

**HAYS COUNTY  
PRACTICES RELATED TO  
HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES**

**1. STATEMENT OF PRACTICES**

Hays County will strive to ensure that all businesses, regardless of size, economic, social or ethnic status have an equal opportunity to participate in the County's procurement processes. The County is committed to promote full and equal business opportunity for all businesses to supply the goods and services needed to support the mission and operations of county government, and seeks to encourage the use of certified historically underutilized businesses (HUB's) through the use of race, ethnic and gender neutral means. It is the practice of Hays County to involve certified HUBs to the greatest extent feasible in the County's procurement of goods, equipment, services and construction projects while maintaining competition and quality of work standards. The County affirms the good faith efforts who recognize and practice similar business standards.

**2. DEFINITIONS**

*Historically underutilized businesses (HUBs)*, also known as a disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE), are generally business enterprises at least 51% of which is owned and the management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more persons who is/are socially and economically disadvantaged because of his/her identification as a member of certain groups, including women, Black Americans, Mexican Americans, and other Americans of Hispanic origin, Asian Americans and American Indians.

*Businesses* include firms, corporations, sole proprietorships, vendors, suppliers, contractors, subcontractors, professionals and other similar references when referring to a business that provides goods and/or services regardless of the commodity category.

*Certified HUB's* include business enterprises that meet the definition of a HUB and who meet the certification requirements of certification agencies recognized by Hays County, as expressed below.

*Statutory bid limit* refers to the Texas Local Government Code provision that requires competitive bidding for many items valued at greater than \$50,000.

**3. GUIDELINES**

- A. Hays County, its contractors, their subcontractors and suppliers, as well as all vendors of goods, equipment and services, shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, age, religion, national origin, citizenship, mental or physical disability, veteran's status or political affiliation in the award and/or performance of contracts. All entities doing business or anticipating doing business with the County shall support, encourage and

implement affirmative steps toward a common goal of establishing equal opportunity for all citizens and businesses of the County.

- B. Vendors and/or contractors desiring to participate in the HUB program must successfully complete the certification process with the State of Texas or Texas Unified Certification Program. The vendor or contractor is also required to hold a current valid certification (title) from either of these entities.
  - C. Vendors and/or contractors must be registered with the State Comptroller's web-based HUB directory and with the Comptroller's Centralized Master Bidder's List (CMBL). Hays County will solicit bids from certified HUB's for state purchasing and public works contracts.
4. Hays County will actively seek and encourage HUBs to participate in all facets of the procurement process by:
- A. Continuing to increase and monitor a database of certified HUB vendors, professionals and contractors. The database will be expanded to include products, areas of expertise and capabilities of each HUB firm.
  - B. Continuing to seek new communication links with HUB vendors, professionals and contractors to involve them in the procurement process.
  - C. Continuing to advertise bids on the County's website and in the newspapers including newspapers that target socially and economically disadvantaged communities.
5. As prescribed by law, the purchase of one or more items costing in excess of the statutory bid limit must comply with the competitive bid process. Where possible, those bids will be structured to include and encourage the participation of HUB firms in the procurement process by:
- 1. Division of proposed requisitions into reasonable lots in keeping with industry standards and competitive bid requirements.
  - 2. Where feasible, assessment of bond and insurance requirements and the designing of such requirements to reasonably permit more than one business to perform the work.
  - 3. Specifications of reasonable, realistic delivery schedules consistent with the County's actual requirements.
  - 4. Specifications, terms and conditions reflecting the County's actual requirements are clearly stated, and do not impose unreasonable or unnecessary contract requirements.
6. A HUB practice statement shall be included in all specifications. The County will consider the bidder's responsiveness to the HUB Practices in the evaluation of bids and proposals. Failure to demonstrate a good faith effort to comply with the County's HUB practices may result in a bid or proposal being considered non-responsive to specifications.
7. Nothing in this practice statement shall be construed to require the County to award a contract other than to the lowest responsive bidder as required by law. This practice is narrowly tailored in accordance with applicable law.