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## Getting Ready to Sell to the Federal Government

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This document details the initial steps a firm needs to take to position itself to sell products and/or services to the Federal Government. Each step in the process costs nothing except for your time. Since your time is valuable, note that the process is much easier if you are using a high-speed internet connection and if you can set aside a period when you can work without interruptions.

You may use this document to take you to each website by placing your cursor over each link and clicking on it. All the links are also available on the “Links” page of [www.ncmbc.us](http://www.ncmbc.us). As you complete each step, be sure to record all the numbers and other data you get and keep them in a handy place for future reference!

### CHECKLIST

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- **Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)**  
All entities wishing to do business with the federal government must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Requesting a UEI takes about 10 minutes and is a free service. Receiving a UEI takes 1–2 business days (under normal circumstances). To see comprehensive instructions and a checklist for entity registration, download the [Entity Registration Checklist](#).  
  
If you do not already have a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code, one will automatically be assigned to you as part of your UEI registration.
- **Identify your product or service by Product and Service Code (PSC)** by selecting the appropriate 4-digit code at <https://www.acquisition.gov/psc-manual>
- **Identify your North American Industry Classification Codes (NAICS)** by running keyword searches at <https://www.census.gov/naics/> You need the full 6-digit numbers. If you sell a product, you should select the NAICS codes for the manufacturer (Sectors 31-33), wholesaler (Sector 42) and retailer (Sectors 44-45) of the product. Remember, you can have more than one code when you register in SAM.gov but you will need to identify your PRIMARY NAICS code.
- **Determine if you qualify as a small business.** There is a separate size standard for each NAICS. Once you know your NAICS, go to <http://www.sba.gov/content/table-small-business->



[size-standards](#) to look up the size standard for each NAICS code. If you are not the manufacturer of the products you sell, your firm is small if you have less than 500 employees.

Before you go any further now is a great time to see if your business qualifies for any of the Federal Business Development Programs.

### Veteran-Owned

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<https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/grow-your-business/veteran-owned-businesses>

“Veteran-owned small business concern” means a small business concern—

- Not less than 51 percent of which is owned by one or more veterans (as defined at 38 U.S.C. 101(2)) or, in the case of any publicly owned business, not less than 51 percent of the stock of which is owned by one or more veterans; and
- The management and daily business operations of which are controlled by one or more veterans.

### Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned

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“Service-disabled veteran-owned small business concern” means a small business concern—

- Not less than 51 percent of which is owned by one or more service-disabled veterans or, in the case of any publicly owned business, not less than 51 percent of the stock of which is owned by one or more service-disabled veterans; and
- The management and daily business operations of which are controlled by one or more service-disabled veterans or, in the case of a service-disabled veteran with permanent and severe disability, the spouse or permanent caregiver of such veteran.
- Service-disabled veteran means a veteran, as defined in 38 U.S.C. 101(2), with a disability that is service-connected, as defined in 38 U.S.C. 101(16).

If your small business is at least 51% owned and controlled by one or more veterans, you should investigate whether your firm qualifies as a SDVOSB. Note that the bar for qualification is very low – any “service connected” disability (**even zero percent compensable**) validated by VA rating letter is qualifying. If you had any medical condition that was addressed while you were in service, but you do not have a VA rating letter, you should request a “disability rating for federal contracting purposes” from the VA by contacting your local Veterans Service Officer.

North Carolina Department of Military & Veterans Affairs <https://www.milvets.nc.gov/>

<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs/veteran-assistance-programs>

VETS FIRST VERIFICATION PROGRAM <https://www.va.gov/osdbu/verification/>





## Woman-Owned

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<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs/women-owned-small-business-federal-contracting-program>

**Qualifying NAICS Codes** <https://www.sba.gov/document/support--qualifying-naics-women-owned-small-business-federal-contracting-program>

“Women-owned small business concern” means a small business concern:

- That is at least 51 percent owned by one or more women; or, in the case of any publicly owned business, at least 51 percent of the stock of which is owned by one or more women; and
- Whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more women.

## Economically Disadvantaged Woman-Owned

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“Economically disadvantaged woman-owned small business” (EDWOSB) means a small business concern:

- That is at least 51% unconditionally and directly owned and controlled by one or more women who are US citizens and who are economically disadvantaged.
- Economically disadvantaged women are those whose ability to compete in the free enterprise system has been impaired due to diminished capital and credit opportunities as compared to others in the same or similar line of business. The net worth of a woman claiming disadvantage must be less than \$750,000. In determining such net worth, SBA will exclude her ownership interest in the firm and equity in her primary personal residence.

## Small Disadvantaged Business

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<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs/small-disadvantaged-business>

“Small disadvantaged business” (SDB) means a small business concern:

- That is at least 51% unconditionally and directly owned and controlled by one or more individuals who are both socially and economically disadvantaged and who are US citizens.
- Socially disadvantaged individuals are those who have been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice or cultural bias within American society because of their identities as members of groups and without regard to their individual qualities. The social disadvantage must stem from circumstances beyond their control. (See who is [socially disadvantaged](#) for further details).

Economically disadvantaged individuals are socially disadvantaged individuals whose ability to compete in the free enterprise system has been impaired due to diminished capital and credit opportunities as compared to others in the same or similar line of business who are not socially disadvantaged. The net worth of an individual claiming disadvantage must be less than \$750,000. In determining such net worth, SBA will exclude the ownership interest in the firm and the equity in the primary personal residence. (See [Who is economically disadvantaged?](#) for further details).





- If your firm qualifies for self-certification as a SDB, you should consider applying to SBA's 8(a) Program.

#### 8(a) Business Development Program

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<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs/8a-business-development-program>

To help provide a level playing field for small businesses owned by socially and economically disadvantaged people or entities, the government limits competition for certain contracts to businesses that participate in the 8(a) Business Development program. Disadvantaged businesses in the 8(a) program can:

- Compete for set-aside and sole-source contracts in the program
- Get a Business Opportunity Specialist to help navigate federal contracting
- Form joint ventures with established businesses through the SBA's Mentor-Protégé Program
- Receive management and technical assistance, including business training, counseling, marketing assistance, and high-level executive development
- Compete for contract awards under multiple socio-economic programs, as they apply.

#### HUBZone Program

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<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs/hubzone-program>

The government limits competition for certain contracts to businesses in historically underutilized business zones. It also gives preferential consideration to those businesses in full and open competition. Joining the HUBZone program makes your business eligible to compete for the program's set-aside contracts. HUBZone-certified businesses also get a 10 percent price evaluation preference in full and open contract competitions. HUBZone-certified businesses can still compete for contract awards under other socio-economic programs they qualify for. See if your business is in a designated HUBZONE

<https://maps.certify.sba.gov/hubzone/map#center=39.828200,-98.579500&zoom=5>

- **Register your firm with System for Award Management (SAM).** It is a requirement that all contractors doing business with the Department of Defense be registered with System for Award Management (SAM). **The website may be accessed at <https://sam.gov/content/home>.**
  - The Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code is a five-character ID number used extensively within the federal government. The CAGE code provides a standardized method of identifying a given facility at a specific location. *You do not need to have a CAGE code prior to registration as one will be automatically assigned to you as a part of your entity's registration in SAM.*
- **Register your firm at [www.MatchForce.org](http://www.MatchForce.org).** This is the official State of NC web-based database of firms who are seeking federal government prime contracts and subcontracts. Your firm will be automatically matched to contracting opportunities based on your keywords and/or NAICS codes.





Once you have completed the above steps, you are ready to market your firm to the Government and to identify contracting opportunities that you want to pursue. For assistance, please contact your local Business Development Professional and visit the North Carolina Military Business Center website [www.ncmbc.us](http://www.ncmbc.us)

