



News from the Office of  
**Adam J. Bello**  
Monroe County Executive



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## **MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO ANNOUNCES MINORITY AND WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESS CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

*The program will help provide more economic opportunity for MWBE's by providing greater access to locally-funded contracts and county procurement.*

**ROCHESTER, NY** — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello today announced the county's new local Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise Certification program alongside a renewed focus on giving minority and women-owned businesses access to government contracts.

As part of the 2022 Monroe County Shared Services Plan, Rochester and other participating municipalities will be able to accept the county's MWBE certification, rather than develop their own programs to ensure they meet MWBE utilization goals set by each municipality's legislative body.

The new local certification gives MWBE's personalized service to streamline and reduce the bureaucracy necessary to bid on local city and county contracts. The new program can certify a MWBE business in days — not months — and makes certification easier to access for newer businesses.

"Key to our economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic is ensuring that our MWBE's have a fair shot at participating in the County's procurement process," said Monroe County Executive Adam Bello. "Our community cannot fully recover unless all of our businesses can successfully and equitably compete for opportunity. The county's procurement practices must reflect the diversity of our business community. The new local certification process, educational workshops for business owners and strong goals will provide more pathways for diverse firms to do business and find success here in Monroe County."

"I want to commend County Executive Adam Bello for recognizing the importance of minority and women owned businesses in the local economy and taking this critical first step to bring fairness and equity to the County procurement process," said Rochester Mayor Malik D. Evans. "Government spending should benefit all of the people we serve, and a robust MWBE program is an essential component to meeting that goal."

The MWBE certification program is a recommendation from the Commission on Racial and Structural Equity (RASE) and codified under Gantt's Law for Utilization of Minority and Women-Owned Businesses. It is administered by the county Department of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

"Today is a great day for Rochester and Monroe County, the RASE Business Development committee, my co-chair Marcus Dunn and myself," said Willie Lightfoot, Rochester City Council vice

president and small business owner. “We promised this community we would implement a plan to level the playing field for MWBE business — and today we are proud to be a part of this great announcement. This new tool helps empower potential MWBE businesses and removes long-existing barriers that have held back so many MWBE businesses. We commend the County Executive for moving our recommendations forward. This is a game-changer for new and existing MWBE businesses “

The county soft launched the program on January 1, 2022. Businesses certified into the program can participate as prime and subcontractors on locally-funded contracts. In partnership with the University of Rochester, MWBE businesses can attend an annual training to learn about the county’s procurement process and discover future procurement opportunities. Tentative workshop dates are April 26 and 27, 2022. Additional details to come.

“It’s an honor to stand with County Executive Bello and Mayor Evans as they break new ground to promote supplier diversity across the region,” said Roland Williams, NFL Super Bowl Champion, philanthropist, and Co-Founder of J2 Medical Supply. “Research has shown a compelling correlation between the economic growth of minority-owned businesses and reinvestment into marginalized communities. This program is a critical step in the right direction.”

More information and applications for the MWBE certification program are available at <https://www.monroecounty.gov/dei-mwbe>.

Additionally, the county set utilization goals for most county contracts at 12% for Minority Business Enterprises and 3% for Women-owned Business Enterprises. The MWBE Utilization Program is no longer limited to its traditional focus on construction contracts and now includes professional and nonprofessional services, greatly expanding the areas where MWBE’s can participate in county procurement.

**About J2 Medical Supply:**

J2 Medical Supply is the nation’s leading black-owned, FDA-approved supplier of examination gloves, masks, COVID-19 tests and other medical solutions.

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