

**From:** City of Houston <houston@mwdbe.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 16, 2018 4:15 PM  
**To:** emelton@7thechelon.com  
**Subject:** Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Certification Approved

Edgartt Melton  
7th Echelon, LLC

Dear Edgartt Melton:

CONGRATULATIONS! Your application for certification as a City of Houston Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) is approved for a three year period thru May 31, 2021. The approval is contingent upon your firm maintaining certification eligibility throughout the three year period. Your firm will be required to complete a three year cycle review form to be considered for certification eligibility beyond the three year period. We will provide you with notification to submit the three year cycle review form prior to your firm's three year expiration date.

We have certified 7th Echelon, LLC, only for IT Consulting, Project Management, and Background Investigations. You are being listed in the Directory of certified M/W/S/DBE, in the following Directory Capability listing:

NAICS 236220: PROJECT MANAGEMENT

NAICS 541512: COMPUTER SOFTWARE CONSULTING SERVICES OR CONSULTANTS NAICS 561611: BACKGROUND CHECK SERVICES

The certification covers only the company, that is listed in this letter and on the attached certificate, not any other company with which you may be associated, and only for those specific functions mentioned herein.

Now that you are certified, the adventure begins. You will also receive emails on upcoming contracting opportunities, networking events, and free training. Check our website at [www.houstontx.gov/obo/index.html](http://www.houstontx.gov/obo/index.html) for valuable resource information.

Here is important information that you need to know:

Two months prior to the expiration date of your certification, you will receive instructions on how to complete the Three year cycle Update Form and Affidavit. This form must be completed and returned along with signed copies of your Business Income Tax (Form 1120, 1065 or 1040 All Schedules including Schedule C) for the past three years. Please note that for Tax Returns not yet filed under an extension of time to file, a copy of the extension will suffice. If you do not complete and return the above items, your certification may be revoked.

Also, failure to report company changes to us such as (ownership changes, address, phone number, business structure changes, etc.), or any subsequently discovered material misrepresentation in the certification application or in the execution of a contract, will be reason for revocation of certification for up to a five-year period.

It is your responsibility to periodically monitor the online M/W/S/DBE Directory at <https://houston.mwdbe.com/VendorSearch.asp> to ensure the accuracy of your contact information and profile.

Attached is a copy of your firm's certification profile. If there are any changes to your firm's contact information (name, address, phone, fax, email), please contact our office immediately at (832) 393-0600 so that the appropriate adjustments can be made.

I want to emphasize several important facts for your consideration:

First, we are here to assist you with any questions you may have about how the City's M/W/S/DBE program works, and also provide you with assistance with any challenges you may have on a City contract.

Second, never allow a company to submit your name unless you will, through your own efforts, be doing the work. The following practices are violations of the City's M/W/S/DBE program and will result in the revocation of certification for a five-year period:

1. Allowing your company's name to be submitted toward satisfying the M/W/S/DBE goal for a scope of work for which you are not certified;
2. Serving as a pass-through by allowing your company's name to be submitted toward satisfying the M/W/S/DBE goal, but not actually performing, with your own workforce, the exact scope of work represented in the prime's contract documents;
3. Hiring members of the prime contractor's workforce;
4. Requesting or allowing the prime contractor to "advance" dollars or otherwise meet payroll for your employees.
5. OBO discovers that the firm provided false or misleading information for the purpose of certification during the original application process or as part of the certification update.

Third, after you sign a Letter of Intent or contract with a prime contractor to provide services or supplies on a City contract, should you experience ANY problems with actually getting or completing the contract, or being paid, please call us immediately to file a complaint. We cannot know whether you have actually been given the contract, or working on a project as reported to City Council, unless you tell us.

Fourth, the M/W/S/DBE Directory is available online at [www.houstontx.gov](http://www.houstontx.gov). It is used internally by City procurement staff and externally by prime contractors and vendors to identify certified firms as they attempt to meet M/W/S/DBE goals assigned to City contracts. Our directory is also used by several other agencies and corporations in their search for confirmed M/W/S/DBE companies. You must maintain an accurate mailing address, a working telephone number with means to leave a message, and a valid email address. It is essential that you return solicitation calls immediately. The accomplishment of the spirit and intent of our program is seriously affected when MWBE's cannot be reached. Those interested in contracting with you must be able to reach you quickly and consistently.

Fifth, please notify us immediately if you are ever, by action or inaction, discouraged from bidding on any City project, by a prime contractor or subcontractor, or any employee of the City. Our program requires that all information on a contract be given to you in a time frame, which will give you an opportunity to develop your bid.

Sixth, your certification has value, so your Certification Number should be guarded carefully. We suggest that you not give your Certification Number to people who call and those who express an interest in doing business with you. Rather, we suggest you wait until your bid is accepted and you have a contract or signed Letter of Intent before releasing your Certification Number. OBO may be called to verify the validity of your certification.

Seventh, be advised that the percentage of M/W/S/DBE goal credit for Material Supply will depend on whether your company meets the commercially useful function requirements for material supplier credit.

Eighth, the expiration date, which appears on this Certification letter, attached Certificate, or other related documentation will be superseded by a graduation date, should your firm be designated as an Established Business.

The City M/W/S/DBE program's focus is to open the competitive process, and to afford you an opportunity to actually perform work or provide services/goods related to City taxpayers' projects. This program is working! Our FY 2015 figures are among the highest in the nation--\$288.0 million earned by minority and women owned companies. We hope that in next year's figures we can count contracts you have received.

Finally, be sure to register as a vendor. All suppliers and contractors interested in registering with the City of Houston and/or bidding on products and services procured by the City of Houston, must first register with the City's Strategic Procurement Division for an online web account by accessing the following web-link:  
[http://purchasing.houstontx.gov/registration\\_form.aspx](http://purchasing.houstontx.gov/registration_form.aspx).

Once a user name and a password are obtained, you may then proceed to place bids, update your company profile and complete and submit a Supplier Registration Form to enroll on the City of Houston's registered supplier list. New supplier registration is incomplete until an IRS W-9 form is sent via email to [houstonpurchasing@houstontx.gov](mailto:houstonpurchasing@houstontx.gov). The information on this form must be the same as listed on the request for Taxpayer Identification Number as required by the Internal Revenue Service.

Again, congratulations. We welcome your participation, and wish you every success.

Very truly yours,

Carlecia D. Wright, Director  
Office of Business Opportunity

City of Houston  
Office of Business Opportunity  
<http://www.houstontx.gov/>  
<http://houston.mwdbec.com>

