

§ 143-128.2. Minority business participation goals.

(a) The State shall have a verifiable ten percent (10%) goal for participation by minority businesses in the total value of work for each State building project, including building projects done by a private entity on a facility to be leased or purchased by the State. A local government unit or other public or private entity that receives State appropriations for a building project or other State grant funds for a building project, including a building project done by a private entity on a facility to be leased or purchased by the local government unit, where the project cost is one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) or more, shall have a verifiable ten percent (10%) goal for participation by minority businesses in the total value of the work; provided, however, a local government unit may apply a different verifiable goal that was adopted prior to December 1, 2001, if the local government unit had and continues to have a sufficiently strong basis in evidence to justify the use of that goal. On State building projects and building projects subject to the State goal requirement, the Secretary shall identify the appropriate percentage goal, based on adequate data, for each category of minority business as defined in G.S. 143-128.2(g)(1) based on the specific contract type.

Except as otherwise provided for in this subsection, each city, county, or other local public entity shall adopt, after a notice and public hearing, an appropriate verifiable percentage goal for participation by minority businesses in the total value of work for building projects.

Each entity required to have verifiable percentage goals under this subsection shall make a good faith effort to recruit minority participation in accordance with this section or G.S. 143-131(b), as applicable.

(b) A public entity shall establish prior to solicitation of bids the good faith efforts that it will take to make it feasible for minority businesses to submit successful bids or proposals for the contracts for building projects. Public entities shall make good faith efforts as set forth in subsection (e) of this section. Public entities shall require contractors to make good faith efforts pursuant to subsection (f) of this section. Each first-tier subcontractor on a construction management at risk project shall comply with the requirements applicable to contractors under this subsection.

(c) Each bidder, which shall mean first-tier subcontractor for construction manager at risk projects for purposes of this subsection, on a project bid under any of the methods authorized under G.S. 143-128(a1) shall identify on its bid the minority businesses that it will use on the project and an affidavit listing the good faith efforts it has made pursuant to subsection (f) of this section and the total dollar value of the bid that will be performed by the minority businesses. A contractor, including a first-tier subcontractor on a construction manager at risk project, that performs all of the work under a contract with its own workforce may submit an affidavit to that effect in lieu of the affidavit otherwise required under this subsection. The apparent lowest responsible, responsive bidder shall also file the following:

- (1) Within the time specified in the bid documents, either:
 - a. An affidavit that includes a description of the portion of work to be executed by minority businesses, expressed as a percentage of the total contract price, which is equal to or more than the applicable goal. An affidavit under this sub-subdivision shall give rise to a presumption that the bidder has made the required good faith or effort; or
 - b. Documentation of its good faith effort to meet the goal. The documentation must include evidence of all good faith efforts that were implemented, including any advertisements, solicitations, and evidence of other specific actions demonstrating recruitment and selection of minority businesses for participation in the contract.
- (2) Within 30 days after award of the contract, a list of all identified subcontractors that the contractor will use on the project.

Failure to file a required affidavit or documentation that demonstrates that the contractor made the required good faith effort is grounds for rejection of the bid.

(d) No subcontractor who is identified and listed pursuant to subsection (c) of this section may be replaced with a different subcontractor except:

- (1) If the subcontractor's bid is later determined by the contractor or construction manager at risk to be nonresponsive or nonresponsive, or the listed subcontractor refuses to enter into a contract for the complete performance of the bid work, or
- (2) With the approval of the public entity for good cause.

Good faith efforts as set forth in G.S. 143-131(b) shall apply to the selection of a substitute subcontractor. Prior to substituting a subcontractor, the contractor shall identify the substitute subcontractor and inform the public entity of its good faith efforts pursuant to G.S. 143-131(b).

(e) Before awarding a contract, a public entity shall do the following:

- (1) Develop and implement a minority business participation outreach plan to identify minority businesses that can perform public building projects and to implement outreach efforts to encourage minority business participation in these projects to include education, recruitment, and interaction between minority businesses and nonminority businesses.
- (2) Attend the scheduled prebid conference.
- (3) At least 10 days prior to the scheduled day of bid opening, notify minority businesses that have requested notices from the public entity for public construction or repair work and minority businesses that otherwise indicated to the Office of Historically Underutilized Businesses an interest in the type of work being bid or the potential contracting opportunities listed in the proposal. The notification shall include the following:
 - a. A description of the work for which the bid is being solicited.
 - b. The date, time, and location where bids are to be submitted.
 - c. The name of the individual within the public entity who will be available to answer questions about the project.
 - d. Where bid documents may be reviewed.
 - e. Any special requirements that may exist.
- (4) Utilize other media, as appropriate, likely to inform potential minority businesses of the bid being sought.

(f) A public entity shall require bidders to undertake the following good faith efforts to the extent required by the Secretary on projects subject to this section. The Secretary shall adopt rules establishing points to be awarded for taking each effort and the minimum number of points required, depending on project size, cost, type, and other factors considered relevant by the Secretary. In establishing the point system, the Secretary may not require a contractor to earn more than fifty (50) points, and the Secretary must assign each of the efforts listed in subdivisions (1) through (10) of this subsection at least 10 points. The public entity may require that additional good faith efforts be taken, as indicated in its bid specifications. Good faith efforts include:

- (1) Contacting minority businesses that reasonably could have been expected to submit a quote and that were known to the contractor or available on State or local government maintained lists at least 10 days before the bid or proposal date and notifying them of the nature and scope of the work to be performed.
- (2) Making the construction plans, specifications and requirements available for review by prospective minority businesses, or providing these documents to them at least 10 days before the bid or proposals are due.
- (3) Breaking down or combining elements of work into economically feasible units to facilitate minority participation.

- (4) Working with minority trade, community, or contractor organizations identified by the Office of Historically Underutilized Businesses and included in the bid documents that provide assistance in recruitment of minority businesses.
 - (5) Attending any prebid meetings scheduled by the public owner.
 - (6) Providing assistance in getting required bonding or insurance or providing alternatives to bonding or insurance for subcontractors.
 - (7) Negotiating in good faith with interested minority businesses and not rejecting them as unqualified without sound reasons based on their capabilities. Any rejection of a minority business based on lack of qualification should have the reasons documented in writing.
 - (8) Providing assistance to an otherwise qualified minority business in need of equipment, loan capital, lines of credit, or joint pay agreements to secure loans, supplies, or letters of credit, including waiving credit that is ordinarily required. Assisting minority businesses in obtaining the same unit pricing with the bidder's suppliers in order to help minority businesses in establishing credit.
 - (9) Negotiating joint venture and partnership arrangements with minority businesses in order to increase opportunities for minority business participation on a public construction or repair project when possible.
 - (10) Providing quick pay agreements and policies to enable minority contractors and suppliers to meet cash-flow demands.
- (g) As used in this section:
- (1) The term "minority business" means either of the following:
 - a. A business that meets both of the following conditions:
 1. At least fifty-one percent (51%) of the business is owned by one or more minority persons or socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, or in the case of a corporation, in which at least fifty-one percent (51%) of the stock is owned by one or more minority persons or socially and economically disadvantaged individuals; and
 2. The management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more of the minority persons or socially and economically disadvantaged individuals who own it.
 - b. An Employee Stock Ownership Plan company in which at least fifty-one percent (51%) of the plan participants are minority persons or socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.
 - (2) The term "minority person " means a person who is a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States and who is:
 - a. Black, that is, a person having origins in any of the black racial groups in Africa;
 - b. Hispanic, that is, a person of Spanish or Portuguese culture with origins in Mexico, South or Central America, or the Caribbean Islands, regardless of race;
 - c. Asian American, that is, a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia and Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands;
 - d. American Indian, that is, a person having origins in any of the original Indian peoples of North America; or
 - e. Female.

(3) The term "socially and economically disadvantaged individual " means the same as defined in 15 U.S.C. 637.

(h) The State, counties, municipalities, and all other public bodies shall award public building contracts, including those awarded under G.S. 143-128.1, 143-129, and 143-131, without regard to race, religion, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, or handicapping condition, as defined in G.S. 168A-3. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require contractors or awarding authorities to award contracts or subcontracts to or to make purchases of materials or equipment from minority-business contractors or minority-business subcontractors who do not submit the lowest responsible, responsive bid or bids.

(i) Notwithstanding G.S. 132-3 and G.S. 121-5, all public records created pursuant to this section shall be maintained by the public entity for a period of not less than three years from the date of the completion of the building project.

(j) Except as provided in subsections (a), (g), (h) and (i) of this section, this section shall only apply to building projects costing three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) or more. This section shall not apply to the purchase and erection of prefabricated or relocatable buildings or portions thereof, except that portion of the work which must be performed at the construction site. (2001-496, s. 3.1; 2023-134, s. 20.4(a); 2024-44, s. 4.)