

GUIDE TO DOD CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES

A Step by Step Approach to the DoD Marketplace

There are several basic steps every company should do to increase their ability to contract in the marketplace. Becoming a government contractor can increase your company's growth in many ways. Follow the links to prepare for doing business with the government.

1. Identify your product or service.

It is essential to know the Federal Supply Class or Service (FSC/SVC) codes, the Product Service Codes (PSCs) and North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes for your products, services or industry in which your organization normally does business. Many government product/service listings and future procurements are identified according to the PSC (www.acquisition.gov; click on PSC Manual link) or NAICS Code (www.census.gov/naics).

The North American Industry Classification System or NAICS is used by business and government to classify business establishments according to type of economic activity (process of production) in Canada, Mexico and the United States.

2. Obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and register in the System for Award Management (SAM).

You must register your Entity (business, individual, or government agency) to do business with the Federal Government. If you do not have a DUNS Number, contact Dun and Bradstreet to obtain one at <http://www.dnb.com/us/>. After obtaining a DUNS number, you should register in the System for Award Management (SAM) for contracts at www.sam.gov. A DUNS Number and SAM registration are prerequisites for any contract award. SAM is the Official U.S. Government system that consolidated the capabilities of the Central Contractor Registration (CCR), ORCA, and EPLS. It is a database designed to hold information relevant to procurement and financial transactions. SAM affords you the opportunity for fast electronic payment of your invoices. Entities may register at no cost directly from the Website. User guides and webinars are available under the Help tab.

3. Vendors must obtain a Contractor and Government Entity Code (CAGE) or NATO Contractor and Government Entity (NCAGE) Code.

The CAGE Code (for U.S. vendors) and NCAGE Code (for foreign vendors) is a required piece of data for registering in SAM. If you are a vendor located in the U.S. and do not have a CAGE Code, a CAGE Code will be assigned to you when you register in SAM system for the first time. The CAGE Welcome information page is at http://www.dlis.dla.mil/cage_welcome.asp.

A foreign vendor must contact its country representative to receive its NCAGE Code assignment. A list of country representatives can be found at http://www.dlis.dla.mil/nato_poc.asp. The NCAGE Code request form is at http://www.dlis.dla.mil/Forms/Form_AC135.asp.

4. **As a small business, explore programs with the Small Business Administration (SBA).**

DoD Small Business Specialists are located at each DoD buying activity to provide assistance on how to market to the DoD. See <http://www.acq.osd.mil/osbp> and click one of the following “Links”, “Doing Business with DoD, or “DoD Small Business Specialist”

The Small Business Administration (SBA) offers assistance and certification in preference programs to small business concerns, go to www.sba.gov. Procurement Technical Assistance Centers are located in most states and partially funded by DoD to provide small business concerns with information on how to do business with the DoD. See <http://www.aptac-us.org/new/>. They provide training and counseling on marketing, financial, and contracting issues at minimal or no cost.

Government Services Administration (GSA) helps small businesses stay competitive in the federal market. Online and onsite federal experts offer small businesses the training tools to succeed, go to <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21983>.

5. **Identifying current DoD procurement opportunities.**

Businesses should first visit Federal Business Opportunities, or FedBizOpps, and register at the website to be notified of newly posted opportunities in their industries. FedBizOpps is the official Website that allows the private sector to electronically access government-wide procurement opportunities. FedBizOpps provides a comprehensive database of all major government solicitations, contract awards, subcontracting opportunities, surplus property sales, and foreign business opportunities with the federal government and is located at <http://www.fedbizopps.gov>.

Many agencies, military departments and contracting offices also have procurement Websites. Check the individual sites for other possible sources of information.

6. **Familiarize yourself with DoD contracting regulations and procedures.**

Familiarize yourself with the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) (<http://www.acquisition.gov/far>) and the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) (<http://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/dfars/index.htm>).

7. **Investigate Federal Supply Schedule (FSS).**

As the centralized procurement arm for the federal government, GSA offers products, services, and facilities needed by federal agencies for serving the public. In turn, GSA offers businesses the opportunity to sell billions of dollars’ worth of products and services to those agencies.

The General Services Administration (GSA) Schedules (also referred to as Multiple Award Schedules and Federal Supply Schedules) Program, establishes long-term government-wide contracts with commercial firms to provide access to over 11 million commercial

supplies (products) and services. These can be ordered directly from GSA Schedule contractors or through the GSA Advantage![®] online shopping and ordering system.

While the GSA Schedules Program is only one of GSA's procurement vehicles, it is one of the largest programs and the most preferred for commercial products and services. Contact the GSA for information on how to obtain a schedule contract, go to www.gsa.gov/schedules.

8. Explore EMALL Contracts.

DOD EMALL shifts the acquisition paradigm away from repetitive small purchases to establishment of broad contractual arrangements and functions as a single entry point for DOD customers seeking to acquire off-the-shelf, finished goods from the commercial marketplace.

The EMALL website (<https://dod-emall.dla.mil>) provides information on how to be a supplier or vendor for DoD EMALL. EMALL is the DoD equivalent of a dot.com mega store. It allows the DoD customer to have internet access to over 12 million national stock number products and commercial items for purchase and delivery at Government negotiated prices. Buyers can use MILSTRIP or Government purchase card and have reconciliation power at their fingertips. DoD EMALL provides the transparency, velocity, and versatility that today's DoD buyers and suppliers demand.

9. Seek additional assistance, as needed, in the DoD marketplace.

There are several important resources that are available to assist you in the DoD marketplace:

- Doing Business with DoD website provides links to the homepages of the DoD activities (http://www.defense.gov/landing/contract_resources.aspx).
- The Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy (DPAP) website (<http://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/index.html>) DPAP is responsible for all Contracting and Procurement policy matters including e-Business in the Department of Defense (DoD). Click on the "eBusiness" tab for more information on a number of systems with which you should be familiar.

The Federal Procurement Data System-Next Generation (FPDS-NG) at <https://www.fpds.gov> is the official web site for all federal procurement data and reports. This site requires registration for a user account and is free to the public.

10. Look for Subcontracting opportunities.

Regardless of your product or service, it is important to consider our very large secondary market. We encourage you to consider contractor teaming arrangements.

The Small Business Administration's SUB-Net (<http://web.sba.gov/subnet>) is a valuable source for obtaining information on subcontracting opportunities. Solicitations or notices

are posted not only by prime contractors, but the SUB-Net is also used by other government, commercial, and educational entities. We encourage you to investigate potential opportunities with these firms many of which also have websites that may be useful.

11. Investigate other DoD programs.

There are several other programs that may be of interest to you, such as the DoD Mentor-Protégé Program, the Small Business Innovation Research Program, and the Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Institutions Program. Information on these and other programs is available on the DoD Office of Small Business Programs website, <http://www.acq.osd.mil/osbp>.

12. Familiarize yourself with the DoD's electronic invoicing capabilities.

Wide Area Workflow (WAWF) is DoD's primary system for the electronic processing of invoices and receiving reports. By submitting your invoices and receiving reports through the Web, Electronic Data Interchange (EDI), or File Transfer Protocol (FTP), they will be routed electronically, resulting in more efficient payments to you. More information on WAWF can be found at <https://wawf.eb.mil>.

13. Market your product or service well.

After you have identified your customers, researched their requirements, and familiarized yourself with DoD procurement regulations and strategies, it is time to market your product or service. Present your capabilities to the DoD activities that buy your products or services. USASpending.gov at <http://www.usaspending.gov> also contains current DoD procurement data. This data can assist your marketing efforts. Realize that, like you, their time is valuable, but if the match is a good one, you can provide them with a cost-effective, quality solution to meet their requirements.

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