



October 2, 2026

Subject: Important Update on DBE Program Regulations – Final Rule Published 9.25.2026

Dear Valued DBE/ACDBE Partner,

We appreciate your continued partnership and commitment to excellence in serving the Commonwealth of Virginia. We want to ensure you are informed about recent regulatory changes that may affect your participation in the **Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)** and **Airport Concession Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (ACDBE)** programs.

On **September 25, 2026**, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) published a **Final Rule** amending DBE and ACDBE program regulations. This rule follows October 3, 2025, Interim Final Rule changes and includes important clarifications, such as:

- Applicants may rely on race- and sex-based discrimination and other individualized experiences in personal narratives but must identify an objective distinguishing feature (ODF) and establish disadvantage through individualized evidence rather than demographic presumptions.
- UCPs may deny certification if an applicant is not economically disadvantaged in fact, despite falling below the personal net worth threshold.
- ANC-, Tribal-, and NHO-owned firms remain exempt from the Personal Narrative (PN) and re-evaluation requirements.
- **Deadline of December 24, 2026.** Non-responsive firms have until this deadline to submit required reevaluation documentation.
- Interstate certification procedures are streamlined, although firms must reaffirm interstate certifications within one year after JOC reevaluation.
- UCPs must continue processing new DBE applications while conducting reevaluations.

A copy of the Final Rule can be found here: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2026-09-25/pdf/2026-19688.pdf>

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on DBE and ACDBE Program Implementation Modifications, September 25, 2026 Final Rule can be found here:

https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2026-09/DBE_Final%20Rule_FAQs%2009-28-2026_0.pdf

If you have further questions, please contact VDOT's Business Opportunity Workforce Development Center (BOWD), DSBSD's Transportation Business Development Team, or MWAA. Please refer to our websites for further information:

Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority

<https://www.mwaa.com/business/small-business-programs>

Department of Small Business Supplier Diversity

<https://sbsd.virginia.gov/certification-division/updates-to-dbe-certifications/>

Virginia Department of Transportation

<https://www.vdot.virginia.gov/doing-business/programs-for-businesses/dbe-program/>

Sincerely,

The Virginia Unified Certification Program (Virginia UCP)