



Frequently Asked Questions

≡ What is the Disparity Study?

The DGS Disparity Study (Study) is an evaluation of the California State's utilization subject businesses - minority, women, LGBTQ, and certified small and disabled veteran-owned business enterprises on state of California contracts from July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2023.

≡ Why is the Disparity Study being conducted?

The Study is being conducted to analyze state contracting practices to determine if all businesses, including but not limited to those owned by minorities, women, LGBTQ, and certified small and disabled veteran-owned businesses, have equal access to contracting opportunities with the State. It was mandated by Assembly Bill (AB) 2019 signed on September 29, 2022.

≡ What are the main objectives of the Disparity Study?

The Study aims to assess the percentage of contracting dollars received by the subject businesses, identify barriers to their participation, and provide recommendations to promote equal access to state contracts.

≡ Which industries are being studied?

The industries being studied are architectural engineering and professional services, IT (Goods and Services), non-IT goods, and construction.

≡ What guidelines exist to help direct the Study?

The Study will be guided by the United States Supreme Court's 1989 decision in *City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.*, 488 U.S. 469 (1989) and its progeny.

≡ Who is responsible for conducting the Disparity Study?

The Department of General Services (DGS), Procurement Division (PD) has contracted the consultant Mason Tillman Associates, Ltd., a national expert in conducting disparity studies, to perform the Study. Mason Tillman Associates, Ltd. will review the State's contract records, identify market area businesses, and collect anecdotal accounts from business owners. The firm is based in Oakland, California.

≡ How long will the Study take to complete?

The Study will take a minimum of 12 months to complete. The final report is expected to be completed and posted on www.dgs.ca.gov by December 2025.

Public Participation

Will there be opportunities for the public and businesses to participate in the Study?

Yes, the Study will involve a comprehensive community engagement plan with both in-person and virtual public participation meetings designed to collect input, particularly from underrepresented communities. To identify available businesses, Mason Tillman Associates, Ltd., will conduct a broad-based business outreach program. The State contract records, certification lists, outreach meetings, and trade and professional association lists will be used to identify available businesses.

How can the public and businesses provide input on the Disparity Study?

Local business owners can participate in business surveys, telephone interviews, and public outreach meetings to share their contracting and bidding experiences and/or provide membership lists from local business associations.

How many public meetings will be conducted?

The contractor will conduct six in-person meetings throughout California and five virtual meetings. Out of state businesses are encouraged to participate in the virtual meetings.

Where will the in-person public meetings be held?

The public meetings will be held in Eureka, Fresno, Oakland, Sacramento, Los Angeles and San Diego. Registration for and detailed information on time and location for each public meeting can be found at www.cadgsdisparitystudy.org

Disparity Study Benefits

What are some of the ways the State will benefit from the Study?

The Study will:

- Provide recommendations on outreach strategies, state program development, and contracting policy improvements.
- Identify best practices to improve the State procurement and contracting process for subject businesses.

Contact Information

Where can I find additional updates or information about the Study?

Additional updates and information will be posted on the www.cadgsdisparitystudy.org as the Study progresses.

Who should I contact if I have questions about the Disparity Study?

Mason Tillman Associates, Ltd. can be contacted by telephone at (510) 607-8353, and by email at cadgsdisparitystudy@mtaltd.com.