

RCW 43.19.725 Small businesses—Increased registration in enterprise vendor registration and bid notification system—Increased contracts and purchasing—Model plan—Technical assistance—Recordkeeping. (1) The department must develop a model plan for state agencies to increase: (a) The number of small businesses registering in the state's enterprise vendor registration and bid notification system; (b) the number of such registered small businesses annually receiving state contracts for goods and services purchased by the state; and (c) the percentage of total state dollars spent for goods and services purchased from such registered small businesses. The goal of the plan is to increase the number of small businesses receiving state contracts as well as the percentage of total state dollars spent for goods and services from small businesses registered in the state's enterprise vendor registration and bid notification system by at least fifty percent in fiscal year 2013, and at least one hundred percent in fiscal year 2015 over the baseline data reported for fiscal year 2011.

(2) The department, the department of transportation, and institutions of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016 may adopt the model plan developed by the department under subsection (1) of this section. If the agency does not adopt the model plan, it must establish and implement a plan consistent with the goals of subsection (1) of this section.

(3) To facilitate the participation of small businesses in the provision of goods and services to the state, including purchases under chapters 39.26 and 43.105 RCW, the director, under the powers granted under this chapter, and the department, the department of transportation, and institutions of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016 operating under delegated authority granted under this chapter or RCW 28B.10.029, must give technical assistance to small businesses regarding the state bidding process. Such technical assistance shall include providing opportunities for the agency to answer vendor questions about the bid solicitation requirements in advance of the bid due date and, upon request, holding a debriefing after the contract award to assist the vendor in understanding how to improve his or her responses for future competitive procurements.

(4) (a) The department, the department of transportation, and institutions of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016 must maintain records of state purchasing contracts awarded to registered small businesses in order to track outcomes and provide accurate, verifiable information regarding the effects the technical assistance under subsection (3) of this section is having on the number of small businesses annually receiving state contracts for goods and services purchased by the state.

(b) The department may provide assistance to other agencies attempting to maintain records of state purchasing contracts awarded to registered small businesses for the purposes described under (a) of this subsection. [2012 c 224 § 26; 2011 c 358 § 2.]

Effective date—2012 c 224: See RCW 39.26.900.

Findings—Intent—2011 c 358: "The legislature finds that it is in the state's economic interest and serves a public purpose to promote and facilitate the fullest possible participation by Washington businesses of all sizes in the process by which goods and services are purchased by the state. The legislature further finds that large businesses have the resources to participate fully and effectively in

the state's purchasing system, and because of many factors, including economies of scale, the purchasing system tends to create a preference in favor of large businesses and to disadvantage small businesses. The legislature intends, therefore, to assist, to the maximum extent possible, small businesses to participate in order to enhance and preserve competitive enterprise and to ensure that small businesses have a fair opportunity to be awarded contracts or subcontracts for goods and services purchased by the state. The legislature recognizes the need to increase accountability for the state's procurement and contracting practices. The legislature, therefore, intends to encourage all state agencies to maintain records of state purchasing contracts awarded to registered small businesses. The legislature further recognizes that access to a modernized system that categorizes a state business by such factors as its type and size, is an essential tool for receiving accurate and verifiable information regarding the effects any technical assistance is having on the number of small businesses annually receiving state contracts for goods and services purchased by the state." [2011 c 358 § 1.]