

HOW TO BE READY TO BID ON GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS aka Doing Business With the Forest Service and the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie

Determine if your product/service is purchased by the Federal Government, Forest Service (FS) and/or the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie

Check the Federal Business Opportunities website (aka FedBizOpps), www.fbo.gov, for postings of procurement opportunities valued over \$25,000. You can browse all posted Federal procurements or, using the advanced search feature, search for a specific site and/or supplies/services. Follow the instructions to offerors included in each posting in order to submit a responsive quote/bid/proposal.

Preparing to Win a Federal Contract

Once you've found an advertised opportunity that fits your interests with regard to location and the supplies/services you can provide, there are several steps you must accomplish before a contract can be awarded to your company. We recommend taking these steps in advance, so that an award won't be delayed.

1. Select your company's NAICS codes.

The Federal government identifies all products and services with a 6-digit code called the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). For example, concrete resurfacing is code 238110 and child care is code 624410. Go online at www.census.gov/epcd/www/naics.html to view and search for the appropriate NAICS codes for your company. Each NAICS code has a small business size standard associated with it; be sure to compare each one with your company to ensure you are selecting the right NAICS code.

2. Get your Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) number.

If your company does not already have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS or D&B) number, contact Dun and Bradstreet directly to obtain one. Call 1-866-705-5711 or 1-800-234-3867, or go online at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. Indicate that you are an Offeror for a Government Contract. You must have a DUNS number in order to proceed to Step 3, registering with the CCR (there is also a link to request a DUNS number on the CCR webpage).

3. Apply to the Central Contractor Register (CCR).

Once you have your DUNS number, you are ready to register in the CCR database. Call 1-888-227-2423 or 269-961-5757, or go online at <http://www.ccr.gov>. You will also need to provide your Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) and, as payments by the Government will be via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), the appropriate bank routing and account data for your firm. Once your CCR registration is processed, you will receive a Contractor and Government Entity (CAGE) code, which is needed before you may receive award of a Federal Government Contract.

4. Online Representations & Certifications Application (ORCA)

The representations and certifications you will complete and data you will enter into ORCA provides contracting officers with the information needed to verify essential information regarding your business, including your NAICS Code(s) and the size of your business for each NAICS Code. For instance, your business size will be verified as a factor for jobs for which competition is restricted to small businesses. Go online at <https://orca.bpn.gov/>. (There is also a link to the ORCA webpage from the CCR webpage.) You will need to enter your DUNS Number to initiate the ORCA entries.

5. Do you qualify as a Small Business?

To certify your company as a Small Business: Contact SBA in Chicago at (312) 353-4528 or go online at <http://www.sba.gov/size>. You may also contact the national Office of Size Standards by email at sizestandards@sba.gov or by phone at (202) 205-6618. Size standards are generally based on the average annual receipts or the average employment of a firm.

To qualify your company as a HUBZone (Historically Underutilized Business Zones) small business concern: Consult the website at <https://eweb1.sba.gov/hubzone/internet/> for background on the program and application information.

Or you can start all of this process by calling SBA's toll-free Answer Desk at 1-800-U-ASK-SBA.

5. Stay up to date with registrations.

Your registrations at the CCR and ORCA require annual renewals. Be sure your company's status is kept current.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) is a great resource to help you with the intricacies of government contracting. SBA District Offices are located in Chicago and Springfield. There are many online resources at <http://www.sba.gov/>.

TIP: When you have these steps completed, you're ready to accept a contract award from the federal government.

NAICS	}	
DUNS		
TIN		
EFT		
	CCR →	CAGE
	ORCA	