, credentials, qualifications, and experience for those companies looking to procure products and services from the WMBE supplier.

