



# How Trade Partners Become SBE Certified

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Using DFW Business Council (DFWBC) [Click Here to Apply](#)

**What this does: A Trade Partner obtains SBE certification through DFWBC, then keeps that certification active and completes agency-specific vendor steps.**

## Before You Start

- Use this process for a Trade Partner that wants to count as an SBE on Public projects opportunities and to be recognized as an approved SBE certification source
- Most Public agencies list DFWBC as one of its approved certifying agencies.
- Certification by itself does not automatically put the company on an awarded vendor list. After certification, the company still needs to complete registration and solicitation of steps required by each agency.

## Step-by-Step Instructions for the Trade Partners

### Step 1 - Confirm the company is eligible as a small business

- Identify the company's primary NAICS code.
- Verify that the business falls within the applicable small business size standards.
- Confirm that the business is independently owned and operated.
- Confirm the principal office is within the Dallas-Fort Worth
- Make sure the scope the Trade Partner will perform matches the type of work it wants the certification to support.

### Step 2 - Create the DFWBC application login

- Start at the DFW Business Council SBE certification page: [Click Here to Apply](#). On that page, click "1<sup>st</sup> TIME APPLICANT" or "Returning Applicant or Former SBE or DFW BC Certified Supplier" within the "DFW Business Council SBE - SBE Plus Certifications" box to open the DFWBC Certification Portal.
- Direct portal link: [First Time Applicants](#) or [Returning Applicants](#). A new applicant should click on Create Login. If the business was previously certified through the legacy DFWMSDC system, use the existing credentials or reset the password before starting a new application.
- After creating the login, sign in and select the option to start a new certification application.
- Choose Local SBE Certification unless the company specifically needs SBE Plus for an agency or owner requirement.

- Before the Trade Partners begin entering data, it should have its legal business documents, tax information for two of the most recent years, ownership records including EIN, address proof, licenses, proof of citizenship, Lease Agreements, owner resume, applicable license/permits, bank signature card and any financial records requested by the portal ready to upload.
- Follow the DFWBC documentation checklist inside the application portal and upload exactly what the portal requests. The checklist can change, so the portal list should control.

### **Step 3 - Choose the correct certification type**

- Select Local SBE Certification for a standard SBE application.
- Only choose SBE Plus if the company specifically needs the expanded application path; DFWBC notes that SBE Plus requires a completed Personal Net Worth Statement and carries a different fee.

### **Step 4 - Assemble the supporting documents before entering data**

- Gather the company's legal formation documents, EIN confirmation, ownership information, business address documentation, and any licenses relevant to the trade.
- Gather recent financial and operating records that support size and business activity, such as tax filings, financial statements, payroll or employee counts, and proof of the firm's current operations.

### **Step 5 - Complete the online DFWBC application carefully**

- Enter the legal business name exactly as it appears on formation and tax records.
- Use the correct primary NAICS code and describe the work the company will actually perform
- List all owners and management personnel accurately and make sure ownership percentages match supporting records.
- Double-check the physical business address, contact person, phone number, and email because this is how DFWBC will communicate about the file.

### **Step 6 - Pay the processing fee and submit**

- For Local SBE Certification, DFWBC currently lists the processing fee as \$300, but can vary. Processing fees are listed as non-refundable.
- Submit the application only after the Trade Partner has uploaded the full package and reviewed it for completeness.

### **Step 7 - Respond immediately to follow-up requests**

- Monitor email after submission. If DFWBC requests clarification, corrected entries, or additional records, respond quickly.
- Do not let the file stall; incomplete applications delay the certification date and can cause the business to miss bid windows.

### **Step 8 - Obtain and save the approval letter/certificate**

- Once approved, save the certification letter, certificate, effective dates, and any portal profile screenshots in one folder.
- Send the certificate and the firm's trade scope to 3i with your proposal

### **Step 9 - Keep the certification active**

- Track expiration dates, renewal windows, and any annual affidavit or update requirements imposed by the certifier.

- Update the certifier promptly if ownership, management, address, or size status changes.
- Do not represent the company as certified after expiration or for scopes it is not approved to perform.

### Fast Checklist for Your Trade Partners Outreach Packet

Item	What the Trade Partners should provide	Done
1	Primary NAICS code and short scope description	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	DFWBC SBE application account created	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Ownership and business formation documents assembled	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Financial/size-supporting records assembled	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Application submitted and fee paid	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Certification approval letter/certificate received	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Certificate copied to prime contractor compliance team	<input type="checkbox"/>