

BLACK BUSINESS LOAN PROGRAM

CERTIFICATION DECISION FORM

Instructions for Use

Use this form to certify eligible recipients of funds under the Black Business Loan Program established by s. 288.7102 of the Florida Statutes.

The application and certification process is governed by Rule Chapter 27M-3 of the Florida Administrative Code, which is available at www.flrules.org. As set forth in Rule 27M-3.001, the following definitions apply to the application and certification process.

“**Act**” means the Florida Black Business Investment Act, section 288.7065 to 288.714, F.S.

“**Agreement**” means the standard “Black Business Loan Program Recipient Agreement” form OTTED 7102-5 (5/10).

“**Applicant**” means a corporation that seeks certification under section 288.7102, F.S., as a Recipient of funds to provide loans, loan guarantees, or investments in black business enterprises pursuant to the Act.

“**Application**” means the standard “Application for Certification as Eligible Recipient of Funds under the Black Business Loan Program” form OTTED 7102-1 (5/10).

“**Application Evaluation Form**” means the standard “Black Business Loan Program Application Evaluation” form OTTED 7102-2 (5/10).

“**Application Period**” means the annual period during which Applicants may submit Applications, which shall be May 1 through June 1 (or the next business day) of each year in which there is a legislative appropriation to fund the Program.

“**Certification Decision Form**” means the standard “Black Business Loan Program Certification and Allocation Decision” form OTTED 7102-4 (5/10).

“**Eligible**” means that an Applicant has demonstrated satisfaction of each of the requirements specified in section 288.7102(4), F.S.

“**Existing Recipient**” means an Applicant that, after a certification process, the Office certified to receive Program funds for the previous year and that entered into an Agreement with the Office.

“**New Recipient**” means an Applicant that the Office did not certify for the previous year.

“**Office**” means the Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development, whose address is 1902 The Capitol, 402 S. Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida, 32399.

“**Program**” means the Black Business Loan Program established by section 288.7102, F.S.

“**Recipient**” means an Applicant that, after a certification process, the Office certifies to receive Program funds and that enters into an Agreement with the Office.

“**Summary Recommendation Form**” means the standard “Black Business Loan Program Summary Recommendation” form the Office 7102-3 (5/10).

Instructions for Certifying Recipients

These instructions guide the Office in certifying Recipients and allocating Program funds. For clarity, where reasonably possible the instructions take the active voice and imperative form, addressed to the Office. When a sentence lacks a subject, the Office is the intended actor. For example, "Contact the reference ..." means "The Office shall prepare contact the reference." In these instructions, the terms "you" or "your" refers to the Office.

STEP ONE – Assemble and Check Documents
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Assemble each Application, its related Application Evaluation Form(s), and the Summary Recommendation Form. Confirm that each evaluated and scored Applicant appears on the summary. Confirm that all scored Applicants were deemed complete and meet eligibility requirements. Confirm that any Applicants not scored were properly excluded.

STEP TWO – Check References

For New Recipients, contact references identified on the forms included behind Tab 6 of the Application. You may also contact any other persons familiar with Applicant's past performance or current ability to perform the service required under the Agreement. Use a form substantially similar to Exhibit A hereto to document your discussions with references.

STEP THREE – Document Scores of Applicants

Based on your review of the documents and assessment of Applicants' past performance (including reference checks), and careful consideration of the designated reviewers' recommendations, list the Applicants deemed eligible for certification on a form substantially similar to Exhibit B hereto. Enter the Applicants' names in the first column of the form. Add additional rows as necessary.

STEP FOUR – Initial Allocation of Funds Based on Number of Eligible Applicants

The Office shall distribute an equal amount of the appropriation to each eligible application. Divide the total annual appropriation for this program by the total number of program recipients certified. Enter each Applicant's allocation amount in the second column of the form.

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At the conclusion of step four, sign and date the award calculation form. Notify each Applicant of the final certification decision pursuant to Rule 27M-3.003(2).

Exhibit A – Reference Check and Interview Form

Your Name: _____

Applicant Name: _____

Date/Time of Contact: _____

Person Contacted: _____

_____ Name

_____ Company

_____ Phone No.

_____ Email address

When interviewing references, please use an introduction similar to the following:

"This is [name]_____. I am calling about ___[Applicant]_____, who has identified you as a reference. I'll be asking you some questions that pertain to that company's record of past and current performance. The information you provide will be used to evaluate the award of a State of Florida grant. Therefore, it is important that your information be as factual and accurate as possible. After our call, I will send you a summary of this discussion for your records. If that summary is inaccurate or incomplete in any way, please contact me immediately. My telephone number and email address are ___[phone number] and _____[email address]_____."

Use the following script to guide your discussion (as appropriate, refer to other "program," "contract," "grant," or "relationship"), and make notes summarizing the discussion:

- Confirm the following data from the Applicant's reference
 - ✓ Identifying information of program (contract or grant name, number, etc., or type of relationship)
 - ✓ Applicant's name and address
 - ✓ Type of contract
 - ✓ Complexity of work
 - ✓ Description and location of work
 - ✓ Contract dollar value
 - ✓ Date of award
 - ✓ Contract completion date (including extensions)
 - ✓ Type and extent of subcontracting

- Did the contract amount or delivery schedule change? Why?

- What role did the reference play, and for how long?

- Did any problems arise, and what did the Applicant and the reference company do to fix them?

- Describe the types of personnel (skill and expertise) the Applicant used and the overall quality of the Applicant's team. Did the Applicant appear to use personnel with the appropriate skills and expertise?

- How well did the Applicant perform, considering:

- ✓ technical performance of the service?
 - ✓ schedule?
 - ✓ business relations?
 - ✓ management?
- Was the Applicant cooperative in resolving issues?
 - Where there any particularly significant risks involved in the performance of the effort?
 - Did the Applicant appear to apply sufficient resources (personnel and materials) to the effort?
 - Did the Applicant use subcontractors? If so,
 - ✓ What was the relationship between the prime and subcontractors?
 - ✓ How well did the prime manage the subcontractors?
 - ✓ Did the subcontractors perform the bulk of the effort or just add depth on particular technical areas?
 - ✓ Why were the subcontractors chose to work on particular areas, what were those areas, and why were they accomplished by the subcontractors rather than the prime?
 - Did you hear of any problems generally, that you don't know the details about? If so, who would know the details?
 - Has this Applicant performed other past efforts with the reference's company?
 - What are the Applicant's strong points, and what do you like best about them?
 - What are the Applicant's weak points, and what do you like least about them?
 - Do you have any reservations about recommending a future contract award to, or relationship with, this Applicant?
 - Would you contract with this Applicant again to perform effort for you?

Following the call, send an email similar to the following to the reference, along with a summary of your conversation, and retain a copy in your file:

"Attached is a summary of our telephone conversation on _____ [date] _____ concerning the past and current performance of _____ [Applicant] _____. If I do not hear from you by _____ [date] _____, I will assume that the summary of our discussion is correct. Please contact me if you have any questions or comments. You may reach me at are _____ [phone number] _____ or _____ [email address] _____. Thank you for taking the time to assist in this effort."

Exhibit B – Calculation of Awarded Funds

Name	Allocation Based on Number of Eligible Applicants
Total Appropriation Amount	

Signature Date

Printed name and title