

**State of Missouri**  
**Office of Administration**  
**Disparity Study**  
**Frequently Asked Questions and Answers**

The State of Missouri's Office of Administration ("OA") is conducting a Disparity Study for its Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Program ("M/WBE") to ensure that this critical program remains legally defensible and administratively successful.

**What is a "disparity study"?**

A disparity study involves compilation of evidence to determine whether the State has a strong basis for implementing race- and gender-conscious contracting remedies and narrowly tailoring any race- and gender-conscious remedies. This includes statistical evidence of disparities, if any, between the availability of minority- and women-owned business enterprises and their utilization in State of Missouri contracts and related subcontracts throughout the Missouri economy as a whole, as well as factors necessary for entrepreneurial success, such as access to business capital, networks, suppliers, etc. The study also will gather anecdotal evidence of any continuing race and sex discrimination, the present effects of past discrimination, and the impact of the current M/WBE Program. Finally, the study will evaluate OA's current M/WBE Program and make recommendations for future initiatives and enhancements.

**Who is conducting the study?**

Following a competitive proposal process, the contract to conduct this study was awarded to Colette Holt & Associates, a nationally recognized expert team on disparity studies.

**What are the specific industries involved in the study?**

The industries involved in the study are: construction, construction-related professional services and goods/services.

**How can business owners and stakeholders be involved?**

The participation of business owners and stakeholders is critical to the study's outcomes in two important ways. First, the consultant, Colette Holt & Associates, will contact businesses to confirm information on specific contracts and/or to receive additional contract information that is currently not available or accessible in document form. With the support and assistance of business owners and stakeholders, the study will present an accurate analysis of the State's contracting activities. Second, interested persons can be part of the process for anecdotal data collection by attending a public meeting and/or a focus group of business owners or stakeholders to share experiences and insights.

**When will the public meeting and business owner and stakeholder meetings be held?**

The public meeting will be held at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, January 29, 2014, in Room 510 of the Harry S. Truman Building in Jefferson City. Remote access will be available



in St. Louis at the Wainwright State Office Building, 111 North 7th Street, Room 923, and in Kansas City at the Fletcher Daniel State Office Building, 615 East 13th Street, Room 503. Seating is on a first come, first serve basis.

In the coming months, business owner and stakeholder interviews will be held in Cape Girardeau, Jefferson City, Kansas City, St. Louis and Springfield. To learn about convenient locations and times pertinent to your type of business, please email Colette Holt at [missouri\\_study@mwbelaw.com](mailto:missouri_study@mwbelaw.com).

**Who do I contact with questions?**

Celeste Metcalf, Director, Office of Equal Opportunity, State of Missouri, Office of Administration, 573-751-8130 or [celeste.metcalf@oa.mo.gov](mailto:celeste.metcalf@oa.mo.gov).