



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS FOR SUPPLIERS)

### What is the USBLN®?

The US Business Leadership Network® (USBLN®) is a national non-profit, non-partisan business to business network; helping employers foster business success by tapping into the skills, talents and buying power of persons with disabilities and providing third party certification of disability-owned firms and encouraging the utilization and growth of certified disability-owned businesses. The USBLN® serves as the collective voice of over 60 Business Leadership Network (BLN) affiliates across the United States, representing over 5,000 businesses.

### What is the USBLN® Disability Supplier Diversity Program® (DSDP)?

This USBLN® flagship program includes a national certification process for disability-owned businesses, including service-disabled veteran owned businesses, and promotes utilization and growth for those firms. Today, DSDP is the leading third-party certifier of disability owned firms and provides information and education and links corporate & government agencies to certified disability owned firms. In January 2010, the Disability Supplier Diversity Program® and certification process was launched.

### What distinguishes the USBLN® certification process?

The USBLN® Disability Supplier Diversity Program® (DSDP) is the leading third-party certifier of disability owned firms and provides information and education and links corporate and government agencies to certified disability owned firms. The certification is modeled after widely recognized and highly credible certification processes of the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC), Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) and National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC). It is the only certification open to all firms owned by people with disabilities regardless of gender or military service status.

### What is Disability-Owned Business Enterprise Certification?

Disability-owned suppliers, including service-disabled veteran owned business enterprises, can apply for certification by completing an application form and providing appropriate documents. Suppliers who meet the qualifier of disability and ownership, management and control are eligible for certification. A business

that is designated as a Disability-Owned Business Enterprise Certification has demonstrated at least 51% ownership, operation, management, and control by individual(s) with a disability who is a U.S citizen or lawful permanent resident. Note: the certification process is the same for disability and service disabled owned firms.

### Why should a disability-owned firm want to become certified?

- A growing number of corporations and government agencies require USBLN® certification.
- Firms certified by the USBLN® and DSDP can use certification to brand their business and to facilitate building relationships with decision-makers
- Access to information, learnings and networking events to market their business
- An important first step but should not be considered a guarantee of business

### How is disability defined?

Disability is defined as a physical and/or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual, and can be demonstrated by appropriate documentation (*e.g.*, records, statements, or other appropriate information) issued from a licensed, registered or certified vocational rehabilitation specialist (*i.e.*, State or private); any Federal agency, State agency, or an agency of the District of Columbia or a U.S. territory that issues or provides disability benefits; or from a licensed medical professional (*e.g.*, a physician or other medical professional duly certified by a State, the District of Columbia, or a U.S. territory, to practice medicine) that state that the individual is a person with a disability.

### Who qualifies as a Service-Disabled Veteran?

A Service-Disabled Veteran is a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable, and whose disability was incurred or aggravated in line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service. To be considered a Service-Disabled Veteran, the veteran must have an adjudication letter from the Veterans Administration (VA), a Department of Defense Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty), or a Statement of Service from the National Archives and Records Administration, stating that the veteran has a service-connected disability.

### If I received certification, what is next?

You will be USBLN® certification as a Disability-Owned Business Enterprise (DOBE®). Certification is a very important first step, but is not a guarantee of business. Follow the steps detailed in your Certified Disability-Owned Business Enterprise Toolkit, incorporate USBLN® certified logo into you marketing materials. We also recommend you attend USBLN® DSDP events, identify potential clients including other DOBE®s.

### Where can I learn more?

For more information about certification process/requirements, confidentiality of materials, and the Disability Supplier Diversity Program® and its corporate and government members visit: [www.usbln.org](http://www.usbln.org)

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