

4

Obtain a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code.

- A CAGE code is a five character alpha-numeric identifier assigned to entities located IN the United States and its' territories. If you are doing business with the U.S. Government to include contracts and grants, you must have a [SAM](#) registration. During this process you will be assigned a new CAGE code if one doesn't already exist. Or, if you have an existing CAGE code your information will be updated.
- You do not need to separately register for a CAGE code, however more information can be found at <https://cage.dla.mil/>



Understand Who Buys What (Procurement Authority)

Identify the contracting activity that purchases your product or service and contact **the Small Business Specialist** on-site. If you contact contracting officers directly simply to provide your company's capabilities they are most likely going to refer you to their small business specialist, so save yourself some time.

Another timesaving point for you to understand is each contracting activity has specific procurement authorities meaning there are supplies/services activities can/cannot purchase. You need to understand which office has the authority to buy your given supply/service.

The following is a very **basic** overview of the procuring authorities and general overview of the supplies/services the contracting activities supporting MCI East procure. The intent of giving you the information below is to **save you time** in trying to find the right office that matches your supply/service:

The Fundamentals

- Whether you are new to Federal Government Contracting, or have experience in Federal Contracts you should review the **Small Business Administration website (www.sba.gov)**. The site is updated regularly and is a critical first step in doing business with the Federal Government.
- Cyber security policies are extensive and can be challenging to understand at times. The North Carolina Military Business Center provides valuable training on a regular basis regarding cyber security policies and procedures. Please go to <https://www.cybernc.us/> for more details.
- Ensure your company is registered in, and maintains a current registration in the System for Award Management (www.sam.gov).
- Ensure your company capabilities are accurately reflected in the Dynamic Small Business Search Engine: https://web.sba.gov/pro-net/search/dsp_dsbs.cfm
- Government Contract Assistance Programs (North Carolina only)/Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) and also known as APEX Accelerators: PTACs-APEX Accelerators (part of DoD Office of Small Business Programs) can assist you with understanding Government procurement regulations, contract terms, conditions and formats. They can also help you in obtaining a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) which replaced the DUNS number, assist with your SAM registration, WAWF (invoicing) registration determining business size and obtaining socio-economic designations. GCAPs/ PTACs-APEX Accelerators will also review proposals IF you give them enough lead time!
- Wilmington GCAP Counselor - Robin Livingston / (910) 672-1359 / rlivings@uncfsu.edu, Greenville GCAP counselor - Joel Guge / (919) 513-0623 / jwguge@ncsu.edu
- Ensure you aggressively monitor all Government Points of Entry (GPE)
 - sam.gov (Contract Opportunities)
 - GSA: <https://hallways.cap.gsa.gov/app/#/> (Acquisition Gateway)- GSA has its own process for vendors to be on GSA Schedule, so review www.gsa.gov for the process and requirements.
 - NASA SEWP <https://www.sewp.nasa.gov/> (IT supplies (NAICS 334111) and services (NAICS 541519))
- Ensure you aggressively monitor each of the above for Requests for Information (Government has a general idea of what it needs and is seeking commercial vendors that can possibly support), Sources Sought (Government knows what it needs and contracting is trying to determine if large/small businesses can support), Synopsis and Proposals. Requests for Information, Sources Sought and Synopsis are all forecasting indicators. Synopsis are the best forecasting indicator of the three because the Government actually says when a solicitation is anticipated to be posted. Please note, responses to sources sought and requests for information are not official proposals, you will still have to provide an official proposal once a solicitation is posted.
- LPTA vs. Best Value. The Federal Government has put more emphasis, through regulations and procedures, on making best-value awards vice Lowest Price-Technically Acceptable (LPTA). Therefore, your proposals need to include language that demonstrates why your company represents the best value to the Government.
- For your Solicitations/Proposals:
 - Propose and propose on time!
 - Read the whole solicitation, complete all required provisions and understand all clauses.
 - Answer the tasks being asked and, when possible, elaborate on what benefits you bring to each task. What to you bring that is over and beyond what the Government is asking for? You must be careful here because this does not mean adding things the Government did not ask for. Rather, it means explaining how your product provides the greatest benefit to the Government.
 - Consider your volume of responses. Quality of responses overrides quantity of responses!!
 - Key provisions/clauses to focus on:
 - Instructions to Quoters (Specific guidance on proposal formats and how the Government is soliciting)
 - 52.212-2 Evaluation of Offers (How the Government will evaluate your proposal: LPTA, best value, specific evaluation criteria)
 - 52-212.3 Representations and Certifications (this is where you identify what type of small business you are)
 - 252-232.7006 Wide Area Workflow ([Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment \(eb.mil\)](http://Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment (eb.mil)), help desk 1-866-618-5988) **You will submit all invoices through this site and you should be registered in this site as soon as possible.** You do not need to wait until you receive a contract award.
- For Awards:
 - Ensure you know who your government points of contact are
 - Ensure you understand all base access procedures
 - Ensure your manifests/delivery documents have the contract number, contracting officer name, and government point of contact.

5

Investigate Other DoD Programs

8

Investigate other DoD programs including Mentor-Protégé, Public-Private Talent Exchange, etc.

- DON OSBP participates in programs that develop small businesses to ensure they gain knowledge and experience in the Navy and Marine Corps marketplace. These initiatives enhance the small businesses' skills and helps to grow the industrial base.
- Public-Private Talent Exchange Program - The DON participates in the Public-Private Talent Exchange Program (PPTE). This program hosts a six-month acquisition exchange between DoD and private sector participants to gain a better understanding between each's business operations and to share innovative best practices. The PPTE policy was published on July 19, 2018. The Implementation Plan was released via DCPAS Message 20180831, dated July 24, 2018 and can found [here](https://www.hci.mil/PPTE.html). For more information on the PPTE, go to <https://www.hci.mil/PPTE.html>.
- Mentor-Protégé Program - The DON Mentor-Protégé Program (MPP) provides incentives for DON contractors (Mentors) to assist small businesses (Protégés) in developing their capabilities, increasing their participation in DON contracts and subcontracts, and strengthening the industrial base by supporting the warfighter. The Department of Defense (DoD) Pilot was established under Section 831 of Public Law 101-510, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1991 (10 U.S.C. 2302 note).

Explore Subcontracting Opportunities

Explore subcontracting opportunities in www.sam.gov. Subcontracting can be a challenge because large businesses tend to want to see experience and performance from their subcontractors. Not a reason to not try, just something to be aware of when seeking out subcontractor opportunities. Aside from searching www.sam.gov for subcontracting opportunities here are a few other ways to seek:

- Participate in tradeshow/matchmaking events.
- Review solicitations related to your supply/service set aside for large businesses. Solicitations set aside for large businesses estimated at over \$1 million must have a Subcontracting plan. By reviewing these you will have some insight into where subcontractor work is available.

Contracting Activity	Procurement Authority	Small Business/Government Point of Contact/Website
<p>Note: Procurement Authority means a given contracting activity is only authorized to purchase supplies and services within their authority. The supplies and services listed below are not all inclusive. Rather, they are there to guide you to the contracting activity aligning best with the supply/service your company offers. For example Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command is the only contracting activity on this list with the procurement authority for construction. Therefore, if you call any of the other offices with construction related issues they will refer you to Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command.</p>		
MCI East Regional Contracting Office	Wide Range of Supplies/Services	chris.rabassi@usmc.mil https://www.mcieast.marines.mil/Staff-Offices/Small-Business-Office/
Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command	Construction (Real Property) Architecture/Design Facility Support Contract Grounds Keeping	donna.l.mason31.civ@us.navy.mil (Lejeune) Donald.j.herschberger.civ@us.navy.mil (Beaufort)
Defense Logistics Agency	Fuel, Clothing, Repair Parts	daren.campbell@dla.mil
Defense Logistics Agency (Aviation) supporting Fleet Readiness Center East	Aviation Supplies and Services for Fleet Readiness Center East	robynn.c.storm2.civ@us.navy.mil melissa.m.walker43.civ@us.navy.mil
Marine Special Operations Command	Wide Range of Supplies/Services	jonathan.d.heskett.mil@socom.mil michael.pockette@socom.mil
Atlantic Marine Corps Communes	Military Housing-Related Supplies and Services	https://www.atlantcmcc.com
Marine Corps Exchange	Military Exchange Related Supplies and Services	https://smc-mccs.org/about-business-partners/
Defense Commissary Agency	Military Commissary Related Supplies and Services	https://www.commissaries.com/our-agency/business-with-dca/s-small-business
Marine Corps Systems Command	End Items and Weapon Systems	auskin.johnson@usmc.mil https://www.marcesyscom.marines.mil/Command-Staff-Office-Of-Small-Business-Programs-OSBP/
Naval Medical Center	Wide Range of Medical Supplies/Services Hospital Support Supplies/Services	The Naval Medical Center is supported by the Defense Health Agency. For questions: https://www.health.mil/Military-Health-Topics/Acquisition-Procurement-and-Small-Business-For-Contract-Opportunities . www.sam.gov .
Marine Corps Community Services	Supplies and Services supporting Marine Corps Family Programs, Family Events, Child Development Centers, a Host of Other Programs	christopher.alger@usmc-mccs.org
Government Services Administration	Wide Range of Supplies/Services	brittany.black@gsa.gov (Customer Service) jan.zeigler@gsa.gov (Industry Specialist)
Department of Defense Schools	Middle and High School Related Supplies and Services	Each school on base does its own procurement. You will have to contact each school for requirements.

Identify Current and Future Procurement Opportunities

6 Identify current and future Marine Corps Installations East procurement opportunities. Most of the websites in Step 5 will have some type of forecasting reference. This will either be a listing of supplies and services the contracting office has procured, or a forecast of future requirements.

In addition, www.sam.gov (Contract Opportunities selection) provides current solicitations based on your NAICS code. Other Government Points of Entry (GPE) are www.gsa.ebuy.gov, www.nasa.sewp.gov. Regardless of the GPE you chose to visit here are some key points to be aware of:

- Solicitations are not the only postings you need to be looking for. Here are some other key postings and why they are important:
 - Requests for Information (Government has a general idea of what it needs and is seeking commercial vendors that can possibly support)
 - Sources Sought (Government knows what it needs and contracting is trying to determine if large/small businesses can support)
 - Synopsis (Government is giving vendors a general idea of what it is soliciting for and says when a solicitation is anticipated to be posted)
- Why are the above important?
 - Responding to sources sought/requests for information lets the contracting office know your company is capable of meeting a requirement. In some cases the contracting office may even contact you directly if there have been no responses to a solicitation. That said, responses to sources sought and requests for information are not official proposals, you will still have to provide an official proposal once a solicitation is posted. This means do not provide pricing when you respond to requests for information/sources sought.
 - Requests for information/sources sought give you an opportunity to refine your proposal writing skills. Even though requests for information/sources sought will not normally have the same level of detail as an official solicitation, you will be able to work on the following:
 - Respond and respond on time!
 - Read the whole document multiple times.
 - Answer the tasks being asked and, when possible, elaborate on what benefits you bring to each task. What to you bring that is over and beyond what the Government is asking for? You must be careful here because this does not mean adding things the Government did not ask for. Rather, it means explaining how your product provides the greatest benefit to the Government.
 - Quantitative is always better than qualitative. Whenever possible, put numbers in your responses vice flowery adjectives.
 - Consider your volume of responses. Quality of responses overrides quantity of responses!!

Proposals in Response to Solicitations

7 There is an art and science to proposal writing and there are literally hundreds of documents and periods of instruction on proposal writing. Here are some of the most common fundamentals to effective proposal writing:

- Know and be honest about what your company can, and cannot do. If you propose on/receive a contract award with the attitude of “we will figure it out as we go” you are guaranteeing a bad performance rating.
- Propose and propose on time!
- Read the whole solicitation multiple times. There will always be one, or more, things you miss that could cause you not to receive a contract award.
- Complete all required provisions and understand all clauses. Provisions are either questions you need to answer, or certifications you need to make regarding your company. Clauses are actions your company must comply with per a range of Government mandates.
- Answer the tasks being asked and, when possible, elaborate on what benefits you bring to each task. What do you bring that is over and beyond what the Government is asking for? You must be careful here because this does not mean adding things the Government did not ask for. Rather, it means explaining how your product provides the greatest benefit to the Government. One effective way to ensure you answered all tasks in to put all the required tasks in an Excel spreadsheet. Then in a separate column respond to each of those tasks.
- Consider your volume of responses. Quality of responses overrides quantity of responses!!
- Key provisions/clauses to focus on. If you don’t pay attention to these you will not be competitive for Federal Contracts:
 - Instructions to Quoters (Specific guidance on proposal formats and how the Government is soliciting)
 - 52.212-2 Evaluation of Offers (How the Government will evaluate your proposal: LPTA, best value, specific evaluation criteria)
 - 52-212.3 Representations and Certifications (this is where you identify what type of small business you are)
 - 252-232.7006 Wide Area Workflow ([Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment \(eb.mil\)](http://Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment (eb.mil)), help desk 1-866-618-5988) **You will submit all invoices through this site and you should be registered in this site as soon as possible.** You must not wait until you receive a contract award.