Certification eligibility criteria:
Under Article 15-A of the Executive Law, any for-profit firm that is at least fifty-one percent owned, operated and controlled by citizens or permanent resident aliens who are either a woman and/or minority is eligible for certification

List of minority groups who are eligible for certification:
• Black persons having origins from any of the Black African racial groups
• Hispanic persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Dominican, Cuban, Central or South American descent of either Indian or Hispanic origin, regardless of race
• Asian-Pacific persons having origins from the Far East, Southeast Asia or the Pacific Islands.
• Asian-Indian subcontinent persons having origins from the Indian subcontinent
• Native American persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North America

An MWBE applicant must successfully demonstrate the following:
An MWBE applicant must successfully demonstrate the following:
• Ownership, Operation and Control: Firm must be independently owned, operated and controlled by minority and/or women members. The ownership must be real, substantial and continuing, and owner(s) must exercise the authority to independently control the day-to-day business decisions
• Personal Net Worth (PNW) Restriction: Each minority or woman owner upon whom certification is based cannot have a personal net worth exceeding $3.5 million after allowable deductions
• Small Business Restriction: Firm cannot exceed more than 300 full time equivalent employees

• Independent, Active and In Business One Year: Firm must operate independently of other firms, must demonstrate business activity and, generally, the business is required to be in operation for at least one year
• Out of State Applicants: Firm to be certified as a MWBE in their home state, if a similar process exists, and be registered and authorized to conduct business in the state of New York and have a presence in New York

How to apply for certification?
New York State has a fully integrated online certification process New York State Contract System (NYSCS) ny.newnycontracts.com. Firms can use NYSCS to submit:
• New Certification Applications with the NYS MWBE Program
  — (Optional) “One-Stop” certification – once certified, the firm’s application is forwarded for review for MWBE certification with the New York City Small Business Services*, Joint Certification Committee of Erie County and City of Buffalo* and/or Port Authority of New York/New Jersey
  — If certified by a recognized program, eligible firms may submit a Fast-Track application*
• Re-Certification Application
• Certification and Vender Profile Updates

What are the benefits of certification?
• Be listed on the MWBE Directory of certified firms
• Be considered for MWBE utilization goals by NYS Agencies and Authorities
• Receive customized alerts for upcoming procurement opportunities
• Receive invitations for business development: workshops, webinars, classes and customized technical assistance targeted to MWBEs
• Have access to lending and bonding programs exclusively for certified MWBEs

* NOTE: Participating certification program may have geographic restrictions.