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CHECKLIST: Documentation Required for WBENC Certification Application

The following is a list of documentation required to process for certification application. We recommend compiling all documents in advance before starting your online application.

A few important things to know:

- All documents will be uploaded into [WBENCLink2.0](#) as part of your online application.
- For documents listed as '**mandatory**,' you must provide the document OR a written statement detailing the reason(s) it is being omitted and/or not applicable to the applicant company.
- For documents listed as 'Required,' you must provide the document or check the Not Applicable box if it is not relevant to your business.
- Failure to provide the necessary documentation required to ascertain the company's eligibility is reason for a denial.
- Your assigned [Regional Partner Organization](#) (RPO) and/or WBENC reserves the right to request additional documentation, if necessary, to determine the eligibility of your firm for certification as a WBE and WOSB (if applying for WOSB certification).
- Please do not upload password-protected documents, without providing the password for the File Description.
- Unless otherwise noted, requirements are the same for all business structures.
- NOTE: All documents will be treated with the utmost security and confidentiality.

GENERAL

1. [Signed Sworn Affidavit](#)
 - Signed by the majority female business owner and notarized by an authorized notary of the U.S. or one of its territories.
2. [WBENCLink2.0 User Agreement](#)
 - Signed by majority female owner
3. [Non-Refundable Processing Fee](#)
 - Paid by credit card or by mailed check



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- NOTE: If your company elects to mail in a check, processing will not begin until the payment has been received by your assigned [Regional Partner Organization](#).
- 4. History of Business
 - Explain the start and history of your business, including when, where, why, with whom, and how the business was started/acquired, as well as an explanation of the primary business of the company.
- 5. Professional and business license(s) (if applicable)
- 6. Resumes of all owners, board of directors, and key management team
 - Biographies are not an acceptable substitute
 - Resumes should cover related professional experience

OWNER ELIGIBILITY

One of the documents requested below must be a photo identification for identify verification purposes.

1. Evidence of gender for female owner(s)
 - Copy of current U.S. Passport, U.S. Birth Certificate, or Driver's License
2. Evidence of U.S. citizenship or Permanent Legal Resident Alien status for female owner(s)
 - Copy of current U.S. Passport, U.S. Birth Certificate, naturalization papers, or Permanent Legal Resident Alien Card (green card)
 - U.S. Passports in color are preferred

FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

1. Financial statements for the business **{mandatory}**
 - Profit and loss statement that aligns with the most recent tax return submitted.
 - Balance sheet that aligns with the most recent tax return submitted.
 - For a new business that has been in operation for less than one year, submit an opening balance sheet only.
2. Three years' Federal Income Tax returns, as filed with the IRS **{mandatory}**
 - Includes current and prior two years' federal income tax returns for the business with all schedules and statements attached



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- **For businesses less than three years old, substitute personal federal income tax returns** for the appropriate number of years with all schedules and statements attached. When submitting personal tax returns, you may black out all social security numbers and all dependent names
 - If personal tax returns are being submitted, personal tax returns must be submitted by any individual that owns 10% or more of the company
 - If your company has applied for an extension to file for the most recent tax year, submit extension paperwork
 - If company information is filed on a Schedule C, please note this is **not** an official tax return and must be accompanied by the official Form 1040 submitted to the IRS (for sole proprietors/sole member LLCs).
 - Submitting only state returns will delay the processing of your file
3. Please submit copies of the following documents that are currently active (listed under the Liabilities section of the company's Balance Sheet):
- Debt instruments
 - Loan Agreements
 - Note Payables
 - Promissory Notes
 - Surety Agreements
 - Security Agreements
 - Equipment rental and purchase agreements or proof of equipment purchase
 - Real estate leases
4. Copy of bank signature authorization card or corporate resolution **{mandatory}**
- This document should be provided by your financial institution.
 - If the item does not exist or your financial institution does not release this information, please have your financial institution write a letter on its letterhead indicating the company name, type of accounts held, date account was opened, who has signature authority for those accounts, as well as any stipulations/restrictions pertaining to signatory authority (e.g. two signatures required for amounts greater than \$10,000).



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5. Proof of capital and/or equity investment by female owner(s) **{mandatory}**
 - o Any document or written statement indicating the method by which the female owner(s) obtained her ownership interest (e.g. cancelled checks, opening bank statement, proof of stock purchase, written statement by owner, list of contributed equipment/expertise, etc.)

PERSONNEL & MANAGEMENT

1. List of all full- and part-time employees by name, position, and length of service or date of hire, including all owners **{mandatory}**
2. Employee payroll for the month prior to submitting the application **{mandatory}**
 - o Indicate time span of the pay period on the document
 - o For each employee, list his/her name, title/position, hours worked for the pay period indicated, gross pay for the pay period indicated, hourly pay rate and/or commission earned in period (if applicable)
 - o Information is required for internal employees, not those who are leased to/from other companies
3. W-2s and/or 1099 forms from every officer, director, or owner receiving compensation from the company for the most recent year **{mandatory}**
4. Trust agreement(s) that involve the majority female owner(s)
5. Employee Stock Ownership Plan Agreements (ESOPs)
6. Submit copies of the following documents that are currently active:
 - o Management/consulting agreements
 - Any agreements with individuals and/or vendors who are providing management/consulting services to the applicant company
 - These are agreements that influence the management and/or operations of the applicant company
 - DO NOT submit client agreements between the applicant company and its customers
 - o Service agreements



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- These are agreements that influence the day-to-day operations, including the production and/or distribution of the applicant company's product or service
- Affiliate/subsidiary agreements
 - An affiliation is a relationship where 5% or more of a company's stock is held by a parent company
 - A subsidiary relationship is one where 50% or more of a company's stock is held by a parent company
 - If the affiliate/subsidiary company is a certified WBE, please include a copy of the WBE certificate; otherwise, include only the agreement
- Franchise Agreements (if applicable)
- Union Agreement (if applicable)

GOVERNANCE

NOTE: REQUIREMENTS DIFFER BY BUSINESS STRUCTURE.

Sole Proprietorships

1. Assumed Name Documents

Partnerships

1. Partnership Agreements **{mandatory}**
2. Limited Partnership Certificate
 - If Applicant is a limited partnership, submit a certificate of existence and a copy of the certificate of limited partnership issued by the state of formation
3. Buy-Out Rights Agreement
4. Profit Sharing Agreements

Corporations

Note: Owning the company 100% does not exempt the owner from providing stock certificates. Also, if 100% owned and minutes are not available, please state so in writing. *Must be signed and dated.

1. Certificate of Incorporation
2. Articles/Charter of Incorporation **{mandatory}**
3. Current corporate bylaws with all amendments **{mandatory}**



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4. Minutes from shareholders' first organizational meeting **{mandatory}**
5. Minutes from first meeting of board of directors **{mandatory}**
6. Minutes from shareholders' meeting establishing current ownership **{mandatory}**
7. Minutes from board of directors' meeting establishing current ownership **{mandatory}**
8. Minutes from most recent meeting of shareholders **{mandatory}**
9. Minutes from most recent meeting of board of directors **{mandatory}**
10. Statement from the Board Secretary certifying the names, titles, and gender of all current members of the board of directors **{mandatory}**
11. Both sides of ALL stock certificates issued, including voided and/or canceled **{mandatory}**
12. Stock Transfer Ledger (Record of stock certificates issued and transferred)
 - o WOSB Applicants: This document **must** be submitted, per SBA guidance; otherwise, the WOSB application will not be processed.
13. Voting agreements and other equity interests including stock options, warrants, buy/sell agreements, and right of first refusal
14. Schedule of advances made to corporation by shareholders for the preceding three years
15. If an out-of-state corporation, proof of authority to do business in state where corporation is headquartered

Limited Liability Company

1. Certificate of Organization/Existence/Formation (for businesses in states that issue certificates)
2. Articles of Organization or Articles of Formation and any amendments **{mandatory}**
3. LLC Regulations, Operating Agreement and/or Member Agreement **{mandatory}**
4. Member List with Titles and gender **{mandatory}**
5. Schedule of Advances made to LLC by members for the preceding three years
6. If an out-of-state LLC, proof of authority to do business in state where LLC is headquartered

W O S B

All businesses seeking WOSB Certification in addition to WBENC WBE certification must also submit:

1. Printout of the first page of [System Award Management \(SAM\) Registration](#) showing an "Active" status.



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2. Partnerships, Corporations, and LLCs must submit one of the following:
 - First page of IRS Form 941 (Quarterly Tax Return) for preceding 12 months **OR**
 - W-3 (Transmittal of Wage & Tax Statements) for past year; **OR**
 - List of all employees, if Forms 941 or W3 are not available for the past year

REFERENCES:

1. <https://www.wbenc.org/certification/documentation-required/>
2. Application Portal: [WBENCLink2.0 \(https://wbenc.wbenclink.org/\)](https://wbenc.wbenclink.org/) – you must be in US or Canada to access the portal without an exception.

For guidance to navigate the application process, contact Strategic Exceptions Professional Consulting INC at info@strategicexceptions.com.