**MWDBE (Minority Women Disenfranchised Business Enterprise) Policy**

**Approved by Board of Trustees:** September 20, 2022

**Last Updated: Last Review:**

This document sets forth the general policy for Dauphin County Library System's procurement practices regarding Minority Women Disenfranchised Business Enterprise (MWDBE) as adopted by the Dauphin County Library System Board of Trustees. MWDBE Firms are those certified to be 51% owned, operated, and managed by individuals who are: racial/ethnic minority members; women; service-disabled veterans; LGBTBE; and/or disabled communities.

# Statement of Commitment

Dauphin County Library System (The Library) is committed to supporting minority, women, and other disenfranchised businesses through its procurement, contracts, and service providers. The Dauphin County Library System (The Library) intends to ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of contracts. The policy will work to create a fair and equitable procurement system in which minority, women, veteran, service-disabled veteran, and LGBT-owned business enterprises can compete fairly for The Library contracts and subcontracts. The Library is committed to helping remove barriers to the participation of minority, women, veteran, service-disabled veteran, and LGBT-owned business enterprises and assisting the development of firms that can compete successfully in the marketplace outside of this program.

# Policy Competition in Procurement

All The Library procurements shall be conducted in a manner that provides practical, complete, and open competition to the maximum extent.

Procurements shall:

1. Avoid noncompetitive practices that may restrict or eliminate competition, including but not limited to:
   1. Unreasonable qualification requirements.
   2. Unnecessary experience and excessive bonding requirements.
   3. Noncompetitive pricing practices between firms or affiliated companies.
   4. Noncompetitive contracts to consultants on retainer contracts.
   5. Organizational conflicts of interest.
   6. Specifying "brand name" only instead of allowing "an equal to" product.
   7. Arbitrary actions.
2. Not intentionally split a single purchase into two or more separate purchases to avoid dollar thresholds that require more formal procurement methods.
3. Exclude contractors that develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, or invitations for bids or requests for a proposal from competing for such procurement.
4. Include in any prequalified list an adequate number of current, qualified vendors, firms, or products.
5. Not preclude potential bidders from qualifying during the solicitation period.

# Bid Process

The Library supports equal and fair access to the bid process. The Library looks to increase participation levels in receiving quotes and bids. Contract opportunities will be shared with interested firms and other professional organizations that promote and distribute to MWDBE networks.

In order to be considered a MWDBE Firm, the Firms must provide proof of MWDBE certification at the time of bidding. The Library does not discriminate between MWDBE certification authorities and will accept certification from all credible sources.

# Exceptions

The Library reserves the right to base supplier decisions on The Library's needs and product value, despite the supplier. The Library will select the supplier that provides the best value based on several criteria. The criteria include but are not limited to the following:

1. Product Quality
2. Price
3. Price protection
4. Rebates v. Availability
5. Distribution arrangements
6. Delivery terms
7. Prior experience with the supplier
8. Current Supplier evaluation
9. User brand preference.

Contracts intended to address an immediate threat to the health and safety of the Library’s staff or members are not subject to this policy. Valid emergencies include the breakdown of equipment or facilities that must be kept in operation to maintain the safety of the Library’s staff or members.

Some State and Federal Grants require specific action regarding the bid process. These procedures may conflict with MWDBE Policy. Specifically, State and Federal guidelines may limit the ability of The Library to solicit its own bids and designate a government portal as the sole procurement process. This restriction does not break the MWDBE Policy nor void The Library's commitment to MWDBE participation. Although, The Library will ensure that State and Federal guidelines are followed when applicable.

# Monitoring Implementation Participation Levels

The Library will measure the participation of MWDBE firms in its procurement practices. MWDBE goals are recommended by The Library staff and approved by the Board of Trustees. MWDBE goals are part of The Library's strategic goals and will be reevaluated bi-annually. Every purchase made by The Library will impact the MWDBE participation. Therefore, this policy is relevant to all library staff with purchasing power.

MWDBE participation will be measured by the total spending of The Library. MWDBE firms can be tracked in our finance database to run quarterly reports that track progress. Once firms provide their MWDBE qualifications, The Library can track participation as a percentage of total library spending. Participation can include but is not limited to the categories described above.

# Reporting

The Finance Director will present quarterly reports as part of the financial report at board meetings. Detailed accounts of ongoing contracts need not be reported, but goals and oddities should be noted.

# General Concerns

This policy is an effort to create a more inclusive procurement system. The Library is committed to learning more about MWDBE businesses and creating more inclusive practices. The Library is open to public comment regarding improvements to the MWDBE policy. Additions and alterations to the MWDBE policy may be presented to The Board of Trustees for discussion.