



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 16, 2014

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**MAYOR EMANUEL, DEPARTMENT OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
HOST FIRST EVER JOINT PROCUREMENT AND M/W/DBE COMPLIANCE AGENCY MEETING**

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Department of Procurement Services (DPS) today convened City, County, State and Federal government procurement and compliance officials, assist agencies and Mayoral appointed board members for a meeting to discuss best practices in procurement and M/W/DBE compliance.

"DPS has made it a priority to ensure that all interested businesses have access to the information, resources and tools they need to compete for City contracts," said Mayor Emanuel. "By convening a variety of procurement and M/W/DBE compliance professionals together with representatives of the contracting community, we can better learn how to adjust procurement practices and procedures to best serve those who do business with the City.

This is the first time that members of the CPO Roundtable, Affirmative Action Advisory Board, Diversity Action Committee and assist agencies have met jointly to discuss issues related to procurement and M/W/DBE compliance. One critical element highlighted during today's meeting was the role of the assist agencies to provide resources to both appointed board members and City, County, State and Federal government agencies. In order to further the collaborative process, the group agreed to organize a monthly meeting to continue the combined efforts of the several groups rather than continue to organize separate meetings as has been happening in the past.

This announcement comes on the heels of the recent implementation of a reciprocal certification program with Cook County for MBE and WBE businesses. The program will allow small minority and women-owned businesses to be certified by just one government, and have that certification accepted by both entities.

"One of our key objectives is to bring greater diversity to the pool of businesses that bid on and earn City contracts, and today's joint meeting is one example of how we are developing ways to empower a thriving small, minority and women-owned business community," said Chief Procurement Officer Jamie L. Rhee. "By facilitating a forum in which procurement agencies can share best practices, we can better tailor our programs and services to meet the needs of our diverse vendor community."

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This is the first of many networking and information gathering opportunities that will be offered by DPS in 2014. On February 13, DPS will host its second annual Construction Summit, an informational and networking event that will include the infrastructure departments of the City, County, State and federal government, as well as sister agencies and assist agencies. On May 22, DPS and Cook County will host the annual Vendor Fair to help educate the vendor community about bid opportunities, the contracting process, certification and compliance. On July 17, DPS will host an inaugural Financial Symposium that will bring together a cross-section of organizations and agencies that will provide information and guidance to businesses interested in micro-lending or other forms of capital. For more information on these and other DPS events, visit www.cityofchicago.org/procurement.

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