



GENERAL

Q: What is ByBlack?

- ByBlack is a platform designed to provide Black-owned businesses with a way to reach new customers and access business resources. The platform was created and developed by the U.S. Black Chambers and is presented by American Express®. The platform offers a national Black-owned business directory and the only national certification currently available for Black-owned businesses.

Q: What business education and resources can Black-owned businesses find on ByBlack?

- On ByBlack, Black-owned businesses can find a variety of resources including:
 - Access to Educational Opportunities available via the USBC or American Express.
 - Grants & Potential Funding Programs – including access to information on when and where these programs are available.
 - Local & National Relationship Building - When business owners join the ByBlack community, they receive priority invitations to join USBC affiliated local chambers of commerce in their community. They also have access to networking opportunities with other fellow business owners and experts through annual events.
 - Corporate-Sponsored Matchmaking Opportunities - available via the USBC or American Express that can help connect buyers with suppliers.

Q: How is Amex involved in ByBlack?

- American Express is providing resources to the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. to enhance the ByBlack platform and launch their national certification exclusively for Black-owned businesses.

Q: Why are the USBC and American Express collaborating on ByBlack?

- ByBlack is part of both the USBC's and American Express' broader efforts to support Black-owned businesses.
- To learn more about the USBC's and American Express efforts to support Black-owned businesses visit <https://usblackchambers.org/certification>

Q: What types of businesses can join ByBlack?

- A business that identifies as Black-owned may create a profile and onboard to the publicly searchable business directory. To create this profile, the business will only need to provide identifying information such as: (i) the name of the business and the business owner; (ii) the

business website, phone number, and address; and (iii) the business category, description, and NAIC/Industry code.

- To become certified as Black-owned, businesses must be a majority (51% or more) owned, operated, managed, and controlled by a Black/African American person or persons who are either U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents. In addition, the business must meet other requirements, including that the business:
 - (i) exercise independence from any non-Black business enterprise
 - (ii) have its principal place of business (headquarters) located in the U.S.
 - (iii) be a S-Corporation, C-Corporation, Partnership, LLC (single or multi-member) or a Sole Proprietorship formed as a legal entity in the U.S.
 - (iv) be in business at least one year to meet tax documentation requirements based on business structure.

Q: How has ByBlack changed?

- In June 2020, the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. expanded the ByBlack platform, its national directory to provide Black businesses with an avenue to register and promote their businesses.
- In September 2021, with the support of American Express, the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. further expanded ByBlack to establish the first national certification exclusively for Black-owned businesses offered with no application fee.
- Black-owned businesses can now join the directory and/or get certified.

Joining the Directory

Q: How do I onboard to the Black-owned business directory?

- To onboard select “ONBOARD TO OUR DIRECTORY” on the main page at <https://usblackchambers.org/certification>. Once you get into the platform, you can create a profile and submit your information, including your Business Name, Business Owner, Website, Phone Number, Address, Category, Business Description, NAICS and Industry Code. Upon submission you will go through a 2–5-day validation period where your information will get reviewed for accuracy and you will be notified via email when your business profile has been posted.
- For questions about how to add your business to the ByBlack platform contact programs@usblackchambers.org.

Q: Who can use the ByBlack business directory?

- Black-owned businesses can use this platform to create a profile and join the national business directory that’s easily searchable by customers and companies of all sizes. Once on the directory, Black-owned businesses can network with others within the community.
- Customers and companies of all sizes can also use the ByBlack business directory to find Black-owned businesses they want to support.
- For questions about how to add your business to the ByBlack directory contact programs@usblackchambers.org.

Q: How is this directory different from the many others available?

The ByBlack directory was designed with the goal of helping consumers and corporations find and support Black-owned businesses. ByBlack, which is accessible at no-cost, is built with the user in mind: offering information not only by business listing, but also by city-curated lists.

Certification**Q: Who is eligible to apply for certification?**

- To become certified as Black-owned, businesses must meet specific requirements including that the business: (i) be a majority (51% or more) owned, operated, and managed and controlled by a Black/African American person or persons who are either U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents; (ii) exercise independence from any non-Black business enterprise; (iii) have its principle place of business (headquarters) located in the U.S.; and (iv) be a S-Corporation, C-Corporation, Partnership, LLC (single or multi-member) or a Sole Proprietorship formed as a legal entity in the U.S. and (v) be in business at least one year to meet tax documentation requirements based on business structure.
- To learn more about each of these requirements based on your business type, visit <https://certification.byblack.us/documents/guide.pdf>.

Q: What are the requirements to apply for certification?

- The list of requirements to apply for certification vary by business structure. Visit <https://certification.byblack.us/documents/guide.pdf> to get requirements by structure.

Q: How long does it take to get certified

- The application to get certified can be completed in as little as 30 minutes once you have all the required documents available. For documentation requirements visit <https://certification.byblack.us/documents/guide.pdf>.
- Applicants will then be required to complete a virtual site visit, which asks for information regarding business ownership, operation, and control that is complimentary to the information presented in the certification application.
- After you submit your completed application and virtual site visit, you will receive progress notifications in your dedicated user dashboard created when you apply or via email.
- The certification process can take up to 30 days.
- For questions about certification, you can contact programs@usblackchambers.org.

Q: How do I get started to submit my application for certification?

- To begin the certification process, Black-owned businesses can visit <https://usblackchambers.org/certification>, select the certification option and follow the steps on the site.

Q: Is there an application fee to become certified or cost to maintain the certification?

- There is no application fee to become a certified Black-owned business via ByBlack. There is no cost to maintain the certification.

Q: What do I get once I get approved for certification?

- Once a certification application has been approved, the business will be notified of their acceptance via email and will be able to access their certificate and official ByBlack Business badge on their user dashboard. This badge can be used to let other businesses or customers know that you are certified as Black-owned by ByBlack.

Q. How long is the certification valid for?

- The certification is valid for two years, after which certified businesses will need to go through a renewal process. Certified businesses will receive notification prior to their certification expiration with instructions to re-certify.

Q: Why is it important for Black-owned businesses to become certified?

- ByBlack certification can help set a business apart in the marketplace and adds credibility when pursuing contracting opportunities with organizations that are looking to fulfill on their commitments to spend with diverse suppliers.

Q: Why is ByBlack's certification different from other types of local or national certifications?

- Created by the USBC, ByBlack is unique in that it is currently the only national certification exclusively for Black-owned businesses.