

Doing business with the Federal government

Did you know your local Federal agencies issues dozens of contracts each year for supplies, services, and even construction projects? Small and mid-sized companies are essential to communities across the west and doing business with the Federal government is a great way to expand your company! As a business owner you may think that government contracts are only for large corporations, but that really isn't the case. Small, local businesses can – and do – win government contracts on a regular basis. Here are six simple steps to getting set, searching for contracts, and winning work from ol' Uncle Sam.

Step 1: Register with the IRS for an Employer Identification Number (EIN). You can register for an EIN online at no cost and receive your EIN immediately. The EIN is sometimes referred to as a Tax Identification Number, or TIN. www.irs.gov/uac/Tools

Step 2: Register with Dun and Bradstreet for a “DUNS” number. This is a unique business identification number, issued at no cost, widely used in commerce and required for bidding on federal contracts. www.dnb.com/duns-number.html

Step 3: Obtain your North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code from the U.S. Census Bureau. Go to www.census.gov/naics and enter a keyword that describes your kind of business. A list of primary business activities containing that keyword and the corresponding NAICS codes will appear.

Step 4: Register your business at the System for Award Management (SAM) database; this enables government procurement officers to find you. The SAM is a great marketing tool, allowing potential agencies and other contractors to check you out and maybe even contact you for work. Go to www.sam.gov, create an individual user account, and then register your entity on the site.

Step 5: Get your name out there. Place local advertisements, network, hang flyers, share business cards. For supply needs under \$3,500, service needs under \$2,500 and construction projects under \$2,000, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) can use basic market research to determine who to purchase from. The BLM cannot maintain a list of available vendors but can seek out known entities.

Step 6: Find opportunities for work! FedBizOpps and FedConnect are the government's go-to web sites for advertising information about federal contracts. “Contracts” are for anything over \$3,500 in supplies, over \$2,500 for services, and over \$2,000 for construction. All contracts require competitive bidding. www.fbo.gov/ and www.fedconnect.net

Using a computer and internet for the process is a necessity, but it's OK if you're not friendly with the World Wide Web. Just give us a call – the BLM can help you through the process!
(541) 573-4458

