I. GOAL

The Ohio Department of Transportation’s (ODOT) primary goal for the DBE Supportive Services Program (DBE SSP) is to assist DBE construction and consulting heavy highway firms to compete and perform on federally funded heavy highway construction projects by providing reimbursements for the cost of items listed under section III.

II. DBE/SSP ELIGIBILITY

1. DBE firms that are not currently bidding or interested in bidding on any ODOT heavy highway construction or engineering project will be denied supportive services.

   “Interested in bidding” on projects is defined as any one of the following:
   a. Participating in meetings with ODOT representatives (having meetings on the calendar or participated in meetings within the last three months) in order to discuss potential upcoming projects.
   b. Currently participating in the ODOT Mentor Protégé Program.
   c. Attending ODOT outreach events, training/educational sessions, or bootcamp orientation within the last six months.
   d. Submitting bids or letters of interest (within the last six months).

   Please note: Supporting documentation regarding your firm’s pursuance of ODOT federally-assisted projects from the above-mentioned list of “interested in bidding” examples can be required at any time by the Supportive Services Manager.

2. DBE firms will have an annual $7,000 assistance cap limit per federal fiscal year for supportive services on a first come first serve basis. The limit applies as long as funds are available.

3. DBE firms participating in the Mentor/Protégé will receive priority supportive services over firms not participating in the Mentor/Protégé Program.
4. DBE firms must submit a Needs Assessment Survey (Supportive Services Application) each Federal Fiscal year (starting October 1st) to the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise prior to approval for any DBE Supportive Services. The Needs Assessment Survey (Supportive Services Application) is located on the Resources page at ODOT’s Division of Opportunity, Diversity, & Inclusion’s website.

5. DBE firms must submit a business plan prior to requesting any DBE Supportive Services.

6. The request for supportive services must be directly related to the operation of the firm and the firm must identify on the Request for Reimbursement Form and the Needs Assessment Survey (Supportive Services Application) the benefit it will gain by participating in the DBE Supportive Services Program.

7. DBE firms only headquartered in the state of Ohio will qualify for the Supportive Services Program. Out-of-state firms are encouraged to seek supportive services through their home state certifying agency.

8. DBE firms must be Ohio UCP-Certified at the time supportive services are requested and remain certified until the service is completed. Loss of certification will result in immediate suspension of DBE Supportive Services regardless of prior approvals. (Learn more about UPC certification.)

9. The DBE Supportive Services Program is limited only to DBE construction and consulting firms that have the capability, equipment, and experience to work on ODOT heavy highway construction and engineering projects who are actively “interested in bidding” on ODOT work (must meet the criteria on page 1, section II. DBE/SSP ELIGIBILITY).

10. THE APPROVAL FOR ANY SUPPORTIVE SERVICES IS SOLELY AT THE DISCRETION OF ODOT. If it is determined that the DBE company is misusing funds or submitting fraudulent information, the DBE company may be permanently denied from the program.

11. Receipts for the requested service must be dated within six (6) months of the request for reimbursement.

III. ITEMS THAT ARE REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

1. Technical training associated with the DBE firm’s core area of business operations.

2. Registration fees for industry related events/seminars associated with the DBE firm’s core area of business operations.

3. Membership fees for professional organizations related to DBE firm’s core area of business operations.
4. **Software and/or software licenses** associated with the DBE firm’s core area of business operations.

5. **Financial Audit/Review** will be reimbursed up to $7,000.00 (this counts toward the $7,000.00 per company cap limit) for the DBE firm’s ODOT pre-qualifications. DBE firms that have no intentions of becoming pre-qualified will be denied.

6. **Books** associated with the DBE firm’s core area of business operations.

7. **Lodging** up to $85.00 per night to DBE firms that attend seminars/trainings/industry related events within the United States that are directly related to the company’s core area of business operations. **Travel, meals, and parking are non-reimbursable expenses.**

8. **Tuition expenses** for one undergraduate course per quarter, semester or trimester. Lab fees, costs associated with purchasing books and materials may also be reimbursable providing the course is related to the company’s core area of business operations.

9. **One-on-One Consulting Services** can be reimbursed up to $7,000.00 (counting toward the per-company cap limit). One-on-one Consulting Services include Accounting, Bond Readiness/Insurance, Bidding/Estimating, Website Development, and Legal Services for ODOT contracts.

   - **Business Development/Marketing** – Services are customized to address every phase of business from start-up to growth and expansion. These services include business plan development, strategic marketing plans, designing and producing marketing communications and promotional materials. Printing costs of materials are not included in this service.
   - **Estimating and Bidding** – Services provide an organized and systematic approach to bidding and quotation submissions. The consultant teaches procedures aimed at methods to monitor the available market, bid success ratio and maximum market return, bidding and take-off, material and subcontractor solicitation, production monitoring and calculations, costs, building organization, and ODOT claims process and collections.
   - **Bond Readiness/Packaging and Insurance** – Services provide bond readiness assistance solutions involving bonding and insurance and provides a resource in resolving construction insurance and bonding issues. This service does not guarantee a bond will be issued.
   - **Accounting** – Services provided include auditing and accounting functions as well as training of DBE firms in the use of accounting software.
   - **Website Development** – Service provides innovative and creative technology solutions to assist businesses to compete in today’s marketplace.
   - **Legal Services** – Services for the review of contract agreements with ODOT for work to be completed on heavy highway or construction projects.
IV PROCESS FOR REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT

1. The Request for Reimbursement Form must be completed by the DBE firm. The DBE firm must identify the benefit it will derive from participating as it relates to doing business on ODOT projects. The Request for Reimbursement Form is located on ODOT’s Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise website: [Resources page](#).

Scroll to the bottom of the webpage to view the “Supportive Services Documents.” Click on the “DBE Supportive Services Reimbursement Request Form” to submit your request. Firms must have also completed a Needs Assessment (Supportive Services Application) and include a copy of their business plan prior to submitting a reimbursement request.

2. If you have questions about the reimbursement process, you can email ODOT’s DBE Supportive Services Section at [dot.dbe.ss@dot.ohio.gov](mailto:dot.dbe.ss@dot.ohio.gov).

3. If your firm has not received any payment from ODOT in the past, you will need to set up an account through Ohio Shared Services. To get set up in the system please go to the following website: [http://www.ohiosharedservices.ohio.gov/SuppliersForms.aspx](http://www.ohiosharedservices.ohio.gov/SuppliersForms.aspx) and complete the following forms; Supplier Information Form, IRS Form W-9 and the Authorization Agreement for Direct Deposit of EFT Payments.

4. All documentation must be uploaded in order to receive reimbursement. A “Proper Invoice” must be accompanied in addition to the items in 5-8 below.
   - **Proper Invoice** - Proper Invoice must include:
     o DBE Company Name
     o Address
     o Contact person and phone number
     o Invoice Date
     o Invoice Number
     o Invoice Amount
     o Service or Product (Do not itemize)
     o Billed to: ODOT
       1980 W Broad Street
       Columbus OH, 43223

5. Request for Reimbursement for costs associated with attendance of course/seminar/training/service must include:
   - Proof of payment (copies of cancelled checks, receipts, credit card/bank statements, paid invoices) must be submitted. Social security numbers and personal account information from receipt must be redacted.
   - Proof of successful completion of the course/seminar/training or verification of attendance by company representatives must be submitted.
o Evidence of a passing grade of “C” or better for tuition reimbursement for courses taken at a college or university.

o W-2 form verifying that the person attending the course/seminar/training is an employee of the company.

o Supporting Documentation such as:
  ✓ The relevant course/seminar/training description
  ✓ Registration fee
  ✓ Hotel stay (if any)
  ✓ Written justification of the course/seminar/training’s relevancy to the firm’s business activities

6. Request for Reimbursement for costs associated with **purchase of computer software** must be accompanied with:

   o Proof of payment (copies of cancelled checks, receipts, credit card/bank statements, paid invoices) must be submitted. Social security numbers and personal account information from receipt must be redacted.

   o Supporting Documentation such as:
      ✓ Relevant software description and how it will benefit your company
      ✓ Receipt of the software/license must be on the software company’s official letterhead

7. Request for Reimbursement for costs associated with **independent financial audit/review** must be accompanied with:

   o Proof of payment (copies of cancelled checks, receipts, credit card/bank statements, paid invoices) must be submitted. Social security numbers and personal account information from receipt must be redacted.

   o Contact information for CPA, Consultant or attorney who provided the services. ODOT may randomly conduct surveys of consultants who complete services for DBEs.

   o Supporting Documentation such as:
      ✓ Purpose for the financial audit/review (must be for ODOT pre-qualifications)
      ✓ Receipt of the financial audit/review
      ✓ Certified Public Accountant’s Letter of Engagement identifying the scope of service that was performed

8. Request for Reimbursement for One-on-one Consulting Services include Accounting, Bond Readiness/Insurance, Bidding/Estimating, Website Development, and Legal Services.

   o Proof of payment (copies of cancelled checks, receipts, credit card/bank statements, paid invoices) must be submitted. Social security numbers and personal account information from receipt must be redacted.

   o Supporting Documentation such as:
Purpose for the Consulting Services to be performed – explanation of how the consulting services help the performance of heavy highway engineering or construction
✓ Estimated cost of the Consulting Services
✓ Consultant’s receipt for services identifying the scope of service to be provided and cost to the DBE

9. The DBE Supportive Services Manager verifies that the firm is Ohio DBE certified and has the capability to perform on ODOT heavy highway construction and engineering projects.

10. The DBE Supportive Services Manager verifies that the applying firm has completed a Needs Assessment Survey (Supportive Services Application) and Business Plan. The Request for Reimbursement Form will not be processed until these items have been completed and emailed to the DBE Supportive Services Manager.

11. Verification of available DBE Supportive Services funds is performed.

12. Verification of individual DBE firm’s available DBE Supportive Services funds is performed.

13. The DBE Supportive Services Manager will make determinations to approve or deny a DBE’s request.

14. Upon approval, all documentation will be forwarded to the Office of Accounting for payment. Please note, it may take 30-60 days from submittal of reimbursement documentation in order to receive reimbursement. The reimbursement process may take up to 90 days at the end of the state fiscal year (June 30). The Supportive Services Manager will notify DBEs once the request is approved.

V APPROVAL/DENIAL OF REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT FORM

1. The Request for Reimbursement Application will be approved or denied within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the form.

2. If the request is approved, the DBE Supportive Services Manager will reserve approved funds in the tracking system pending receipt of all requested documentation.

3. An approval or denial email will be sent to the DBE. The documentation will be submitted to accounting to be paid.