

(6) simplifying procurement specifications and terms, to increase the opportunities for small business participation;

(7) investigating the responsibility of bidders on small business preferences; and

(8) explaining to a small business the reason for which its bid for a small business preference was rejected.

14-205.

The Department of Business and Economic Development shall help the Secretaries of General Services and Transportation and the Chancellor of the University [of Maryland] System OF MARYLAND in establishing procedures to carry out § 14-204(1) and (2) of this subtitle.

14-206.

(b) Subject to the approval of the Board, the Secretary of General Services, the Secretary of Transportation, and the Chancellor of the University [of Maryland] System OF MARYLAND each:

(1) shall establish a percentage preference, not to exceed 5%, for each industry; and

(2) may vary the percentage preference among industries to account for their particular characteristics.

14-207.

(a) The Secretary of General Services, the Secretary of Transportation, and the Chancellor of the University [of Maryland] System OF MARYLAND each may designate, for the Small Business Preference Program, procurement of certain supplies, services, or construction related services that have been requested through or with the approval of the Secretary or Chancellor.

(c) The Secretary of General Services, the Secretary of Transportation, or the Chancellor of the University [of Maryland] System OF MARYLAND shall award a procurement contract designated for a small business preference to the small business that:

(1) is a responsible bidder; and

(2) submits the lowest responsive bid from a small business if the difference between that bid and the lowest responsive bid submitted by a responsible bidder who is not a small business does not exceed the percentage preference established under § 14-206 of this subtitle.

14-208.

(a) Within 90 days after the end of each fiscal year, the Secretary of General Services, the Secretary of Transportation, and the Chancellor of the University [of Maryland] System OF MARYLAND each shall submit a report on the operation and effectiveness of the Small Business Preference Program to the Board.