

# Introduction to Federal Government Contracting

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New Hampshire Department of  
**BUSINESS AND  
ECONOMIC AFFAIRS**

New Hampshire Procurement Technical Assistance Center

[www.nheconomy.com/sell-to-the-government](http://www.nheconomy.com/sell-to-the-government)

# Introduction and Participant Guide

- Muting
- Chat function
- Slides will be posted at [www.NHEconomy.com/ptac](http://www.NHEconomy.com/ptac) under Training Presentations

# What is NH PTAC?

- Procurement Technical Assistance Center
- 96 PTAC Centers Nationally
- Authorized by Congress in 1985
  - ✓ *To Level the Playing Field, in support of the Small Business Set-Aside Program*
  - ✓ *Purpose is to assist Small Businesses; we will assist large businesses as well.*
- Funded by DOD
- Assist with Federal, State, and Local contracting

# NH PTAC: Our Services

- Step-by-step counseling in federal contracting, as well as assistance with state and local.
  - Finding the opportunities
  - Understanding the 'government speak'
  - Bidding and invoicing
- Training workshops/webinars
- Small Business Matchmaking events  
(registration fee applies)
- Referrals for business guidance on topics outside of our scope

# Step by Step Support

- Step 1 – Is there a market for you?
- Step 2 – Do you have a good foundation for government contracting?
- Step 3 – Does the market make **strategic sense** for your business?
- Step 4 – The dreaded “Red Tape”
- Step 5 – Finding opportunities
- Step 6 – Preparing bids/proposals
- Step 7 – Issues in contracting – After the bid

# Step 1 – Is there a market for you?

- Required government transparency provides windows into procurements:
  - What they buy
  - How much?
  - How often?
  - Who from?
  - Pricing
- We can access this through
  - [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov)
  - [www.USASpending.gov](http://www.USASpending.gov)
  - [www.FPDS.gov](http://www.FPDS.gov)

# A Few Words About SAM.gov

- “System for Awards Management – SAM”
- A **FREE** place to register for federal contracts
- You will find bid opportunities there
- You can research buying history there
- Plus much more.
- First step: set up a FREE login.gov account. This will enable you to log in to SAM.gov - <https://www.login.gov/>
- Later, if you decide to move forward, you will register your entity in SAM

## Step 2 - Foundation

What you need before you pursue government contracts/subcontracts:

- Adequate financial resources
- Well-developed general business systems
- **Drive, determination, & patience**
- A competitive advantage
- Demand for products/services
- Competitive pricing and margins
- And usually:
  - Effective quality system,
  - Bonding, insurance
- And sometimes security clearances



# Readiness: How is B2G Different from B2B?

- Red Tape
  - REGISTRATIONS & REGULATIONS
  - Timing, Invoicing
- Fairness, Openness & Transparency
  - Finding Opportunities, and Awards
    - Multiple sources
  - Learning about your competition
- Social and Other Policy Goals
- Conservative, risk-averse buyer – not agile

***Big companies have specialized staff for these things, small companies don't.***

# Readiness: Regulations

## Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR)

- <https://www.acquisition.gov/browse/index/far>  
~ 2000 pages
- FAR Chapters contain most of the rules that pertain to procurement
- FAR clauses insert those rules into your contract
- You agree to many FAR clauses during SAM registration.
- Often many additional clauses added to each individual contract.

## Step 3 - Is it for you?

- Sure, the government buys what you sell, but:
  - Can you compete?
    - Market research:
      - [USASpending.gov](http://USASpending.gov) &
      - [SAM.gov](http://SAM.gov)
  - ❑ Can you make money?
  - ❑ Is it consistent with your other business goals?

## Step 4 – the **Red Tape**

**ALL FEDERAL REGISTRATIONS ARE FREE OF CHARGE**

***Beware of illegitimate emails and phone calls!!***

- TIN      IRS      **FREE**
  - DUNS      Dun & Bradstreet      **FREE**
  - SAM      System for Award Management      **FREE**
  - DSBS      Dynamic Small Business Search      **FREE**
- **Tip:** prepare a descriptive narrative and list of keywords before you do your SAM registration. Then you can just cut-and-paste this into place in DSBS.

# More Red Tape - Certifications

- Small Business Size Standards
  - Based on [North American Industrial Classification System](#)
  - Each NAICS code has a size standard
  - Published [here](#) and updated periodically
- Self-Certifications
  - Small business, SDB, WOSB, SDVOSB
- Formal Certifications
  - HUBZone, SDVOSB, VOSB, 8(a) SDB
- Security related
  - ITAR, EAR, JCP
  - **CMMC – Cybersecurity**
- **Current topic – vaccine mandate**

# Step 5 – Finding Opportunities

- Direct & Subcontracting Opportunities
  - Market Research to
    - Identify targets
    - Assess competition
- SAM Contract Opportunities and MyBidmatch for solicitations
- On any given day, there are ~300,000 public sector bid opportunities in play. The challenge isn't to find them all, it's to **disqualify** the 99.999% (or more) you don't care about.

# Links to Finding the Opportunities

- [SAM.gov](#) (FedBizOpps/FBO, beta.sam)
- [DIBBS](#)
- [iSearch](#)
- Individual Agency Websites
  - Including social media websites
- [State of NH Purchase & Property](#)
- *NH PTAC Bidmatch Service!*
- List of [NH Town Officials contacts](#) (pro-active “pavement pounding”)
- Newspapers

# Step 6 - Preparing Bids & Proposals

- There is an art to preparing successful bids
  - Do your homework
  - Put yourself in the reader's shoes
  - FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS!
- To get it right, it's important to budget your time
  - Read carefully enough to make a go/no-go decision quickly
  - Follow the opportunity
  - Formulate and submit questions
  - Be ready to submit well before deadline



# You've submitted a bid – now what?

- Understanding the mysteries of government timing
- “Discussions”
- Award
- Protests

# Step 7 – You've Won! Now What?

- Re-read your contract
- Understand your rights & obligations
- Establish communication with your customer
- Understand the role of the Contracting Officer
- Understand the needs of the end user.
- Monitor schedule & costs carefully
- Set up in government invoicing system
- Communicate about questions and problems
- If you're new to government payment systems, ask us for help.

# Fairness, Openness & Transparency

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- Requirements to publish Opportunities and amendments
- Requirements to publish Awards
- Debriefing Rights
- Access to documents
- Access to contact people
- Opportunity to ask questions
- Opportunity to comment on (proposed) rule changes
- OSDDBU & Ombudsman
- Congressional assistance

# Using SBA's Dynamic Small Business Search (DSBS)

- ▶ Linked to your SAM registration
- ▶ Keywords and Capabilities Narrative
- ▶ Federal contracting officers' Market Research (Opportunities might find you!)
- ▶ Public information (Primes might find you!)
- ▶ Includes your socio-economic status and certifications, as applicable
- ▶ ***Small Businesses only***

# Socio-economic Status

- ▶ Must be small in primary NAICS code
- ▶ Small Business Goal is 23% of Federal Contracting Dollars (subject to change)
  - ▶ Women-Owned (5%)
    - ▶ Economically Disadvantaged Women Owned
  - ▶ Service-Disabled Veteran Owned (3%)
    - ▶ Veteran Owned (VA Only)
  - ▶ 8(a) and SDB (small-disadvantaged) (5%)
    - ▶ members of certain racial or ethnic groups (Black Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans and Asian Pacific Americans) are presumed to be socially disadvantaged by SBA
  - ▶ HUBZone (Historically Underutilized Business Zone (3%)

# General Eligibility

- Ownership, Legal and Real
  - by U.S. Citizens
- At least 51% unconditionally owned and controlled by eligible individual(s)
- Day-to-day operations management and long-term decision-making by eligible individual(s)
- “Qualified” to run business
  - Management experience

# Economically Disadvantaged

- **Personal net worth less than \$750,000**  
(excluding home equity, retirement accounts and the business value)
- **\$350,000 or less each** in adjusted gross income (3-year average)
- **\$6,000,000 or less** in personal assets, excluding qualified retirement accounts
- Title 13, Part 127, Subpart B of Code of Federal Regulations

# HUBZone

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“Historically Underutilized Business Zone”

- Designed to help small firms in certain communities gain access to federal contract opportunities
  - Typically areas of low median household incomes or high unemployment, or both
- HUBZone Map frozen until June 30, 2023
  - normally updated every 5 years
- Principal Office in HUBZone
- 35% employees reside in HUBZone
- Ownership not limited to individuals



# Remember - Step by Step

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# NH PTAC is here to help!

- ▶ We offer FREE assistance with all of these registrations, certifications and more:
  - ▶ Strategy development and marketing techniques
  - ▶ Identifying bid opportunities and understanding bid requirements and how to respond
  - ▶ Learning/Knowing the competition
  - ▶ Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) – “the rules of the road.”
  - ▶ Payment processes

# Some Other Sources of Help:

- **SBA NH District Office**  
<https://www.sba.gov/offices/district/nh/concord>
- **Center for Women and Enterprise (CWE)**  
<http://www.cweonline.org/Default.aspx>
- **Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC)**  
[www.cweonline.org/vboc](http://www.cweonline.org/vboc)
- **SBDC (Small Business Development Center)**  
<https://www.nhsbdc.org/>
- **SCORE** [www.score.org](http://www.score.org)
- **Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP)**  
[www.nhmep.org](http://www.nhmep.org)

# How do I get started with NH PTAC?

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- Go to the website and answer our “Become a Client” questionnaire ([www.nheconomy.com/ptac](http://www.nheconomy.com/ptac))
- Email us: [govcontracting@livefree.nh.gov](mailto:govcontracting@livefree.nh.gov)
- Meet with us in Concord (live or via Zoom)
- Request a site visit – we’ll come to you.
- Outside NH? Find your PTAC [here](#).