

From the Portland Business Journal

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# State punishes Portland contractor for minority contracting claims

Mar 30, 2015, 2:27pm PDT Updated: Mar 31, 2015, 11:38am PDT



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A Portland firm must pay \$15,000 to settle allegations regarding bids it submitted under the city's minority- and women-owned contracting program.

Elkins Masonry Restoration Inc. admitted no wrongdoing in the matter. The company entered into an agreement last week with the Oregon Department of Justice that also requires it to relinquish its state certification as a minority- and women-owned business enterprise.

The moves come after a 2013 complaint into the company, to the City of Portland's Office of the Ombudsman, led to "evidence that appeared to show that Elkins may have acted as a pass-through for a non-certified firm on construction projects funded by the Portland Housing Bureau."

The Office of the Ombudsman turned the complaint over to Oregon's justice department.

"Subversion of the city's social equity contracting program undermines efforts to reverse historic discrimination and deprives bona fide minority- and women-owned businesses of work on city projects," said Ombudsman [Margie Sollinger](#) in a release.

"The city is committed to ensuring the integrity of its program and has spearheaded state legislation that gives it additional enforcement authority to address alleged fraud."

Andy is the Portland Business Journal's digital managing editor, overseeing the daily digital news operation.