
GPO

How to do business

with the
United States
Government Printing
Office

A Contractor's Guide



GPO Publication 1050.1
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What Is the Government Printing Office?

The Government Printing Office (GPO) is an agency in the legislative branch of the U.S. Government. Its mission is to produce and distribute information products and services using both traditional printing processes as well as electronic information technology. Approximately 70 percent of this work is purchased from commercial sources.

The GPO is headquartered in a large four-building complex located near the U.S. Capitol, in Washington, DC. In addition to the main Office complex, GPO operates a field printing plant in Denver and a number of regional and satellite printing procurement offices. These field facilities provide printing and printing procurement requirements in their respective areas.

The Office is headed by the Public Printer, who is nominated by the President of the United States and confirmed by the U.S. Senate. The Joint Congressional Committee on Printing, which includes members from both the Senate and House of Representatives, serves as the oversight committee.

What Does the Government Printing Office Buy?

The GPO purchases all manner of equipment, materials, supplies, and related services necessary for the production and distribution of information in printed and electronic formats and for the operation of the Office. The GPO is not equipped to do certain specialized printing and binding jobs. These are best handled by firms that have the experience and expertise to perform those jobs. Yours may be such a firm. If so, we would like you to do business with us. Printing requirements purchased include composition; printing by letterpress, offset, silk-screen, and gravure; binding and finishing; color work; and snapout and marginally punched continuous forms, labels, etc. Other procured requirements include the acquisition of microfiche, microfilm, and automatic data processing equipment and services, such as integration, data base composition, data dissemination, and optical media Compact Disc-Read Only Memory (CD-ROM).

How Are Government Printing Office Purchases Made?

By law, the GPO is required to purchase its needs through the competitive bidding process. Bids are solicited by telephone, fax, advertisement in the *Commerce Business Daily*, posting, and by mail to firms on bidders mailing lists. Invitations to bid and requests for proposals are circulated as widely as possible, consistent with the nature of the requirement, the time available, and the quantities needed.

The only exceptions to the rule are materials from contracts established by the General Services Administration available to all Government agencies; items for which there is a specific justified need, and for which no substitute can be accepted; items purchased for public exigency; items having only one source of supply; items for which it is impracticable to secure competition by sealed bidding; and small requirements of shelf items that are available on the market at a modest dollar cost. Even so, several sources of supply, if available, are checked to ensure that such procurements are made on terms beneficial to the Government.

General Policy Concerning Small, Minority, and Small Disadvantaged Business Concerns

The policy of the GPO is to encourage small, minority, and small disadvantaged business (SDB) concerns' participation in the Federal Government's acquisition process. Therefore, the GPO ensures that small and minority business concerns and SDB concerns are afforded an equitable opportunity to compete for all contracts that they can perform to the extent consistent with the Government's interest. GPO has also initiated a program for SDBs to further assist these concerns in winning printing and binding contracts required for the Department of Defense. In the acquisition process, the GPO will, to the extent practicable, take the following steps to encourage maximum participation by small and minority business concerns and SDB concerns:

(a) Ensure that delivery schedules are established on a realistic basis that will encourage small and minority business and SDB participation to the extent consistent with the actual requirements of the Government.

(b) Publicize appropriate solicitations and awards in the *Commerce Business Daily*.

(c) Publicize solicitations and specifications to the maximum extent practicable. All GPO printing procurements shall be posted in the Bid Room located at each Procurement Office for review by interested parties. Copies of solicitations and specifications shall be made available to interested parties, upon request, on a first-come/first-served basis. When GPO's supply is exhausted, all interested parties shall be given an opportunity to copy the information necessary to bid.

(d) To the maximum extent practicable, encourage prime contractors to provide subcontracts to small and minority business concerns and SDB concerns.

(e) In the event of equal low bids, make awards, first, to small business concerns which are also labor surplus area concerns, and, second, to small business concerns which are not also labor surplus area concerns.

(f) Provide to any small and minority business concern and SDB concern, upon request, a copy of bid sets and specifications with respect to any contract to be let, and the name and telephone number of a GPO contact to answer questions related to such prospective contract.

(g) Conduct seminars for small and minority business concerns and SDB concerns on *How To Do Business With the GPO*.

(h) Participate, to the maximum extent practicable, in Department of Commerce Small Business Seminars and Conferences.

How Can I Bid?

Firms interested in supplying any product or service should submit a request to the Manager, Printing Procurement Department, or the Director, Materials Management Service, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20401, or to any of the regional printing procurement offices listed in this pamphlet. The appropriate forms will be sent to you. When properly filled out by you and returned, you will be placed on the bid lists for those items which you are able to supply. Once this procedure is completed, you will be invited to bid on GPO solicitations.

What Am I Bidding To Do?

Before anything can be done, the Office prepares a written description of the work or services to be performed. This description, called a specification, is intended to be sufficiently clear and comprehensive so that anyone qualified to do so can decide whether or not to submit a bid or proposal.

Specifications cover the descriptions, nature, sizes, colors, standards, quantities, labels, packaging, delivery schedules, and describe all other materials and services necessary to completely fulfill the requirements. This may include references to brand names or equal in the interest of clarity, or when a patented or proprietary article is required.

How Do I Enter a Bid or Offer?

Invitations for Bid (IFB) and Requests for Proposals (RFP) are sent to qualified contractors on a rotational selection. IFB's and RFP's are also solicited via appropriate advertising in the *Commerce Business Daily* and the posting of specifications in the office originating the IFB or RFP. The Printing Procurement Department (PPD) has developed an electronic service on the GPO World Wide Web site. This service provides general procurement information. In addition, electronic posting of some sealed bid solicitations is available. Eventually, electronic posting will encompass all solicitations from the entire PPD operation nationwide.

The purpose of this on-line system is to provide you with quick, easy, and inexpensive access to procurement information. This effort is our initial step toward implementing Electronic Commerce in Printing Procurement.

To retrieve this information on the web you must:

1. *Be connected to the Internet.* If you have a computer, you can access the Internet via (a) an account with an online national service provider such as CompuServe, America Online, Prodigy, PSINet, etc.; (b) an account with an online service provider local to your area such as Digital Express, CRL Network Services, Erols, etc., in the Washington, D.C. area or (c) your company's local network that is connected to the Internet. GPO is *not* recommending any one of these providers.

2. *Have access to a web browser* such as Mosaic or Netscape Navigator. You can connect to GPO's home page at <http://www.gpo.gov> and Procurement's home page at <http://www.gpo.gov/procurement>.

3. *Have access to a viewer* such as Acrobat Reader. You can download Acrobat Reader free from Procurement's home page.

Questions regarding this system may be sent to us via e-mail at printproc@gpo.gov. If you wish to submit a bid or offer, simply request an IFB or an RFP, in writing, from the originating office. Complete the required document and return it to that office in person or by mail. Be sure that

your bid or offer is mailed or delivered to arrive before the exact time set for the receipt of bids or offers contained in the invitation or it may not be considered. Unless specifically allowed by the IFB or RFP, telegraphic, mailgram, or facsimile bids or offers will not be accepted. When such bids or offers are authorized, you must promptly confirm them on furnished bid forms or by letter. You can, of course, withdraw your bid or offer at any time before the exact time set for the opening of bids or offers; however, we must receive your request in writing. If you do not wish to bid, please tell us why, so that you will remain on our list of active bidders or offerors. If you wish not to be included on a specific requirement list, or, if you wish to have your name removed from our list of bidders or offerors, just let us know.

Prospective bidders for all printing, binding, and blank bookwork are furnished a copy of "GPO Contract Terms" (GPO Publication 310.2). This document is the basic contract between the Office and its contractors. It should be read carefully and retained by you for future reference.

Buy American Act

The Buy American Act requires that the Government give preference to domestic source end products. Generally in evaluating bids on which both domestic and foreign products are offered, 6 percent will be added to the foreign bid prices, or 12 percent if the domestic end product bidder is a small business or located in a labor surplus area. A domestic end product is an unmanufactured end product which has been mined or produced in the United States, or an end product manufactured in the United States if the cost of its components which are mined, produced, or manufactured in the United States exceeds 50 percent of the cost of all its components.

Bid Acceptance and Award of Contracts

In the sealed-bidding process, the responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid is awarded a contract. In competitive negotiation, the lowest price or lowest total cost to the Government is the deciding factor only if so stated in the solicitation. Generally, source selection on competitively negotiated procurements is made to the proposal that offers the greatest value to the Government in terms of performance and other factors. Once the contract is entered into, the Office expects the contractor to completely conform to its terms and conditions.

Term Contracts

A large volume of our printing, binding, and blank bookwork is produced by commercial firms under contracts established for a specified term. This type of contract is particularly adaptable for items of a repetitive nature, such as recurring issues of periodicals, pamphlets, and forms, and for printing of a specialty nature, such as snapout forms and marginally punched continuous forms. Procedures applicable to one-time contracts apply equally to term contracts.

Similarly, a large volume of our blank paper, envelopes, containers and newsprint requirements are purchased under term contracts. The current terms for these items are:

Blank Paper—3-month contracts, commencing January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1 of each year.

Envelopes—6-month contracts, commencing March 1 and October 1 of each year.

Containers—6-month contracts, commencing April 1 and October 1 of each year.

Newsprint—1-year contract with two 1-year options on a calendar year basis. Standard samples of paper purchased are available, and supplemental detailed specifications are furnished with the IFB.

Quality Assurance, Inspection, and Testing

All work performed under a contract with the Office is subject to inspection and testing to insure that all contract terms are fulfilled. Almost all the contracted work is procured using the Quality Assurance Through Attributes Program (QATAP). This program provides for the precise expression, prior to production, of quality requirements for printing and related products, and for the clear determination, based on objective methods, of conformance to these requirements once the product has been produced or received. Items failing inspection and tests will be rejected, and the contract may be terminated. You may be required to correct or replace defective items at your own expense, or to reimburse the Office for any additional expenses incurred as a result of your noncompliance. Prospective bidders are furnished a copy of GPO *Contract Terms, Quality Assurance Through Attributes for Printing and Binding* (GPO Publication 310.1). It should be read carefully and retained for future reference.

Defaults

One element of your performance consists of delivering the required articles at

a specified time and place. Your failure to do so may constitute default. In case of default the contracting officer may, by written notice, terminate your right to proceed either with the contract as a whole or with the part which is in default. After issuing such notice, the product may be purchased elsewhere, with all additional costs chargeable to you if the default is found to be not excusable.

Remember that a record of your performance is a part of the contract file. Rejections, late deliveries, and other failures of performance are noted in the record, and could have a direct bearing on whether or not you will be considered for any future awards.

Equal Low Bids

When two or more low bids are equal in all respects, the award is made following these priorities:

1. To small businesses located in labor surplus areas;
2. To other small businesses
3. To businesses in labor surplus areas; and
4. To other businesses.

If this formula does not break the tie, the award will be made by drawing lots.

Safeguarding Bids

All sealed bids are kept under lock and key until the time specified for opening. You and your representatives are invited and encouraged to attend the public opening.

Proposals in response to an RFP are forwarded, unopened, to the Contracting Officer for recording and for safeguarding from unauthorized disclosure. However, unlike sealed bids, proposals are not publicly opened, and there is no public disclosure of the offerors' names and the number of proposals received.

Rejection of Bids

If your bid fails to comply with the specifications, it will be rejected as nonresponsive. Causes for rejection include any modification or the insertion of conditions which might give you an advantage over other bidders such as failure to state price (e.g., "price in effect at time of delivery") or making the bid conditional upon the award of another related contract. The Office also reserves the right to reject any and all bids if the prices are determined to be unreasonable.

What Does the Government Printing Office Sell?

The GPO offers for sale a variety of surplus property and scrap. When equipment is being replaced, bids are invited for both trade-in and outright sale. The final disposition is based on the greatest overall return to the Government.

Items offered for sale include printing and binding equipment, industrial trucks, warehousing equipment, furniture and fixtures, office machines, industrial machinery, waste paper, scrap iron, metal, scrap film, and damaged or surplus printing paper.

How Are Government Printing Office Sales Made?

All such sales are made by competitive sealed bids. Solicitations are mailed to individuals and firms who have asked to be placed on mailing lists for categories in which they are interested.

The solicitations include the description, age and condition, location, date of availability, method of removal, and terms of payment.

All property is available for inspection, and prospective bidders are encouraged to do so.

If you are interested in bidding on any surplus property or equipment, contact the Director, Materials Management Service, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20401. You will be sent an application, and when properly completed and returned, your name will be included on the appropriate list.

Getting Paid

One of GPO's goals is to pay its bills within 30 days after receipt, or within the discount date if economically beneficial. To receive payment, complete your own invoice and send it to the Comptroller-FMCE, Office of Financial Management, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20401. When completing your invoice, make sure that you include all requested information as outlined in GPO's Billing Instructions (GPO Publication 300.3) or your payment could be delayed. Be sure to show the purchase order and jacket number (plus the print order and program number on term contracts) on all invoices. Invoices for printing work must include evidence that shipment or delivery has

been made and all contractual requirements have been met (e.g., sample copies, negatives returned, sales copies, file copies, etc.). In addition, if no sample is required, you may telefax your invoices (with all pertinent documentation) to the following numbers: (202) 512-0992 or 512-0993. Read your contract carefully and ensure that all the requirements have been met and are supported with documentation where required.

Under the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (P.L. 10-134), GPO is required to pay all contractors, for contracts entered into after July 26, 1996, through the Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) program unless the contractor certifies that he/she does not have an account at a financial institution or an authorized payment agent. The Act provides even further that all payments made after January 1, 1999, **must** be made by EFT. Under EFT, payment is in your account on the payment date. Accounting data is furnished electronically to your bank or financial institution. Your bank or financial institution is responsible for providing you with the accounting data you need to settle your accounts. To receive payment through EFT, contractors must complete an SF-3881, "ACH Vendor/Miscellaneous Payment Enrollment Form." If you have any questions concerning EFT, please call (202) 512-0800.

Feel free to call if you are a first-time contractor for GPO, have a new contract that you are not familiar with, or have any billing problems you do not understand.

Local: (202) 512-0800.
Toll free: 1-800-BILLGPO

A Final Word of Advice

The GPO offers fair and equitable treatment to all suppliers. To this end, our contracting personnel will give you full support and cooperation in order for us to obtain an acceptable product from you at a reasonable price and in a timely manner. The Government is strict in its enforcement of contract terms. So, if you have any questions or problems, we urge you to contact us as soon as possible so that we can answer your questions or, if feasible, work toward a mutually acceptable solution.

Thousands of small business firms obtain Government contracts and continue to seek them because they are profitable. We hope that this pamphlet answers most of your questions about doing business with the GPO. If not, please contact any of the GPO organizations listed in this booklet. They will be glad to help you. Once again, we invite you to become one of our contractors.

GPO Central Office

U.S. Government Printing Office
Paper & Specialized
Procurement & Sales Division
Room A340, Stop MMP
732 North Capitol Street NW
Washington, DC 20401
Telephone: 202-512-0937

U.S. Government Printing Office
General Procurement Division
Room A332, Stop MMG
732 North Capitol Street NW
Washington, DC 20401
Telephone: 202-512-0916

U.S. Government Printing Office
Printing Procurement Department
Contract Management Division
Bid Section, Room B104, Stop PPSB
732 North Capitol Street NW
Washington, DC 20404
Telephone: 202-512-0526

Government Printing Office Regional Printing Procurement Offices

Region 1

U.S. Government Printing Office
Regional Printing Procurement Office
28 Court Square
Boston, MA 02108-2504
Telephone: 617-720-3680

Region 2

U.S. Government Printing Office
Regional Printing Procurement Office
Southampton Office Park, Suite A-190
928 Jaymore Road
Southampton, PA 18966-3820
Telephone: 215-364-6465

U.S. Government Printing Office
Regional Printing Procurement Office
201 Varick Street, Room 709
New York, NY 10014-4879
Telephone: 212-620-3321

U.S. Government Printing Office
Satellite Printing Procurement Office
Moorhead Federal Building, Room 501
1000 Liberty Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-4000
Telephone: 412-395-4858

Region 3

U.S. Government Printing Office
Regional Printing Procurement Office
11836 Canon Blvd., Suite 400
Newport News, VA 23606-2555
Telephone: 757-873-2800

U.S. Government Printing Office
Rapid Response Center
Building 136, Washington Navy Yard
First & N Streets SE
Washington, DC 20403-0001
Telephone: 202-755-2110

Region 4

U.S. Government Printing Office
Regional Printing Procurement Office
2 Park Place, Suite 110
1888 Emery Street
Atlanta, GA 30318-2542
Telephone: 404-605-9160

U.S. Government Printing Office
Satellite Printing Procurement Office
L. Mendel Rivers
Federal Building, Room 122
334 Meeting Street
Charleston, SC 29403-6417
Telephone: 803-723-9379

Region 5

U.S. Government Printing Office
Regional Printing Procurement Office
200 North LaSalle Street, Suite 810
Chicago, IL 60601-1055
Telephone: 312-353-3916

U.S. Government Printing Office
Regional Printing Procurement Office
1335 Dublin Road, Suite 112-B
Columbus, OH 43215-7034
Telephone: 614-488-4616

Region 6

U.S. Government Printing Office
Regional Printing Procurement Office
815 Olive Street, Room 328
St. Louis, MO 63101-1597
Telephone: 314-241-0349

Region 7

U.S. Government Printing Office
Regional Printing Procurement Office
1100 Commerce Street, Room 3D4
Dallas, TX 75242-0395
Telephone: 214-767-0451

U.S. Government Printing Office
Satellite Printing Procurement Office
Door 2, Building 1552
Kelly Air Force Base, TX 78241-5000
Telephone: 210-924-4245

U.S. Government Printing Office
Satellite Printing Procurement Office
3420 D Avenue, Suite 100
Tinker Air Force Base, OK 73145-9188
Telephone: 405-231-4146

U.S. Government Printing Office
Satellite Printing Procurement Office
U.S. Customs Building, Room 310
423 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70130-2352
Telephone: 504-589-2538

Region 8

U.S. Government Printing Office
Regional Printing Procurement Office
Denver Federal Center
Building 53, Room D-1010
Denver, CO 80225-0347
Telephone: 303-236-5292

Region 9

U.S. Government Printing Office
Regional Printing Procurement Office
12501 East Imperial Highway
Suite 110
Norwalk, CA 90650-3136
Telephone: 562-863-1708

U.S. Government Printing Office
Regional Printing Procurement Office
536 Stone Road, Suite 1
Benicia, CA 94510-1170
Telephone: 707-748-1970

U.S. Government Printing Office
Satellite Printing Procurement Office
Valley Center Office Building
2221 Camino Del Rio South
San Diego, CA 92108-3609
Telephone: 619-497-6050

Region 10

U.S. Government Printing Office
Regional Printing Procurement Office
Federal Center South
4735 East Marginal Way South
Seattle, WA 98134-2397
Telephone: 206-764-3726

GPO Regional Printing Office

Denver:

U.S. Government Printing Office
Regional Printing Office
Denver Federal Center
Building 53, Room D-1010
Denver, CO 80225-0347
Telephone: 303-236-5292

Contractors located in the Denver area and wishing to supply material requirements should contact the field printing manager at the above location.

