



PENNDOT MENTOR-PROTEGE PROGRAM

(Contractor MPP Virtual Pairing Guide)

Introduction

This document will help your firm navigate the PennDOT Mentor-Protégé Program (MPP) pairing process more effectively and answer some of the questions you will be asked when informing other contractors about the program. The information provided will focus on Tier 3 MPP participants of the construction cohort. The objective of Tier 3 is successful mentor-protégé pairing. Please remember that MPP participants must meet various requirements before participating.

Mentors should submit all pairing requests through PRA using their MPP tab. Protégés should respond to the mentor pairing request email by clicking the Respond button. They will be redirected to their respective PRA MPP tab, where they can accept or deny the pairing request. When the pairing request does not occur through PRA, the MPP Supportive Services Center is unaware of the MPP project to provide support and assistance.

Some additional essential pairing considerations for the construction cohort are listed below:

Important Considerations for Tier 3 Contractor Pairing:

- For a mentor to help a protégé acquire a particular work code, they must first have that particular work code themselves
- Mentors must be prequalified prime PennDOT contractors; MPP protégés must work directly under their prime mentor.
- Protégés in Tier 3 must be prequalified PennDOT subcontractors with at least one active work code in ECMS.
- Provisional Prequalification will be the mentor's mechanism for helping the protégé acquire the new work code.

Understanding The MPP Process

Understanding the entire PennDOT Mentor-Protégé Program process helps tremendously when pairing with mentors or protégés. Although there is a pre-approved list of mentors and protégés

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in **your respective tier 3 room**, you can introduce new participants to the MPP in minutes by sending them the appropriate questionnaire link. We'll start by reviewing the overall process and discussing critical considerations for pairing at each step.

Step 1: Sign-Up and Profile Creation

- **Protege Sign-Up:** The primary contact for the protege firm visits mppsurvey.com and completes the [protege questionnaire](#). This creates the Protege Profile in ProRank Academy and sends a welcome email with instructions on how to get started.
- **Mentor Sign-Up:** The mentor company's primary contact completes the [mentor questionnaire](#) at mppsurvey.com. This creates the Mentor Profile in ProRank Academy and sends a welcome email with further instructions. The mentor questionnaire is distinct from the protege questionnaire, ensuring that specific mentor-related details are captured.
- **Pairing Tip:** Proteges can invite potential mentors who meet the criteria for MPP participation by sending them the link to complete the [mentor questionnaire](#), and mentors can invite eligible proteges by sending the [protege questionnaire](#) to the firms.

Secondary MPP User Process for Proteges and Mentors:

- **Secondary Protege Sign-Up Process:** ([multi-account video](#))
 - **Requesting Multi-Account Access:** PRA users from the protege firm who did not complete the MPP questionnaire need to request ["Multi-Account" access](#).
 - **Access Granting:** Once the primary MPP POC grants multi-account access, the secondary protege PRA user can toggle to the primary MPP user's profile and view the MPP rooms and resources as the primary user.
 - **Legal Disclaimer:** By enabling Multi-Account access, you acknowledge and accept the risks associated with granting access to secondary users. ProRank Academy is not liable for any misuse, unauthorized access, or data loss resulting from the use of the Multi-Account function. Users are responsible for managing

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and monitoring access permissions and ensuring compliance with all relevant data protection regulations and organizational policies.

- **Secondary Mentor Sign-Up Process:**
 - **Creating a Public Profile:** PRA users from the mentor firm who did not complete the MPP questionnaire can create free public profiles on PRA.
 - **Profile Update:** Upon login, the user must update their profile. Remember to choose "[Interested in participating in the PennDOT MPP](#)" and select "Mentor."
 - **Profile Addition:** Once the profile change is saved, the secondary mentor's profile is added to their cohort's Tier 3 room. Note that Tier 3 rooms may have multiple mentor profiles from a single mentor firm but will only have one protege profile per protege firm. This helps reduce confusion when mentors search for firms to initiate the pairing process.

Step 2: Visit The Tier 3 Contractor Room

- **Tier 3 Cohorts:** All mentors can visit their cohort's Tier 3 Room on the PRA platform after signing up. However, only proteges who are actively qualified and ready to pair on MPP projects with mentors can access their cohort's Tier 3 Room.
 - There are two separate cohorts: one for Contractors and one for Consultants. Mentors and proteges will have access to the applicable rooms in their relevant cohort.
 - Tier 3 Contractors - [Contractor Tier 3 Room](#): This room contains potential Construction Cohort mentors and protégés ready to partner on PennDOT projects, as well as best practices and pairing resources.
- **Tier 3 Access:** Mentors can only access the Tier 3 rooms of their respective cohorts. All other tier rooms are restricted to proteges and admins. Access to Tier 3 rooms allows mentors and proteges to review each other's profiles and send connection requests through PRA. **Note:** "Connection Requests" on PRA Are Not the same as "Pairing Requests" for MPP projects. Only Mentors can initiate pairing requests from the MPP tab of their PRA profile.

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- **Room Report Feature:** The Room Report feature provides access to detailed reports of MPP room members and their roles within the program. This feature helps proteges and mentors find and vet each other quickly before pairing.
- **Public Tier 3 Reports:** The public reports allow users to view Tier 3 Room Reports without logging into PRA.
 - [Public Contractor Tier 3 Report](#)

Step 3: Mentor/Protege Pairing Request

- **Request:** Mentors initiate a pairing request through their [MPP Tab](#) using the "Add Projects" subtab. Mentors enter basic project details, then review and choose proteges for collaboration. ([Mentor Video](#))
- **Acceptance:** Proteges will receive an email and see the pairing request in their [MPP](#) profile tab. They can accept or deny the mentor's request. ([Protege Video](#))
- **Pairing Note:**
 - **Contractors:** For the construction cohort, pairing requests can be initiated for projects that have already started because the MPP special provisions can be added to construction projects by the mentor submitting a force account.
 - **Contractor Proteges:** Inform the mentor of your desired provisional work code. Make sure the mentor has that work code by viewing the room report and ECMS.

Step 4: Mentor-Protege MOU Signature

- Upon notice of selection for the MPP project, the awarded mentor will be sent a virtual MPP MOU agreement from PRA. The mentor POC should sign this agreement virtually or upload a physical copy of the fully executed MOU. ([Mentor MOU Video](#))
- Upon completing the mentor's virtual signature, the protege will receive an email prompting them to sign the virtual MOU. ([Protege MOU Video](#))
- **Pairing Note:** The MOU is the formal agreement between the mentor and protege to work together on a PennDOT project. If a physical MOU agreement has been signed, it should be uploaded to PRA through the MPP tab when requested from PRA.
 - **Contractors:** After signing the MOU, contractor mentors or protégés may want to initiate the "Provisional Prequalification" request.

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- If the construction project does not already have the MPP Special Provision, the mentor will need to initiate a force account to add the MPP line item to the project. This step should also be initiated after the protege signs the MOU when required.
- “Provisional Prequalification” and “Force Accounts” only occur in the construction cohort.

Step 5: Work Development Plan Submission

- The Work Development Plan (work plan) templates will be emailed to the mentors by ProRank Academy once the MOU has been signed. The mentor and protégé are required to develop a mentor protégé development plan.
- Once complete, the work plan should be uploaded through the mentor’s My MPP tab on PRA or by following the link provided in the email. ([This link will give a brief video.](#))
- The protege’s anticipated start date will be provided with the work plan.
- The work plan needs approval by PennDOT before services begin.
- Both the mentor and protege will be notified by PRA when PennDOT approves the Work Development Plan.
- **Pairing Note:** Mentor protégé teams can propose using a particular work item needed for training through a signed agreement (the MOU) at the onset of the mentor-protégé partnership. Approval must be documented before starting the services. As part of the work development plan, the mentor protégé team must include the projects and duration for which any equipment or other means of equity is being shared.
 - For the construction cohort, the work development plan should support the protege's provisional prequalification work code request.

Step 6: MPP Feedback Surveys

- Upon uploading the protege work plan into PRA for approval, the mentor must also provide an anticipated start date for the protege’s scope of work. This date is crucial as it signifies the start of the survey period. On the anticipated start date, the mentor and the protege will receive a separate one-question survey asking if the protege's work scope has begun. If either answers "yes," the following ten questions of the project feedback

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survey will be shown, and the first “Project Feedback” survey will be captured. If either firm answers "no," the same one-question study will be sent every 30 days until the answer is "yes." Inconsistent answers will prompt the MPP SSC to contact both parties to resolve the issue.

- **Feedback Survey:** After the initial feedback survey, both parties will receive a survey every 60 days until they identify that the protege’s agreed scope of work has been completed on the final question. Once this is indicated, the feedback survey will display the Project Closeout Survey questions.
- **Closeout Survey:** Upon project completion, both parties will complete a closeout survey to assess the success of the mentoring relationship and the project outcomes.
- **Pairing Note:** You don’t need to wait for the survey. Both mentors and protégés can communicate issues or challenges on an MPP project by calling (833) 736-6677 or Emailing mpp@prorankllc.com Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Step 7: Successful Protege Completion

- After completing the project and the closeout survey, the protege will have completed a cycle through the MPP. They can now reenter the MPP by updating their survey and starting a new cycle.
- **Pairing Note:** After completing the MPP project, the protege’s primary profile should be automatically removed from Tier 4 and returned to their Tier 3 Room. Underutilized firms will get removed from Tier 4 but remain in Tier 3.

MPP Navigational Diagram: Please see an interactive visual diagram of the last seven steps discussed at [this link](#).

Understanding The Construction Cohort

For direct in the field construction experience, PennDOT will include an ECMS contract DBE Mentor Protégé Specification either as part of the advertisement or via force account on certain projects as pay line item to Prime contractors who will serve as a mentor and help DBE subcontractors receive pre-qualification codes. Primes may choose to pay their DBE subcontractors as part of the funding described below. To be eligible, the mentor and protégé

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must enter into an MOU. The pay line item is a pre-determined maximum amount of \$25,000. Per PennDOT's DBE Mentor Protégé Special Provision (Attachment D), "Prime Contractor paid for the documented cost of actual expenses reasonably incurred, directly attributable to, and allowable under the contract for mentoring one DBE Subcontractor up to a maximum \$25,000." Publication 408: Construction Specification, Designated Special Provision-7 Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) For Federally Funded Construction Projects details PennDOT's procedures on DBE participation, monitoring, reporting, and compliance. (Attachment B).

Criteria for Participation: Construction protégés must be registered BP in ECMS and, per state regulation, must have one (1) provisional pre-qualification code to bid on the project as a sub-contractor. Construction protégés must be PA UCP certified in the NAICS for the work being completed.

Steps for Participation On Projects With and Without MPP Training Provisions

- The addition of the **MPP Special Training Provision Attachment D** (Attachment D) converts a normal PennDOT construction project to a formally recognized MPP construction project. This means the project will have a line-item reimbursement for the mentor's services and any associated costs that must be directly attributable and properly allowable to specific individual contracts. Currently, this happens one of two ways:
 - **Scenario 1:** The MPP Special Training Provision is included in the initial project bid on ECMS.
 - **Scenario 2:** The MPP Special Training Provision is **not** included in the initial project bid on ECMS. In this scenario, the mentor must submit a force account to add it to the project.
- **Protege Tip:** Understand which situation the project falls under. Does it have an MPP Training Provision in ECMS?
 - Scenario 1 - If the project already has an MPP Training Provision on it in ECMS and:
 - **The MPP Project Has Not Yet Been Awarded:**

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- Identify any Tier 3 MPP mentors who have desired work codes and are pursuing the project.
 - Send an introduction email or PRA message mentioning the MPP Project by ECMS Project number and other helpful information about your firm and the MPP.
 - Conduct a follow-up call to discuss the email or PRA message sent.
 - Inform the mentor of your desired provisional work code.
- Recruit PennDOT prime contractors as potential mentors from the project's List of Plan Holders (LOP) on ECMS.
 - Send an introduction email or PRA message with a link to the MPP Mentor Questionnaire and other helpful information about your firm and the MPP.
 - Conduct a follow-up call to discuss the email or PRA message sent.
 - Inform the mentor of your desired provisional work code.
- Upon Notice of a successful low-bid, move forward with mentor MOU. Use the PRA virtual process to sign the virtual MOU or upload a physically executed MOU.
- The mentor or the protege can initiate a provisional prequalification request electronically through ECMS.
 - The mentor will send the final request to PennDOT.
- The mentor will create a work development plan to support the protege's provisional work code request and submit the work plan through the MPP tab on PRA.
- The work development plan provides the protege's anticipated start date.
 - The project feedback survey can be used to report delays.
- **The MPP Project Has Already Been Awarded:**
 - Identify the awarded prime in ECMS and engage with them via email, phone, and PRA if they are in the system.

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- Identify if the awarded prime already has two or MPP proteges on the project. A mentor may not have more than two proteges per construction project.
- Identify if the awarded prime is a potential mentor listed in the Tier 3 Room with a work code your firm desires.
- If the awarded prime is not a Tier 3 MPP mentor, send the firm an introduction email with a link to the mentor MPP questionnaire and additional information about your firm and the MPP.
- If the awarded prime agrees to mentor you, they should send you a pairing request through PRA, followed by an MOU.
- After executing the MOU, the protege or mentor should initiate a provisional prequalification request.
- The mentor will create a work development plan to support the protege's provisional work code request and submit the work plan through the MPP tab on PRA.
- The work development plan provides the protege's anticipated start date.
 - The project feedback survey can be used to report delays.
- Scenario 2 - If the project **does not already have an MPP Training Provision** in ECMS, all steps above still need to be completed, but include the following considerations:
 - **Proteges:** Include a copy of the MPP Special Training Provision with your initial engagement. This will help validate your message.
 - **Mentors:** After the MOU is executed, mentors may want to initiate force accounts to add the project's MPP Training Provision and line item.
 - Primes who are low bidders on ECMS projects can become mentors and add the MPP training provision post-award.

Additional Resources:

- [MPP Website](#): Visit the official MPP website for more information.

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- [Course 22.13 - PennDOT ECMS Provisional Code Request \(Sub Initiated\)](#): This course is designed to guide contractors through the step-by-step process of requesting a provisional work class code using PennDOT's Engineering and Construction Management System (ECMS).
- [Lesson 22.2.4 – ECMS Force Accounts](#): This lesson guides contractors through submitting a PennDOT Force Account for an ECMS project. A PennDOT Force Account is a contractual arrangement that allows construction projects to address unforeseen work items or changes without specific contract pricing.
- [Appendix D to Part 26 - Mentor Protege Guidelines](#): For contractors, a provisional specification, referred to as the PennDOT DBE Mentor Protégé Special Provision (Attachment D), was developed to provide for line-item reimbursement for the mentor's services provided and any associated costs that must be directly attributable and properly allowable to specific individual contracts. As a best practice, this document should be provided to potential mentors with your introduction email to help inform them about the MPP.
- [PennDOT MPP Program Guide](#): This document is PennDOT's guidance on policies and procedures for the Mentor-Protege Program.
- [PennDOT ECMS Road Map](#): This is an interactive PDF diagram of the PennDOT ECMS process of becoming "Ready to Work" for PennDOT projects.

Conclusion

This guide provides a detailed framework for new PennDOT MPP participants of the construction cohort to navigate the Mentor-Protege Program (MPP) 's virtual pairing resources. Following the outlined steps, participants can effectively engage in the virtual pairing process and utilize available tools to foster successful mentor-protege relationships.

For further assistance, please contact the PennDOT MPP Supportive Services Center by email at pennmpp@prorankllc.com or by phone at (833) 736-6677 or **(833) PENN-MPP**. You can also visit us at pennmpp.com for more information on the PennDOT MPP.