

# New Set-Aside Program is a First for Hudson County and New Jersey

*The program increases opportunities for minority-, women-, and veteran-owned or small businesses to obtain contracts and do business with Hudson County.*

Jersey City, NJ, February 15, 2017 – Small business owners are the backbone of Hudson County's economy, with data from the U.S. Census Bureau indicating that these enterprises employ more than 307,000 people.

To provide small businesses with more opportunities to successfully participate in the County's procurement processes, the Board of Chosen Freeholders and County Executive Thomas A. DeGise adopted an ordinance establishing a Qualified Minority-, Women-, Veteran-owned Business or Small Business Set-Aside Program, which sets aside 10% of the dollar value of all the County's goods, services and construction contracts to be utilized for qualified small businesses. The ordinance – the first of its kind for Hudson County and the first of its kind in New Jersey – went into effect on January 1<sup>st</sup>.

Hudson County Executive DeGise announced that a new Set-Aside Ordinance will make it easier for qualified businesses to contract with the County as it will provide access to procurement opportunities of \$40,000 or less. An estimated \$3.4 million worth of contracts will likely be available as part of the new program to eligible businesses.

"The Freeholders and my administration believe this ordinance will open doors for businesses that may not have the capacity to bid for large contracts, but who have the qualifications, expertise and means to provide County departments and agencies with much-needed goods, services and construction," Mr. DeGise said. He noted that the Set-Aside Program will also expedite the delivery of goods and services to the County.

In order to be eligible to qualify for the Hudson County Set-Aside Program, businesses must have their principal places of business in New Jersey, and be independently owned and operated with at least 51% of ownership and operation controlled by a minority group member, a woman or veteran, or be a New Jersey-based, independently owned and operated small business. These businesses must hold a valid and current certification as a Minority (MBE), Woman (WBE), Veteran (VBE) or Small Business (SBE) Enterprise from the State of New Jersey Department of Treasury, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, NJ Transit, The United States Small Business Administration, or the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

Eligible businesses must also register on the Hudson County Purchasing Portal at [www.hudsoncountynjprocure.org](http://www.hudsoncountynjprocure.org).

The Set-Aside Ordinance calls for the Hudson County Office of Minority & Women Business Enterprise (OMWBE) to assist small businesses for participation in the program.

The OMWBE staff will walk small businesses through the certification and procurement processes and offer information to them about what is required for taking advantage of the Hudson County Set-Aside and other programs. The OMWBE may be contacted via email at [OMWBEinfo@hcnj.us](mailto:OMWBEinfo@hcnj.us) or by phoning 201-395-6267.

"This is a win-win for the small businesses and for Hudson County," Mr. DeGise said. We hope all of Hudson's minority-, woman- and veteran-owned and small businesses will investigate and register to be a part of this ground-breaking Set-Aside Program."

The Hudson County Set-Aside Program ordinance may be viewed and downloaded by going to [www.hudsoncountynj.org/about-omwbe](http://www.hudsoncountynj.org/about-omwbe).