PENNDOT MENTOR-PROTEGE PROGRAM
Welcome Guide for Contractor Mentors

Introduction: **Click Here For Audio** 🔊

Welcome to the PennDOT Mentor-Protégé Program (MPP) for Contractors! This guide will help you navigate the resources available on ProRank Academy (PRA) and make the most of your mentor-protégé experience.

Additional Members Access:

Additional members of your organization seeking access to MPP resources on PRA should **not** complete the MPP questionnaire again. Instead, create profiles at prorankacademy.com and update your profile to state your interest in participating in the MPP as a mentor. By updating your profile, you will automatically be added to the MPP. For detailed instructions, watch the instructional video here.

Navigating the PennDOT MPP Rooms:

1. Understanding Your Role as a PennDOT Contractor Mentor

- As a contractor mentor for the PennDOT MPP, you are seeking to help proteges acquire a provisional work code for a PennDOT construction project.
- You are considered a "Potential" mentor until you are awarded a PennDOT agreement with MPP provisions and you execute the MPP MOU with a protege. At that point, your mentoring relationship with your protege will be formalized.
- You will submit the provisional prequalification request to PennDOT.
- You may need to submit a force account to add the MPP training provision to your construction project. The force account will add a $25,000 mentoring line item to your construction project for direct in-the-field construction experience that will help DBE subcontractors receive prequalification codes.

2. Accessing Group Rooms:

- Navigate to the group rooms page and filter by Mentor-Protege rooms to see your enrolled MPP rooms.

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- **PennDOT MPP Room**: This room is for all PRA users interested in and/or enrolled in the PennDOT Mentor-Protege Program. It shows all program stakeholders from both cohorts and across all tiers, including interested stakeholders who still need to be enrolled as mentors or proteges.

- **Contractor MPP Room**: This room is for all PennDOT MPP consultant cohort participants. Please note that although you will meet potential mentors in this room, you should only attempt to pair with them on projects once you have successfully reached Tier 3 of the program.

- **Tier 3 Contractor Room**: This room contains potential mentors ready to partner on PennDOT projects and best practices and resources for pairing.
  - *Tip: You can invite Potential DBE Proteges to the MPP by sending them this link (https://mppsurvey.com) to complete the MPP Protege Questionnaire. Once the questionnaire is completed, the primary Point-Of-Contact (POC) will automatically have their original PRA profile added to the appropriate tier of the MPP, or they will have a new PRA profile created and added to the room if they use an email address not already registered in PRA. No other members of the POCs firm need to complete the questionnaire. They can just create free PRA profiles and edit their profile option to be a "Potential Mentor," as shown in this video.*

- The **Tier 3 Contractor Room Forum** can be used to ask PennDOT or MPP Admins questions anytime and review past questions and answers.

Note: Mentors can only access the Tier 3 room for their respective cohort. All other tier rooms are designed for proteges and administrators.

3. PRA Group Room Statuses:

Rooms on PRA have three visibility statuses. By completing their PRA profile and uploading their capabilities statement, PRA users are automatically enrolled into applicable rooms, which may have "Public," "Private," or "Hidden" status. These three room statuses are explained further below.

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- **Public Rooms**: These rooms are visible and accessible to all PRA users and can be joined by any user at any time.
    - **Example**: PennDOT Resources Room
    - **Example**: Heavy Highway Construction Room
- **Private Rooms**: Request access and approval needed.
    - **Example**: PennDOT MPP Room
    - **Example**: DBE Supportive Service Room
- **Hidden Rooms**: These rooms are only visible to room members. Most PRA users gain access to these rooms by providing relevant information. Hidden Rooms are invisible to all PRA users except the currently enrolled room members, and they can only be accessed with admin approval.
    - **Example**: Contractor MPP Room
    - **Example**: Tier 3 Contractor Room

4. Room Hierarchies:

Rooms house other rooms on PRA as "Subgroups." Most rooms on PRA are nested and can be navigated using the "breadcrumb" links at the top of the room page just below the room banner image. (Please watch this video for a further explanation of the MPP room hierarchy.)

- **Subgroups**: Each room with subordinate rooms has a "subgroups" tab. This tab shows the next level of rooms, which drill down to more specific classifications of information.
- **Breadcrumb Feature**: Room visitors can navigate from sub rooms back up the room hierarchy utilizing the tiny links just under the room banner image of all sub rooms.
- **MPP Room Nesting Logic for the Tier 3 Contractors Room** is shown below:

(Parent Room > Child Room > Grandchild Room)

    - PennDOT MPP Room > Contractors MPP Room > Tier 3 Contractors Room

MPP Contractor Mentor Focus:

1. Making Connections and Pairing with Proteges:

- The Tier 3 Contractors Room proteges are ready to pair up on PennDOT projects.

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- Check the Public Tier 3 Contractors Report regularly to find new protege firms that may be joining the program daily. This report can be accessed without logging in to PRA.
  - Tip: You can toggle the report from list to tile mode, where you can view each protege profile and send connection requests and messages directly from the report.
  - "Tile View" of The Tier 3 Contractors Room Reports. Protege tiles can be viewed by toggling the small icon at the right of the table from the "three lines" icon to the "four square" icon.
- MPP Rooms have three member types: Program Admins, Potential Mentors, and Potential Proteges. Ensure you are aware of the room member type before sending communications. You can view the services provided and contact information directly from the protege profile.
- When viewing Tier 3 proteges from the "Tile mode" of the report, you can click on any protege's profile image to visit their profile and learn more about their company.
- You can send connection requests and begin dialogues with proteges once connected.
- MPP room members must connect with the user before sending a message. To initiate a connection request, click the person icon with a plus symbol on the member profile image.
- Remember, you can cancel connections anytime.
- **Best Practice Tip:** Mentors can refer proteges who are PAUCP-certified DBEs to the PennDOT MPP by sending them the link to the MPP Protege Questionnaire (mppsurvey.com). After the questionnaire is completed, the new protege firm must be actively prequalified on ECMS with at least one work code before they are visible in the MPP Tier 3 Room and ready to pair.
- **Please note: Sending a Connection Request to a protege Is Not the Same as sending a Pairing Request to a Protege!**
  - **Connection Requests -** Can be sent to any user on ProRank Academy. A connection between users on PRA is required before they can message. The option to initiate a connection request with a protege can be found in the following places:

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- ■ "Tile View" of The Tier 3 Contractors Room Reports. Protege tiles can be viewed by toggling the small icon at the right of the table from the "three lines" icon to the "four square" icon.
  - ● The tile view of the Public Tier 3 Contactor Room Report can be used to send connection requests.
  - ● The tile view of the PRA Tier 3 Contractor Room Report can be used to send connection requests.
- ■ The Members Tab of the Tier 3 Contractors Room can be used to send connection requests.
- ■ The profile page of any protege can be used to send connection requests and;
- ■ The PRA Community Page can be used to send connection requests.
- **PAIRING requests can only be initiated from the mentor's "MPP Tab" on the "Add Project" Sub-Tab. See the steps below:**
  - ○ You can visit the "MPP" tab on your profile menu from the PRA, on the main menu under MPP; it's the "My MPP Projects" tab, or you can use This Link.
  - ○ Visit The MPP tab to view a list of Proteges available to pair with your cohort. The protege's mapper profile, NAICS codes, and desired skill sets can all be viewed from the blue buttons on each row of the in-line report.
  - ○ Enter the ECMS project number and the project name in the fields provided.
  - ○ Select the check box next to the protege(s) you want to pair with.
  - ○ Click the blue Submit button to send the pairing request.
  - ○ You can view the pending pairing request in the "Projects" subtab until the protege approves or rejects the request.
- **If pairing does not occur through ProRank Academy, your MPP Project Award could be delayed, or there could be other issues receiving payment or credit for work performed. Please use the above-mentioned process to initiate your MPP teaming requests.**
- The documents section of the Tier 3 Contractor Room contains a sample MOU and a Workplan template. **Please Note** that the documents in this room are just for reference.

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The formal documents will be sent to all participants through PRA, as shown in the MPP Navigational Diagram.

2. Contractor Mentor Considerations After Pairing:

The mechanism for a protégé to expand its eligibility for PennDOT work is the Provisional Prequalification Program. It is worth noting that receiving additional pre-qualification codes can also be accomplished on ECMS projects that do not include the DBE Mentor Protégé Special Provision. Therefore, the general process from provisional pre-qualification to the regular assignment of a work classification code is summarized as follows:

1. The Protégé expresses its intent to expand its eligibility for PennDOT work in a specified area.

2. The prime contractor sends a formal provisional pre-qualification request to the Prequalification Office (PO) that identifies one of its projects that includes the protégé's specified area of work interest.

3. The PO reviews the provisional pre-qualification request, and the Contract Management Division Chief approves the provisional pre-qualification request. See Course 22.14 - PennDOT ECMS Provisional Code Request (Prime Initiated).

4. During construction, the Prime contractor provides necessary training and oversight; the protégé self-performs the work while satisfying the Commercially Useful Function (CUF) requirements; and District personnel witness, inspect, and evaluate the protégé's performance.

5. Upon successful completion of sufficient projects in the protégé's specified area of work interest, the protégé sends a formal request for additional codes to the PO. The number of projects is dependent on the type of work, quantity or work, scope or work and independent 3rd party verification or the work.

6. The PO reviews and approves the additional codes request (i.e., regular assignment of the work classification code).

● Payment for work using the DBE Mentor Protégé Special Provision will occur as services are rendered using the Mentor Protégé Program Activity Invoicing Log form (Attachment F), which is to document satisfactory performance, as part of submitting an invoice(s) to

PennDOT through ECMS. See an example of the MPP Activity Log for mentor invoicing at the link provided in this document.

● If the MPP special provision is not initially added to the construction project, the awarded prime contractor can add the MPP training provision and the $25,000 mentor line item via a force account. See PRA lesson 22.2.4 on ECMS Force Accounts to learn more.

3. Contractor Mentor Resources:

● Course 22.14 - PennDOT ECMS Provisional Code Request (Prime 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.

● Provisional Prequalification Guidelines: This document provides guidelines for the provisional assignment of a work classification code by PennDOT to a prequalified contractor, working as a subcontractor if a Prime Contractor is willing to train and directly supervise this work as it is self-performed by the subcontractor. **This work classification code must be assigned to the Prime Contractor to be considered for provisional prequalification for the subcontractor**. Provisional prequalification approval is project-specific. Successful completion of provisional prequalification may be applied toward the regular assignment of the work classification code.

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- ○ Provisional prequalification does not apply to a 1st-tier subcontractor mentoring another 1st-tier subcontractor. Provisional prequalification does not apply to a 1st-tier subcontractor mentoring a 2nd-tier subcontractor. <u>Provisional prequalification only applies to a prime contractor mentoring a 1st-tier subcontractor.</u>
  - ○ Only one provisional prequalification work classification will be granted per subcontractor at one time. Once a provisional work classification has been made permanent, the subcontractor may initiate another provisional request.
  - ○ As an MPP contractor Protege, you will acquire your new work codes using the provisional prequalification process, so it is highly recommended that you understand the guidelines.
- Contractor MOU Template: The mentor and protege should begin their formal agreement by signing the MOU. The sooner this can be done, the better. This should occur immediately after a prime decides to mentor the protege if the prime has already been awarded the project. If the project has not been awarded, the MOU can be signed immediately after the award notice. The mentor should have this executed document available and ready for discussion at their kick-off meeting with PennDOT.
- Contractor Development Plan Template: This template can be used to develop your mentor-protege development plan. Both the mentor and the protege should work together and have input in creating this plan, although it is the mentor's responsibility to submit the plan to PennDOT.
- Sample Contractor Development Plan: This is an example of how a contractor protege work plan might look once completed.
  - ○ Tip: In MPP jargon, Development Plans are also commonly referred to as Work Plans, so please do not be confused if you hear these terms used together.
    - ■ Example: "Work Development Plan"
    - ■ Or if you hear them used interchangeably;
      - ● Development Plan and
      - ● Work Plan
  - ○ These terms refer to the same document for the PennDOT MPP.

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- Activity Invoicing Log form
  - Example MPP Activity Log for Invoicing (Mentor Example)
- MPP Navigational Diagram This document is an interactive flowchart that guides proteges and mentors through the entire MPP lifecycle. It includes video instructions and direct links to each webpage referenced at each program step.
- The MPP Contractor Virtual Pairing Guide provides a detailed written overview of the MPP virtual pairing process between mentors and protégés of the contractor cohort on PRA.
- PennDOT Mentor-Protege Program (MPP) Website: This is the official website for the PennDOT MPP Program. It contains various resources to help proteges and mentors understand and navigate the program.
- PennDOT MPP Program Guide: This document is PennDOT's guidance on policies and procedures for the Mentor-Protege Program.
- ProRank Academy Password Reset Link: This will allow you to reset your PRA password if you forgot it or are having issues logging in.

Conclusion:

This guide provides a detailed framework for new contractor mentor MPP Program participants to navigate the Mentor-Protege Program (MPP) resources on PRA. By properly pairing with proteges using the outlined steps, participants can foster successful mentor-protege relationships and avoid potential delays and pitfalls. This guide is maintained as a virtual document. For the latest version, please use "this link" and check the top right corner of any page for changes to the version number.

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.