

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the NAWBO Certification process and how long does it take?

The NAWBO Certification process starts with registration. Applicants will go to <https://nawbo.org/certification> and select which certification product applies to them. After selecting and paying the certification fees, the applicant will receive a confirmation email with a sworn affidavit attached and a link to their application portal to upload all of their documents.

Once the applicant has submitted all required documents and submits their application, they will receive another confirmation from the certification manager (CM) acknowledging receipt. An initial review will be conducted by the CM to make sure everything is accurate, current and correct. If there are missing documents, the CM will reach out to the applicant to upload the necessary items.

Once the application is marked as complete, the CM will assign a reviewer to conduct an in-depth review of the application to verify certification eligibility. The reviewer can, at times, request additional documentation—the CM will coordinate this request. When the reviewer has completed their review, she will flag the application as eligible or not eligible for WBE/MWBE Certification. If the applicant is eligible, a Zoom interview will be scheduled—all parties will be required to be on camera.

The reviewer will communicate with the CM after the interview to share whether the applicant is approved or denied. The CM will email the applicant with the decision. If approved, the CM will provide a digital toolkit, within one week, that will provide the woman business owner with downloadable certificates and other certification tools.

How long does the certification process take from start to finish?

Our goal is to complete the evaluation process within 60 days from the time all required paperwork has been submitted and the file is marked as complete by the CM.

Are there minimum requirements?

WBE/MWBE Certification Requirements:

- At least 51% unconditionally and directly owned by women who are U.S. citizens
- The woman must manage the day-to-day operations
- The woman must make the long-term decisions for the business
- The woman must hold the highest officer position in the company
- The woman must work at business full-time during normal working hours
- The business must be operational for 2-years or more

Is there a fee for NAWBO Certification?

Yes, the fee structure for NAWBO Certification is based on membership status, business size and length of certification, and is as follows:

The fee structure for new signups for NAWBO Certification is based on membership status and business size, and is as follows:

One Year*	Member	Non-Member
WBE/MWBE Certification (under \$1M)	\$350	\$750
WBE/MWBE Certification (over \$1M)	\$500	\$900
Add'l WBE/MWBE Certification (under \$1M)	\$200	\$600
Add'l WBE/MWBE Certification (over \$1M)	\$350	\$750

Two Years*	Member	Non-Member
WBE/MWBE Certification (under \$1M)	\$550	\$1,350
WBE/MWBE Certification (over \$1M)	\$850	\$1,650
Add'l WBE/MWBE Certification (under \$1M)	\$400	\$1,200
Add'l WBE/MWBE Certification (over \$1M)	\$700	\$1,500

* Including \$150 one-time non-refundable application fee.
\$150 application fee waived for additional applications.

NOTE: Applicants have 3 business days following their date of registration to cancel their registration and receive a full refund. After that date, all registration fees are non-refundable.

Applicants have 6 months to submit all of their documents for review from the date of their registration. If additional time is needed, applicants have the option of requesting a one-time 60-day extension in writing or paying a \$150 refiling fee to extend their application submission up to 1 year after the date of initial registration. After 1 year and the applicant has not submitted their documents and completed the process, all fees will be forfeited, and applicants will have to register again at the current fee structure. If after 6 months and the applicant has not submitted their application documents and has not submitted a written request for a 60-day extension, all fees will be forfeited, and applicants will have to register again at the current fee structure.

How does NAWBO define MWBE?

A Minority Women's Business Enterprise is defined as a US citizen who is:

- Asian-Indian
- Asian-Pacific
- Black
- Hispanic
- Native American
- Arab American

To qualify for a MWBE certification, a woman business owner must be at least 51% of the ownership and represent one or more of the minority categories.

How does NAWBO certify a husband & wife owned company?

When our reviewers look at a husband and wife owned company, the female owner is required to have at least 51% ownership, must operate the business, have final say in all the decisions related to the business, have experience within the industry, and hold the highest position within the company. It must be very clear that the woman is in charge and that no one connected with the business has authority or power that can supersede that of the woman.

Who approves the certification?

We have expert reviewers who complete the review of required paperwork, interviews, and site reviews (virtually). Once completed and the WBE/MWBE qualifies and meets the requirements, the candidate is approved, and a certificate is issued.

Is there a virtual and/or in-person interview with the applicant?

Interviews are required for all applicants and are conducted virtually on camera via Zoom. In some instances, we may also require interviews for co-owners and/or key employees.

Is NAWBO certifying on a national level or a state level?

NAWBO Certification is a national certification.

What kind of organizations would I utilize this certification for?

NAWBO's WBE/MWBE Certification is useful when interacting with corporations who have supplier diversity initiatives and goals in place. Many corporations have committed a certain amount of spend towards diversifying their supply chain—this means women-owned businesses! Corporations want to know who they're doing business with, and most supplier diversity and procurement teams do not have the bandwidth to vet all of the suppliers who are trying to do business with them via the supplier diversity route. If they are willing to consider your products or services and your access point is through their supplier diversity route, it's

important to be able to show a valid certification that proves you have been vetted and validated as a woman-owned and/or minority woman-owned and operated business.

Does NAWBO offer any benefits for my business once certified?

NAWBO offers ongoing educational webinars with supplier diversity professionals from major corporations and experts in related fields. The live webinars are exclusive to our certification community. During the live sessions, NAWBO certified women have the opportunity to interact with decision makers at major corporations for Q & A's and best practices. The recorded versions of these webinars are available to all women business owners and located on our YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLFWmtGx8QOgvKOrZoAwCJGHDTdpCUMUmZ>

Additionally, NAWBO offers a certification-focused session at all of its in-person national events, including Leadership Academy and the National Women's Business Conference.

What type of business would benefit from this certification?

All industries can benefit from certification. NAWBO has certified women from the service industry, artists, photographers, retail, construction, consultants, tech, wellness, etc. Any woman business owner who wishes to leverage a woman-owned certification can market herself many different ways to promote and share that her business is woman owned. Certification adds a solid layer of credibility so that anyone who does business with a WBO, knows exactly who they are doing business with. Additionally, women are more inclined to do business with and to support other woman owned businesses.

Is there annual re-certification?

Yes, WBE/MWBE participants are required to re-certify each year to verify no changes have occurred affecting the certification of their business. If the applicant was approved for a 2-year certification, then re-certification would be every 2 years.

What if I want to switch to a 2-year certification after I have been certified by NAWBO?

You will have 60 days after approval, to choose to extend your certification by 1 year. You will be invoiced for the additional fees. After 60 days, we will not honor any changes to your certification expiration date.

Why should I get certified?

Being a certified woman business owner is a tool to validate your business and increase your visibility and opportunities to help you grow your business, as well as to increase equity and parity for women business owners in general. Public sector organizations and large corporations are the largest buyers of goods and services and often award contracts specifically to women. These contracts can be constant, reliable sources of income—another bucket of

revenue for your business. Certification also often comes with access to other important business opportunities like networking, mentoring, subprime opportunities, training and education and more. Therefore, if you sell a service or product and want to do business with larger corporations or public sector organizations that have a supplier diversity program, it is a differentiator.

What's the difference between the NAWBO WBE Certification and the SBA WOSB Certification?

The WOSB certification is solely to sell to the federal government and an organization has to be authorized by the Small Business Administration (SBA) in order to offer it. We are offering WBE and MWBE certifications, which are recognized by corporations, but not the federal government. We plan to apply to the SBA to be an authorized WOSB certification provider in the future.

How is NAWBO Certification managed?

NAWBO Certification (and Re-Certification) is managed under the NAWBO Institute. This is our C3 organization that was established to provide virtual training and education, private social communities and other online resources for women business owners. NAWBO Certification is part of the NAWBO Institute's offerings, and once women business owners are certified through the Institute, they will have access to certification-specific opportunities and resources to support their success in the long term.

Why is a notarized and signed NAWBO affidavit required?

By signing and notarizing an affidavit, your identity is verified. It's important that we confirm, through a notary, that you are who you say you are. NAWBO Certification is very committed to confirming and verifying that businesses that apply for our certification are in fact women owned.

What if I don't meet the criteria?

If you are denied, your reviewer will provide a reason as to why you did not meet the criteria. If you feel there is an error, you can submit a written request for reconsideration via email to certification@nawbo.org. If the additional request is also denied, then you must wait 1 year and make the appropriate changes, according to the denial feedback, before re-applying.

What is the refund policy?

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Can franchise owners get certified through your program?

Yes, however, they will need to provide clear documentation that they have provided capital to start and run the business with an independent bank account, as well as control over daily activities, hiring, firing, etc.

HAVE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS? WE MAY ALREADY HAVE THE ANSWERS.

Please visit the NAWBO Certification landing page at <https://www.nawbo.org/events/power-yourbusiness-wbe-certification>. If you still have questions, please email us at Certification@nawbo.org.