



U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20416

Original
Certification
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Shannan Starling - Managing member
Astra Solutions L.L.C.
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Dear Shannan Starling:

Congratulations! Welcome to the HUBZone Program!

I am pleased to advise you that effective on the date of this letter, Astra Solutions L.L.C. has been approved for certification as a "certified HUBZone small business concern." The firm is now eligible for HUBZone opportunities and will be identified as a certified HUBZone small business concern in SBA's Dynamic Small Business Search (DSBS) database found at [Dynamic Small Business Search Tool](#). This certification will remain in effect for one year, unless: the firm acquires, is acquired by, or merges with another firm during that one-year period; the firm is performing a HUBZone contract and fails to attempt to maintain compliance with the minimum employee HUBZone residency requirement; or the firm voluntarily withdraws from the program. The information below sets forth requirements related to the firm's continued HUBZone eligibility and its responsibilities as a certified HUBZone small business concern.

As a certified HUBZone small business concern, the firm may receive program benefits, including eligibility for HUBZone set-aside awards, HUBZone sole source awards, the HUBZone Price Evaluation Preference in full and open competition, and HUBZone reserves. These benefits come with important responsibilities, including:

- Annually recertifying that the firm meets the HUBZone eligibility requirements. **The date of this letter is the firm's HUBZone certification date. Each year, you must recertify your firm's HUBZone eligibility as of the anniversary of this certification date.** For additional information, see the [Recertification Fact Sheet](#).
- Checking SBA's [HUBZone Map](#) to determine whether changes in HUBZone area designations will impact the firm's eligibility at the time of its annual recertification. Note that changes in HUBZone designations may critically affect the firm's ability to recertify its compliance with the HUBZone requirements that its principal office be located in a HUBZone and that at least 35% of its employees reside in HUBZones.
- Signing up to receive HUBZone News Updates by entering your email address at <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USBSA/subscriber/new>. After entering your email address, expand the "SBA Initiatives" subscription topic, select "HUBZone News", and click "Next." This is the simplest single step you can take to remain up-to-date on key program changes that may affect the firm's eligibility.
- Complying with the limitations on subcontracting requirements and nonmanufacturer rule when performing any HUBZone contracts (see 13 C.F.R. §§ 126.700, 125.6, 121.406).
- "Attempting to maintain" compliance with the 35% HUBZone residency requirement during the performance of any HUBZone contracts. "Attempt to maintain" means making substantive and documented efforts, such as written offers of employment, published advertisements seeking employees, and attendance at job fairs, and applies only to firms that are performing a HUBZone set-aside contract or order, a HUBZone sole source award, a HUBZone reserve, or a contract where the HUBZone Price Evaluation Preference was applied (see 13 C.F.R. §§ 126.103, 126.200, 126.600). A certified HUBZone small business concern that has less than 20% of its total employees residing in HUBZones during the performance of a HUBZone contract has failed to attempt to maintain the HUBZone residency requirement and must immediately notify SBA.
- Notifying SBA within 30 days if the firm is acquired by, acquires, or merges with another firm.
- Keeping the firm's System for Award Management (SAM) and DSBS records up-to-date. These records must remain up-to-date in order for the firm to receive benefits from the HUBZone Program (i.e., to be identified by contracting officers as eligible to be awarded HUBZone contracts and to be paid under any such contracts). You must validate the firm's SAM information at least annually or its SAM registration will become inactive. If you need assistance in updating the firm's SAM or DSBS information, please go to the SAM Help Desk at <https://fsd.gov/fsd-gov/home.do>.
- Responding to notices from SBA, including but not limited to notices regarding program examinations, protests, proposed decertification actions, and recertification requirements. The HUBZone Program sends such notices to the firm's email address listed in its DSBS profile. If the firm fails to respond to these notices, SBA will propose the firm for decertification and may subsequently decertify it from the HUBZone Program. **Therefore, it is critical that you keep the firm's SAM and DSBS profiles current, including listing an active email address for contacting the firm, and check your email's SPAM folder to make sure that you are receiving emails from SBA.**

Note: All current Redesignated Areas will retain their HUBZone designation until **June 30, 2023**, in accordance with a final rule published by SBA on May 5, 2021 (86 FR 23863). For planning purposes, if the firm's principal office is located in a Redesignated Area or any of its employees reside in Redesignated Areas, you should consider actions to maintain program compliance after that date.

Additional information about the program is available at <https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs/hubzone-program>.

Misrepresentation

By bidding on any Federal solicitation that is set-aside or reserved for certified HUBZone small business concerns or for which a HUBZone price evaluation preference will be applied, the firm's submission of that offer is deemed to be a representation to the United States that the company is a certified HUBZone small business concern in compliance with the HUBZone Program requirements. ANY FIRM FOUND TO HAVE WILLFULLY MISREPRESENTED ITS HUBZONE STATUS IN OBTAINING SUCH AN AWARD MAY BE SUBJECT TO A RANGE OF CIVIL AND CRIMINAL PENALTIES, TREBLE DAMAGES UNDER THE FALSE CLAIMS ACT, AND/OR SUSPENSION OR DEBARMENT FROM FEDERAL CONTRACTING.

How to get the most out of the Program

Although the firm's status as a certified HUBZone small business concern greatly improves its access to Federal procurement opportunities, this certification does not guarantee contract awards. Your ability to research opportunities and competitively bid on them will be the key to your success in this program. I recommend you utilize the web resources described below, which are designed to help you maximize the HUBZone Program's benefits.

The "Contract Opportunities" function in SAM (<https://sam.gov/content/opportunities>) serves as a central listing for Federal procurement opportunities. Anyone interested in doing business with the government can use this system to search opportunities. In addition, the "Contract Data" function in SAM (<https://sam.gov/content/contract-data>) is a database accessible to the public at no cost and you may use it to learn about contract awards to businesses in various socioeconomic categories, including HUBZone. Please note that while your concern was approved under the primary North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code found in your firm's SAM and DSBS profiles, you may be awarded contracts under other NAICS codes, as long as your firm is small under the size standard corresponding to the NAICS code assigned to the contract. You may benefit from researching and identifying potential HUBZone contracting opportunities outside your firm's primary NAICS code.

As a certified HUBZone small business concern, you may use the SBA digital icon (available at [SBA-GCBD ICON](#)) on your business' website, business cards, social media profiles, and in your capability statements and proposal bids. However, you MAY NOT use the digital icon to express or imply endorsement by SBA of any goods, services, entities, or individuals. Thus, the SBA digital icon may not be used on a company's letterhead, marketing materials, or advertising, whether paid or public service announcement, traditional or digital.

We wish you the best of luck as a certified HUBZone small business concern - your success will help improve the economic future of the HUBZone areas in which the firm operates and in which the firm's employees reside.

If at any time you have any questions about the HUBZone Program or how SBA may be able to support your business objectives, the HUBZone Office offers assistance via an interactive conference call where we can respond to general questions and concerns in real-time. For additional information, visit our website at <http://www.sba.gov/hubzone> or contact the HUBZone Help Desk at HUBZone@sba.gov.

Respectfully,

SBA

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