



Illinois Commission on Equity and Inclusion
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Commission on Equity and Inclusion Launches Inaugural Business Enterprise Program and Veterans Business Program Certification Educational Webinar Series

SPRINGFIELD, IL, March 22, 2024 — The Illinois Commission on Equity and Inclusion (CEI) announces its new Business Enterprise Program (BEP) and Veterans Business Program (VBP) Certification Educational Webinar series, in collaboration with Chief Procurement Offices (CPOs).

“We’re meeting a need and closing the knowledge gap for our business vendor community. Our webinar series will equip business owners with the tools to complete their State certification application for the BEP or the VBP,” said LaTasha Binder, CEI’s Deputy Director for the BEP Certification Unit and Mentor Protégé Program. Vendors already certified with the State will receive next-step resources and business development information directly from the State’s CPOs, ultimately helping business owners overcome barriers and succeed in Illinois government contracting.”

As the State's foremost authority on promoting supplier diversity, equity, and inclusion, CEI is committed to providing beneficial training resources to support underrepresented businesses owned by minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and veterans and increase their capacity, grow their revenue, and enhance their credentials.

Each virtual webinar will provide practical insights regarding the benefits of being certified with the State of Illinois, contract bid opportunities and resources, and step-by-step guidance to complete the BEP and VBP certification applications successfully. Participants will also be able to engage with CEI certification analysts and have their questions answered during the Q&A segment.

[BEP and VBP Certification Educational Webinar](#)

- March 27th at 11:00 am – 12:00 pm
- April 24th at 11:00 am – 12:00 pm
- May 22nd at 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

About CEI:

CEI is dedicated to fostering equity and inclusion in the State's procurement processes. CEI is vital in promoting supplier diversity, ensuring a level playing field for all businesses, and advancing Illinois' commitment to inclusive economic growth.

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