

Certified City of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging Frequently Asked Questions



How do we apply?

First, city officials must request access (up to 3 users per city) to the certification portal. You will see the “Request Access” button on www.gacities.com/cityofdeib when you are logged on to your GMA account. If you do not see a button, you likely don’t have a role associated with the program on your GMA account. Please contact GCSPortal@gacities.com for support. Once on the portal, you will gain access to the pre-application and category applications.

Is there a cost to apply for certification?

Yes, the application fee for first-time certification is \$199. The application fee for recertification is \$99.

Who has the authority to apply for certification? Who should apply?

Certification requires commitment by at least a majority vote from city council and involves work throughout the city. Ideally, it is a united effort involving city leadership. A city can have up to three people working in the application portal, but multiple people can work on the application materials and submit via the individuals with access when completed.

Can a specific department or division of the city seek certification, or does the entire city government have to participate?

A city’s application may not involve work from all departments or divisions, as they choose from the categories listed in the Resource Guide. A few committed departments or divisions may work on the certification application, but the city’s governing body is required to include a resolution stating intent to apply.

How long does it take to complete certification?

It depends on how many categories the city chooses to complete and what measures the city has already implemented. If a city must develop and create new initiatives and projects, it could take about a year. If a city has already implemented a lot of the measures required, compiling the documentation could take 1-3 months, depending on the applicants’ capacity. It is likely that most cities will have a combination of both, fulfilling some measures already and needing to develop additional projects—6 months to 8 months.

Is there a deadline?

There is no deadline; the application portal will remain open as cities work to complete certification at their own pace. Cities will be certified on a rolling basis.

How long is the certification valid?

Certification is valid for three years after the day your certification was approved. You will be notified 6 months prior to the certification period ending so the city can apply for re-certification.

Can we submit multiple document uploads for a measure requirement? Yes, you can upload multiple resources up to 10MB in all general formats – .pdf, .doc, .docx, .xls, .xlsx, and image/* (all image files).

We’ve already done some of the work outlined in the measures in the past; how long ago can be applicable?

Training held within 3 years of the time applying can be applicable to fulfill a training requirement. Master plans, strategic plans, etc., adopted up to 5 years prior to the time of applying can be used to fulfill plan requirements in a measure.

Can we seek external support from third-party contractors to fulfill certification requirements?

Yes, you can seek external support to fulfill certification requirements, such as development plans, reports and assessments, consulting services, training, and partnering for services. However, third-party contractors cannot replace city officials where actions are specified in the measures.

How long does the review process last?

The length of the review process depends on the size of the application, how many categories were applied for, how many measures were fulfilled and documented, as well as reviewer availability.

Access Requests will be processed in 1-3 business days.

Pre-applications will be processed in 1-5 business days.

Category Applications will be processed individually in 5-10 business days.

Who reviews the applications? What is the process of reviewing applications?

The Georgia City Solutions team will review applications in conjunction with an External Review Committee, made up of subject matter experts. The subject matter experts will provide feedback on your application, and/or approve the completion of a category.

Who approves certification for each category?

The Georgia City Solutions team will review applications in conjunction with an External Review Committee, made up of subject matter experts.

The portal isn’t working, what do I do?

Please contact GCSPortal@gacities.com to get support.

Can we submit multiple “other” measures?

Yes, though it is recommended that you package many items within one “Other” submission.

Can we file an exemption for a required measure, or alternate it with another?

No, if you’d like to fulfill that category, all required measures and one additional elective measure must be completed.

For additional questions, please contact GCSPortal@gacities.com.