

# USDN Emergent Learning Frant 2024

## Memphis EF28 Update

Deliverable 5

September 16, 2024

The Division of Planning and Development Department of Housing team continues in its efforts to professionalize the program and attract new talent. Since its last update, the Department of Housing has maintained availability of the workforce development survey; onboarded another new contractor; hosted both focus groups, “Coffee with Contractors: A Chance to Connect”; sponsored seven employees at Moore Tech’s weatherization training, hired an intern for Fall ’24, and sponsored lead supervisor training for a new hire.

### Workforce Development Survey

*A complete copy of the survey is available in the appendix. The following is an analysis of the results and efficacy of the survey.*

Thus far only 4 of our contractors have completed the survey. At this point, the survey has only been disseminated digitally via flyers with a QR code link to the survey posted in the office. The consensus is that there would be more uptake on the survey, if at our next contractors’ engagement session, whether it be a focus group or expo, we administer a paper survey to be completed in person. We will, however, continue to have the survey available online.

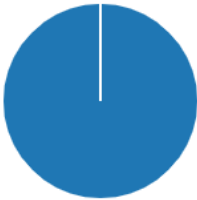
While there have been limited responses to the survey SCDH was able to glean valuable information from the contractors’ input.

### Key Takeaways:

1. Contractors unanimously agree that there should be a step-by-step guide to onboarding. One contractor even suggested we develop a video that shows contractors how to get established as a vendor for the Department of Housing
3. Having a step-by-step instructional guide on how to become a vendor for Shelby County would be helpful.

[More Details](#)

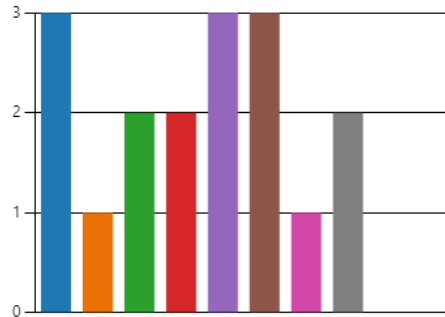
Strongly agree	4
Somewhat agree	0
Neither agree nor disagree	0
Somewhat disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0



14. Which of the following subjects would you have liked to hear more about during the onboarding and training process for new vendors? Select all that apply.

[More Details](#)

Job training resources	3
Staffing resources	1
Job cost accounting	2
Material resources / local vendors	2
Bidding process	3
Contracts process	3
Project scope and timelines	1
All of the above	2
None of the above	0
Other	0



2. All contractors have an interest in completing a weatherization course.

9. Weatherization and sustainability are increasingly important especially in the built environment. Indicate your level of interest in learning more about energy efficiency, weatherization, and certification and training opportunities pertaining to these subjects.

[More Details](#)

Extremely interested	3
Somewhat interested	1
Neither interested or disinterest...	0
Somewhat disinterested	0
Extremely disinterested	0



3. Some contractors find the cost of SCDH required certifications to be burdensome; consequently, all have expressed an interest in SCDH offering those classes to them for accessibility and convenience.

12. Indicate your interest level in group certification / recertification classes hosted in the training rooms at 6465 Mullins Station Rd., Memphis, TN 38134.

[More Details](#)

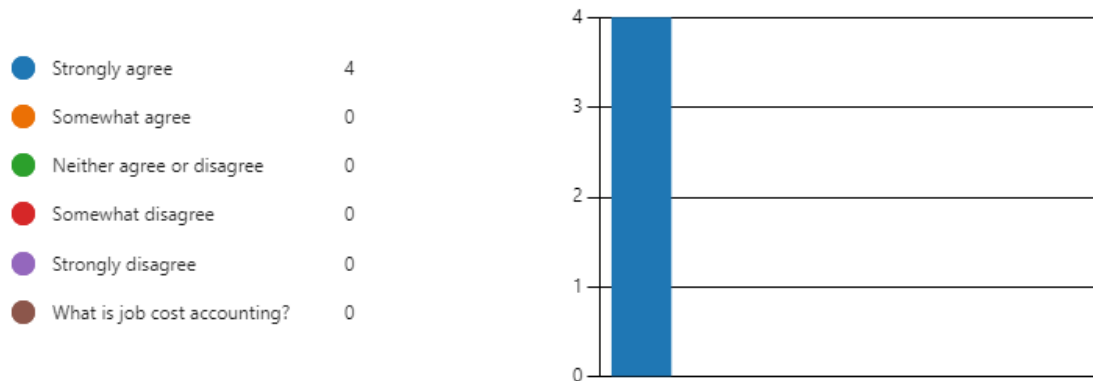
Extremely interested	4
Somewhat interested	0
Neutral	0
Somewhat disinterested	0
Extremely disinterested	0



4. Many of our contractors do not utilize any formal accounting or billing system. Much of them are not familiar with job profitability and job cost accounting; however all expressed a desire for classes regarding the topic.

24. Training on job cost accounting would be beneficial for my business.

[More Details](#)



5. All contractors were interested in increased opportunities for networking and access to information about local wholesalers.
6. All contractors were happy about their participation in the focus group discussions and were eager to participate in another event.

### ***Focus Group Series: “Coffee with Contractors: A Chance to Connect”***

*A copy of the itinerary and sign in sheet can be found in the appendix.*

The Department of Housing hosted two focus group sessions, one on July 18, 2024 and another on July 25, 2024. The meetings were hosted in the conference room of the Construction Code Enforcement building at 6465 Mullins Station Rd., Memphis, TN 38134. The meetings began at 9:00 AM and concluded at 11:00 AM.

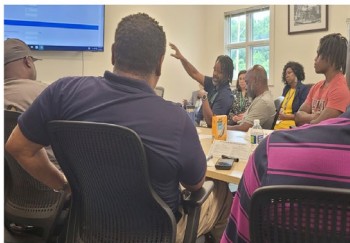
Meetings were hosted by SCDH staff and assisted by a Business Services representative. Participants were provided with donuts and coffee in addition to being compensated for their time.



The Ups and Downs: Our contractors shared their experiences, highlighting both the challenges and successes they've faced while working on home rehabilitation projects. From unexpected surprises during renovations to the rewarding moments of seeing a home restored, we covered it all!



Making Things Better: The feedback was invaluable! Together, we brainstormed ways to streamline the process, improve communication, and enhance the overall experience for both our homeowners and contractors. Our goal? To make the Home Rehab Program as smooth and successful as possible for everyone involved.



Site Inspector Anthony Lockhart (above) explains in detail the importance of pricing and labeling permits correctly in Accela. Accurate pricing and labeling are vital when pulling permits for construction projects. They ensure compliance with regulations, preventing costly fines or delays. Clear documentation helps streamline the review process, reducing the chance of misunderstandings.

Collen Funk (Right) explains the benefits and how to navigate our recently updated system. Navigating the online permitting system is essential. It saves time, enhances communication with authorities, and allows for quick submission and tracking of applications. Many of our contractors were still coming in to pull paper permits. This expertise leads to smoother project execution and helps keep construction on schedule.



Inflation is significantly impacting contractors and our budget, making it crucial to provide accurate in-house estimates aligned with contractors' pricing. As costs for materials and labor rise, ensuring our estimates reflect these changes helps us maximize the support we offer to homeowners.

Our "Coffee with Contractors" meetings have been instrumental in fostering effective communication about current pricing and material costs. This open dialogue allows us to stay informed about the challenges contractors face due to inflation. By maintaining transparency, we can ensure that both contractors and homeowners have their needs met, ultimately leading to successful project outcomes.



### Key Takeaways:

In addition to sharing feedback in alignment with that received in the survey, contractors discussed the bidding process as it pertains to SCDH in house estimates, availability of work, communication issues with homeowners, pre-bid open houses, and inspections.

After discussion with contractors, it became evident that SCDH needs to streamline its onboarding process as well as create engaging directional content; act as communication liaisons between homeowners and contractors; provide opportunities for networking and training among professionals in the construction field; and continue to train its own staff on industry standards, especially in pricing materials, labor, and other overhead expenses.

Ideas that emerged from the focus group included contractor lead mock inspections to assist in inspectors' understanding of signs to look for that may indicate underlying damage / need for change orders, streamlined communication methods, and recommendations on payment and inspection schedules.

### **Conclusion**

The implementation of a robust workforce development strategy is essential for the government housing department to enhance program outcomes and operational efficiency. By prioritizing continuing education and training, we empower our staff and construction vendors with the latest industry knowledge and skills, fostering a culture of excellence and innovation. The Department of Housing plans to continue to pursue this via sharing certification and training opportunities to staff and vendors, seeking certification to become instructors for various certifications programs, and continuing check ins formatted similarly to the focus groups hosted in July. Furthermore, enhancing communication channels in this way will ensure that all stakeholders are aligned and fully engaged, leading to more effective collaboration and problem-solving.

Networking opportunities will also play a critical role in building strong partnerships within the community and the construction sector, facilitating the sharing of best practices and resources. By investing in these key areas, our department can not only improve the quality of housing programs but also contribute to a more skilled and motivated workforce. The Department of Housing plans to accomplish this by hosting a vendor expo at our offices. This expo will include material vendors, insurance providers, software vendors like Quickbooks, and professional organizations like MAMCA.

This strategic approach will ultimately lead to better service delivery, increased satisfaction among residents, and a stronger, more sustainable housing rehabilitation program. As the department moves forward, it is committed to continuous improvement and adaptability, ensuring that evolving needs of the community are met.



# ARE YOU A LOCAL CONTRACTOR? WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!



Your input matters and we would love to hear what you have to say. We are collecting information to better meet your needs and help us guide our programs to help grow your business.

Scan QR code to take part in our survey - we will be accepting responses through July and August, 2024



# Work Force Development Survey

The Memphis - Shelby County Department of Housing (SCDH) is conducting a workforce development study in order to better support your work and grow your business as a vendor for SCDH.

This study will be used as a guide to better meet your needs and enhance the profitability, quality, and efficiency of Housing vendors and their work.

We appreciate your time, talent, and expertise as we navigate making improvements to our growing programs.

1. As vendor for Shelby County how are you classified?

- ☐ Individual Proprietorship
- ☐ LLC
- ☐ Corporation
- ☐ Consultant
- ☐ I am not yet a vendor

2. If you are not yet a vendor, briefly specify your qualifications and how you would like to become involved.

3. Having a step-by-step instructional guide on how to become a vendor for Shelby County would be helpful.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

4. What program(s) within the Shelby County Department of Housing (SCDH) do you participate in as a vendor? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Lead hazard Control
- ☐ Rehabilitation
- ☐ Both A & B
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Other

5. Which of the following licensure do you or your company/entity carry? Please note we are not asking about subcontractors. Check all that apply.

- ☐ Home Improvement
- ☐ Electrician
- ☐ Plumber
- ☐ HVAC
- ☐ Contractors (BC)
- ☐ Contractors (BC-A)
- ☐ Contractors (BC-A/r)
- ☐ Contractors (BC-B)

6. In what states do you carry a license? Select all that apply. Please indicate any other states in which you have licenses in the space provided next to "Other".

- ☐ Tennessee
- ☐ Mississippi
- ☐ Arkansas
- ☐ None
- ☐ Other



7. If your license level varies by state (i.e. it is not a reciprocal license), please specify licensure limits in each state in the space provided below.

8. Is your company certified with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) ?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know what LEED is.

9. Weatherization and sustainability are increasingly important especially in the built environment. Indicate your level of interest in learning more about energy efficiency, weatherization, and certification and training opportunities pertaining to these subjects.

- ☐ Extremely interested
- ☐ Somewhat interested
- ☐ Neither interested or disinterested
- ☐ Somewhat disinterested
- ☐ Extremely disinterested

10. SCDH requires that vendors bidding on jobs have lead training certifications. Do you have any additional training or certifications beyond your required lead certs? If so, please list them below; otherwise, type N/A.

11. The cost of training and certifications can be a cost burden for my business.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

12. Indicate your interest level in group certification / recertification classes hosted in the training rooms at 6465 Mullins Station Rd., Memphis, TN 38134.

- ☐ Extremely interested
- ☐ Somewhat interested
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat disinterested
- ☐ Extremely disinterested

13. Are you a member of any of the following organizations? Check all that apply. If your professional organization is not listed, please indicate your involvement in the space provided by "Other".

- ☐ National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC)
- ☐ Memphis Area Minority Contractors Association (MAMCA)
- ☐ Tennessee Association of General Contractors (TAGC)
- ☐ Greater Memphis Chamber of Commerce
- ☐ Build. Live. Develop. Grow. (BLDG)
- ☐ Urban Land Institute (ULI)
- ☐ None of the Above
- ☐ Other

14. Which of the following subjects would you have liked to hear more about during the onboarding and training process for new vendors? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Job training resources
- ☐ Staffing resources
- ☐ Job cost accounting
- ☐ Material resources / local vendors
- ☐ Bidding process
- ☐ Contracts process
- ☐ Project scope and timelines
- ☐ All of the above
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Other

15. In your own words, what, if anything, could be done to streamline the onboarding process.

16. A majority of contracted jobs with SCDH focus on code compliance and maintenance of major systems to improve sustainability and efficiency. What areas, if any, would you like to receive more training/resources on? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Heating and Cooling Systems
- ☐ Electrical Systems
- ☐ Plumbing and Drainage
- ☐ Roofing
- ☐ Weatherization
- ☐ All of the Above
- ☐ Other

17. How do you source labor for awarded county jobs? Check all that apply.

- ☐ I have my own crew on regular payroll.
- ☐ Staffing agencies
- ☐ Temp agencies
- ☐ Labor pool
- ☐ Licensed subcontractors
- ☐ Other

18. From where do you source materials for awarded county jobs? Check all that apply.

- ☐ Home Depot
- ☐ Lowe's
- ☐ Other big box retailer like Harbor Freight, Barton's, Ace., etc.
- ☐ Local retailers
- ☐ Wholesalers
- ☐ Other

19. Using the scale below, indicate your level of interest in a contractors' vendor expo.

- ☐ Extremely interested
- ☐ Somewhat interested
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat disinterested
- ☐ Extremely disinterested

20. SCDH is considering hosting a contractors expo to enhance networking and educational resource opportunities for its vendors. Indicate vendors you might be interested in attending by checking corresponding boxes below. Select all that apply.

- ☐ J.E. Allen
- ☐ River City Materials (L&W Suply)
- ☐ Chris Moore Inc. (Coburn Supply)
- ☐ General Shale
- ☐ Harrison Roofing
- ☐ Tennison Brothers
- ☐ Chickasaw Lumber
- ☐ Active Bolt & Screw
- ☐ Beacon Roofing
- ☐ C & C Equipment (ERG)
- ☐ H & E Equipment
- ☐ Nexair
- ☐ Nature's Earth
- ☐ Other

21. In the space provided below, please indicate other vendors (not listed above) that you would like to see at a contractors' expo. Examples include representatives from organizations like MAMCA, local insurance brokers, staffing agencies, etc.

22. Do you utilize job cost accounting to track job profitability and efficiency/

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ What is job cost accounting?

23. If you answered yes to using job cost accounting, what software program do you use? Please indicate in the space provided below.

24. Training on job cost accounting would be beneficial for my business.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ What is job cost accounting?

25. Do you utilize equipment and or heavy machinery on your jobsites?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

26. If you utilize equipment and/or heavy machinery on your jobsites, check all that apply.

- ☐ Aerial Platform Equipment
- ☐ Earth Moving Equipment
- ☐ General Equipment
- ☐ Material Handling Equipment
- ☐ Power Equipment
- ☐ Pump Equipment
- ☐ Trench Safety Equipment
- ☐ Other

27. Prior to submitting a bid, do you do a site-visit?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

28. Rank in order of preference, 1 being most preferred and 4 being the least, times of the day for pre-bid open-house site visits.

8:00AM - 10:00AM

10:00AM - 12:00PM

12:00PM - 2:00PM

2:00PM - 4:00PM

29. Briefly describe you ideal payment or "draw-on-contract" schedule for jobs not exceeding \$50,000.00

30. The work write-ups provide sufficient information for completing a fair and accurate bid.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

31. What information that is not currently included in the write-ups do you feel could be added to make estimating job costs more accurate and thorough?

32. In the near future, we will be organizing small focus group discussions, for which you would be compensated. If you are interest in participating in these focus groups, please enter your email address in the space provided below.

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 Microsoft Forms

**Coffee with Contractors:** A focus group exercise to expand on information collected from the 2024 Work Force Development Survey.

*Contractors will be compensated for their participation in this exercise. Information collected from this engagement activity will be used to enhance the efficiency of SCDH's programs as well and determine training and development opportunities that can be provided by SCDH to its vendors.*

**Date:** Thursday, July 25, 2024

**Time:** 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

**Location:** Flex Room Bldg. 1 @ 6465 Mullins Station Rd.

#### Itinerary

- I. 9:00 AM – 9:15 AM
  - a. Arrival and Welcome window
- II. 9:15 AM – 9:30 AM
  - a. Introduction – starting with Victoria and/or Dana along with a brief description of the purpose of the meeting
  - b. Employees introduce themselves
  - c. Contractors in attendance introduce themselves.
- III. 9:30 AM – 10:00 AM
  - a. Tremaine to discuss Accela and open the floors for Q & A
- IV. 10:00 AM – 10:40 AM
  - a. Discussion topic one
    - i. Feedback / open forum about the onboarding process
    - ii. Feedback, suggestions, comments about rehab job from start to finish.
  - b. Discussion topic two
    - i. Training
      - a. Availability of certification courses
      - b. Interest in the potential of discounted group rates if SCDH can get certified as instructors.
      - c. What training courses are contractors most interested in
- V. 10:40 AM – 11:00AM
  - a. Open the floor for questions (10 Min)
  - b. Thank attendees for their participation and dismiss