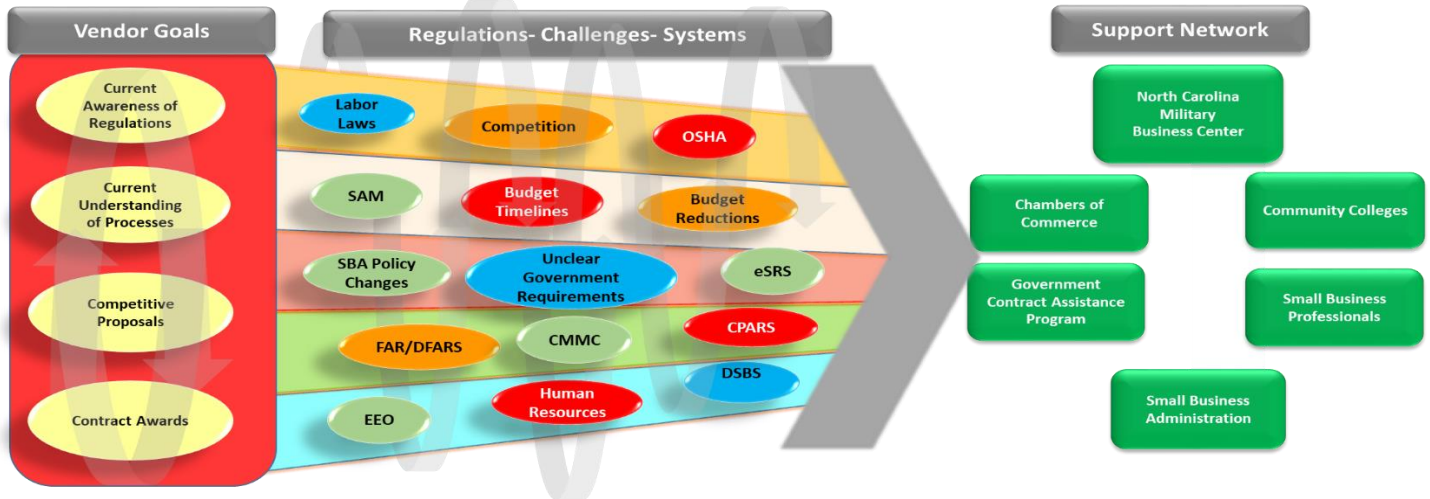


Welcome to the environment of Department of Defense (Federal) Contracts!

The first thing you need to understand is the environment you are entering into:



In order to meet your **(Vendor Goals)** you need to understand everything in **Regulations-Challenges-Systems** above **AND** recognize you have a **Support Network** ready to assist you in being competitive in this environment. One very important point up front about this **Support Network**. The bulk of the entities in this **Support Network** are available to you either **Free Of Charge**, or for a nominal fee! What is a nominal fee? Chambers of Commerce annual memberships are several hundred dollars, some **Support Network** entity- hosted events can be \$25-\$100, and some training could be several hundred dollars based on the topic.

Support Network

Chambers of Commerce	The chamber offer networking opportunities with military leadership by way of the Military Affairs Committee. They also have Governmental Affairs Committees whose purpose is to advocate for business owners. We can also serve as a reference point for business owners. May provide networking opportunities with military and federal employees. Advocates for business policies at the local and federal level.
Community Colleges	Mostly free of charge: Small Business Center Network offers 58 convenient locations, based at Community Colleges throughout North Carolina. They provide free one-on-one confidential small business counseling/training specifically designed for business owners and potential business owners, and access to resources and referrals. Experienced counselors and trainers help take the confusion out of the seemingly endless lists of rules, regulations, and red tape. For more information visit www.ncsbc.net
Government Contract Assistance Program	Mostly free of charge: Help with topics such as: determine if your company is ready for Government contracts, key registrations (SAM, WAWF,SBA), small business certifications, marketing, networking, proposal preparation, and some contract performance issues. Your local GCAPs are: Wilmington GCAP Counselor – Robin Livingston / (910) 672-1359 / rlivings@uncfsu.edu , Greenville GCAP counselor – Joel Guge / (919) 513-0623 / jwguge@ncsu.edu
North Carolina Military Business Center	Mostly free of charge. The North Carolina Military Business Center (NCMBC) is a statewide business development and technology transition entity of the State of North Carolina, headquartered at and supported by Fayetteville Technical Community College (FTCC). The mission of the NCMBC is to leverage military and other federal business opportunities to expand the economy, grow jobs and improve quality of life in North Carolina. Much more information is available at www.ncmbc.us!
Small Business Administration	Free. For Federal Contracts, provides: a Contracting Guide (Learn how to find and win contracts with the Federal government), Contracting Assistance Programs (Gain a competitive edge with help from the SBA's business development programs), Counseling and Help. Much more information is available at www.sba.gov!
Small Business Professionals	Free. Federal government employees assigned to agencies across the Federal government providing: an understanding of the fundamentals of Federal contracting, how their agencies solicit requirements, requirement forecasting and a linkage between vendors, other contracting activates entities in the Support Network. Local small business representative contact information is provided at the end of this brochure.

After seeing the Government Contracting Environment and Support Network, **and deciding you are ready to go for it**, the following ten steps are the fundamental steps you must take in order to be competitive for Federal Contracts.

Before you go to Step 1, know your business/know the market! Go to www.usaspending.gov to see what the demand for your supply/service is for the area you are trying to work in.

Identify NAICS Codes

Identify your product or service using the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). This is the standard used by Federal statistical agencies in classifying business establishments for the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data related to the U.S. business economy.

1

- NAICS is a Self-Assigned System. Your organization should select the code that best suits your business and use it. Note that it is not assigned.
- To identify the NAICS Code being used for a specific company, visit <https://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/>. To identify the proper code for your company, use the NAICS SEARCH TOOLS to identify the code that best reflects your primary business activity (revenue producing activity.)

The screenshot shows the official U.S. Census Bureau website for the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The page features a navigation menu with options like 'Main', 'History', 'Developmental Partners', 'Federal Register Notices', 'FAQs', 'Reference Files', and 'NAICS'. The main content area is divided into three sections: 'NAICS Search' with three search boxes for 2017, 2012, and 2007 NAICS codes; 'Introduction to NAICS' which explains the system's purpose and history; and a footer area with three columns: '2017 NAICS Manual' (with a PDF download link), 'Reference Files' (listing various NAICS versions and concordances), and 'Announcements' (including updates for 2022 and a notice about the site's redesign).

2

Obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)

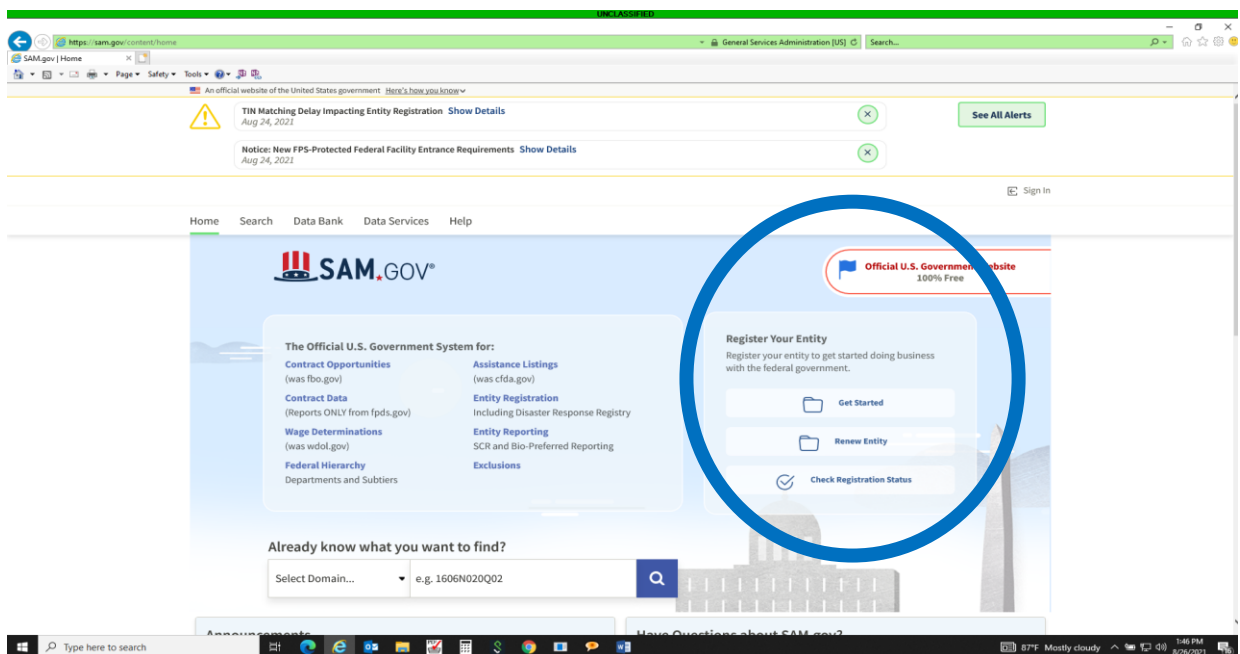
- Request the UEI and register your entity to do business with the U.S. Government at SAM.gov (<https://sam.gov/SAM/>). The UEI is a 12-character, alpha-numeric value within databases and passed as such within interfaces and extracts.
- This number will replace the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number, the Dun & Bradstreet D-U-N-S Number unique nine-digit identifier used previously. The DUNS number assignment will be retained if already assigned to records for historical purposes following the transition.

3

Register in SAM

Register in the System for Award Management (SAM) website.

- To register your entity or update your registration, please continue to use SAM.gov (<https://sam.gov/SAM/>).
- If you do not have a current SAM Registration you cannot receive an award of a Federal contract.



4

Obtain a CAGE Code

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. The DLA CAGE Program Office is the only activity authorized for assignment or update of a CAGE code. It is used to support a variety of procurement and acquisition processes throughout the U.S. Government.
- 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/>

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the CAGE program website. The browser's address bar shows the URL <https://cage.dla.mil/Home/UsageAgree>. The website header features the word "CAGE" in large blue letters, with "COMMERCIAL AND GOVERNMENT ENTITY PROGRAM" underneath. A navigation menu includes links for "SEARCH & INQUIRY", "REQUEST | UPDATE", "NEWS", "FORMS", "RESOURCES", "ABOUT | FAQ", and "CONTACT THE CIC". The main content area is titled "Terms and Conditions" and contains the following text:

You are accessing a U.S. Government (USG) Information System (IS) that is provided for USG-authorized use only. By using this IS (which includes any device attached to this IS), you consent to the following conditions:

- The USG routinely intercepts and monitors communications on this IS for purposes including, but not limited to, penetration testing, COMSEC monitoring, network operations and defense, personnel misconduct (PM), law enforcement (LE), and counterintelligence (CI) investigations.
- At any time, the USG may inspect and seize data stored on this IS.
- Communications using, or data stored on, this IS are not private, are subject to routine monitoring, interception, and search, and may be disclosed or used for any USG authorized purpose.
- This IS includes security measures (e.g., authentication and access controls) to protect the USG interests--not for your personal benefit or privacy.
- Notwithstanding the above, using this IS does not constitute consent to PM, LE or CI investigative searching or monitoring of the content of privileged communications, or work product, related to personal representation or services by attorneys, psychotherapists, or clergy, and their assistants. Such communications and work product are private and confidential.

This site requires cookies to function properly. Please enable acceptance of cookies if they are currently disabled.

This site has been tested and is operational on the latest versions of Chrome, Edge and Firefox.

At the bottom of the page, there is a blue button labeled "I AGREE".

The Windows taskbar at the bottom of the screen shows the time as 11:29 AM on 8/27/2021.

6

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:

<u>Contracting Activity</u>	<u>Procurement Authority</u>	<u>Small Business/Government Point of Contact/Website</u>
MCI East Regional Contracting Office	Wide Range of Supplies/Services (minus construction)	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 Groundskeeping	joseph.a.wade@navy.mil (Lejeune) jennifer.lmcguire@navy.mil (Mid Atlantic) don.herschberger@navy.mil (Mid Atlantic) eric.e.overfelt@navy.mil (Mid Atlantic)
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 (minus construction)	jonathan.d.heskett.mil@socom.mil michael.pockette@socom.mil
Atlantic Marine Corps Communities	Military Housing-Related Supplies and Services	https://www.atlanticmcc.com/
Marine Corps Exchange	Military Exchange Related Supplies and Services	https://usmc-mccs.org/about/business-partners/
Defense Commissary Agency	Military Commissary Related Supplies and Services	ivy.yeoman@deca.mil
Marine Corps Systems Command	End Items and Weapon Systems	kyle.oeagle@usmc.mil https://www.marcorssyscom.marines.mil/Command-Staff/Office-Of-Small-Business-Programs-OSBP/
Naval Hospital	Wide Range of Medical Supplies/Services Hospital Support Supplies/Services	melissa.g.carpenter.civ@mail.mil
Marine Corps Community Services	Supplies and Services supporting Marine Corps Family Programs, Family Events, Child Development Centers and 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	Gloria.Cherry@dodea.edu

7

Identify Current and Future Procurement Opportunities

Identify current and future Marine Corps Installations East procurement opportunities. Most of the websites in Step 6 above 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) such as www.gsa.ebuy, 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 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.

-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!!

8

Proposals in Response to Solicitations

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 is 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 \(eb.mil\)](https://www.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.

9

Investigate Other DoD Programs

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](#). 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).

10

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.

***So you have gone through the ten steps, NOW WHAT?
Please review the Fundamentals on the below pages!***

Fundamentals

Congratulations you made it through the Ten Steps above and are ready to compete for Federal contracts! The following Fundamentals are a must in order to be competitive for Federal contracts. These Fundamentals apply to new and experienced vendors:

- 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. This is especially important if you are a Woman Owned Small Business (WOSB) because there is a new certification process. The new WOSB certification process, once complete will show your business as properly registered in the Small Business Dynamic Search Engine (https://web.sba.gov/pro-net/search/dsp_dsbs.cfm). Contracting officers are now required to verify your registration here as well as SAM. State-level registrations are not sufficient for this requirement.
- The Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification is going to be required for all vendors involved in Federal contracting no later than 2026. Basic information on the CMMC can be found at <https://www.acq.osd.mil/cmmc>.
- Government Contracting Assistance Program (GCAP) Know your Government Contracting Assistance Program (GCAP) (formerly Procurement Technical Assistance Center): Wilmington GCAP Counselor – Robin Livingston / (910) 672-1359 / rlivings@uncfsu.edu , Greenville GCAP counselor – Joel Guge / (919) 513-0623 / jwguge@ncsu.edu
- 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
- 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.