

WSR 25-06-059
PREPROPOSAL STATEMENT OF INQUIRY
OFFICE OF MINORITY AND
WOMEN'S BUSINESS ENTERPRISES
[Filed February 28, 2025, 4:10 p.m.]

Subject of Possible Rule Making: For chapter 326-20 WAC; adding a new chapter or sections, and amending sections concerning LGBTQ individuals and/or businesses, to the presumptive disadvantaged group and establishing a free-standing certification program.

Statutes Authorizing the Agency to Adopt Rules on this Subject: RCW 39.19.030 gives the office of minority and women's business enterprises (OMWBE) authority to adopt rules to develop and maintain a central certification program for the state of Washington, and SB [ESSB] 5950 granted funding to implement a certification program for LGBTQ individuals and businesses.

Reasons Why Rules on this Subject may be Needed and What They Might Accomplish: OMWBE was granted funding through a decision package in 2024 through SB [ESSB] 5950 to implement and operate an LGBTQ certification program. Rules are needed to implement the program.

Extending LGBTQ certification for LGBTQ-owned businesses will address the disparity of supporting some protected classes while leaving others out from statewide minority-owned business certification. Extending certification will put the state in the same level as the other states that already provide this certification. Moreover, this extension of certification aligns with the governor's executive actions regarding equity in the state.

Process for Developing New Rule: Early solicitation of feedback and recommendations concerning new or amended rules, and consideration of comments and recommendations while drafting rule language.

Interested parties can participate in the decision to adopt the new rule and formulation of the proposed rule before publication by contacting Phyllis Martin, 1110 Capital Way South, Suite 150, phone 360-664-9761, email Phyllis.Martin@OMWBE.wa.gov, website www.omwbe.wa.gov; or Amanda Moore, 1110 Capital Way South, Suite 150, phone 360-664-9761, email Amanda.Moore@OMWBE.wa.gov, website www.omwbe.wa.gov.

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