

Tuesday, September 24, 2002:

LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS PREFERENCE PROGRAM TO START SOON

Firms eligible for 5% preference through County enterprise program scheduled to start on October 30th

Businesses can learn more about program at free workshop scheduled for Wednesday, October 2nd

A new local small business assistance program, which will provide firms with up to five percent preference on County bids, is scheduled to start on October 30th. The Local Small Business Enterprise Preference Program, which was recently adopted by the County Board of Supervisors, is part of the County's ongoing efforts to establish a system of incentives and allowances for small businesses to compete effectively.

The small business enterprise (SBE) program recognizes the importance of supporting local small businesses to promote a healthy and competitive business climate, which benefits the County and its residents. This gender and race neutral program is applicable to solicitations for the acquisition of goods and services.

The Local SBE Preference Program is based on the State of California's small business program. In order to be County certified as a local SBE, businesses must be certified by the State as a small business and have its principal office located in Los Angeles County for at least one year.

The County's Office of Small Business (OSB) - which aims to foster small business development and growth - will make businesses aware of the program through its ongoing outreach activities. The OSB also serves as the County Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC), funded by the U.S. Department of Defense, which trains businesses on how to obtain contracts with state and federal agencies. The OSB (www.laosb.org) is a unit of the County Community Development Commission (CDC), which serves as the region's economic and community development agency.

Carlos Jackson, Executive Director of the County CDC (www.lacdc.org), said, "Small businesses play a vital role in the local economy and their success benefits residents. This program will help small businesses compete more effectively for a portion of the County's procurement and contracting dollars. We encourage local entrepreneurs to contact us for more information."

Businesses can learn more about the new preference program at the County's "Contracting Connections" workshop scheduled on Wednesday, October 2nd, 8:00 a.m. to noon, at the Radisson Hotel, located at 6161 W. Centinela Avenue, Culver City. The half-day workshop is being co-sponsored by County Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke and the County OSB/PTAC. Contracting Connections is a free workshop series held regularly throughout the County and aims to inform firms about business contracting opportunities with the various levels of government. To register for the October 2nd workshop, please call 323-260-2311.

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