



Disaster Resources for the Small Business Community

After catastrophes and extreme weather, federal funds are frequently spent helping localities recover. Importantly, when this work is conducted by local businesses, local economies and communities recover faster and jobs in disaster-impacted areas are sustained and created. It is therefore important that businesses located in disaster-impacted areas understand how the contracting process works following disasters.

Contracting during a disaster is significantly different than standard contracting. The Thomas T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act requires the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to contract with businesses located in the affected area when feasible and practicable. While the Stafford Act does not require small business contracts to be made, it does include a local business contracting preference.

State and local government agencies control a large proportion of disaster response activities, so many of the contracting opportunities will come through these offices. At the time of a disaster, they may initially rely upon contracts already in place so potential contractors must be registered in the appropriate federal, state, and/or local databases to be eligible for contract awards. Many Federal agencies, such as FEMA and the Army Corps of Engineers to participate in the recovery and relief process and therefore, each agency is responsible for their own bids and awards.

Basic Contracting Steps

There are some general steps required before bidding on a disaster contract. For more details on the below points, please visit the SBA website: <https://www.sba.gov/contracting/getting-started-contractor/register-government-contracting>

- ✓ Obtain a Dun & Bradstreet D-U-N-S® Number to uniquely identify the physical location of the business. This can be done by visiting: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do;jsessionid=81407B1F03F2BDB123DD47D19158B75F>
- ✓ Register with the System for Award Management at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/SAM/##11>
- ✓ Find the appropriate NAICS Codes by going to <https://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/>
- ✓ Obtain a Federal Tax Identification Number at <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed> and a Standard Industrial Classification by visiting <https://www.osha.gov/pls/imis/sicsearch.html>
- ✓ Obtain Past Performance Evaluations to include in bid material and know which contracts to apply for by visiting <https://www.supplerriskmanager.com/ppe-order/login>

Disaster Contracting

System for Award Management

Register for an account in the System for Award Management (SAM) because contractors must have a SAM registration in order to receive a contract. Registration can be completed at: <https://uscontractorregistration.com/sam-registration/>

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Disaster Response database collects its information from SAM.

Please note that SAM has replaced both the Central Contractor Registry (CCR) and the Debris Removal Contractor Registry (DRCR) in an effort to streamline the federal government contracting structure.

Disaster Response Registry

The Disaster Response Registry is used by FEMA and the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers to establish their list of contractors that want to provide disaster-response assistance through Federal Government procurement opportunities. This can be done by completing the disaster response information in SAM.

Learn more at <https://www.acquisition.gov/disaster-response-registry>

Dynamic Small Business Search Database

The dynamic small business search database (DSBS) is another tool contracting officers use to identify potential small business contractors for upcoming contracting opportunities. Small businesses can also use DSBS to identify other small businesses for teaming and joint venturing. To learn more, visit http://dsbs.sba.gov/dsbs/search/dsp_dsbs.cfm

FEMA Industry Liaison Program Vendor Profile

Complete FEMA's Industry Liaison Program Vendor Profile form and submit it to "fema-industry@fema.dhs.gov"

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Advanced Contracting Initiative

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Advanced Contracting Initiative is a program developed and implemented specifically for emergency and disaster scenarios through an inventory of already awarded contract tools. USACE uses its engineering and contracting capabilities to support FEMA and other Federal, State and local government agencies in a wide variety of missions during natural and man-made disasters.

For more information, visit <http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Emergency-Operations/Contracting-in-Disasters/>

Locate Disaster Contract Opportunities

Often state and local offices control much of the work that is done. In fact, FEMA does not do anything without request and concurrence from the state, local, and tribal governments. The type, kind and quantity of assistance FEMA provides is entirely up to state and local authorities. If contracts are already in place for routine incidents, those contracts may be used for major disasters first.

Federal Business Opportunities (FedBizOpps)

This is for contract opportunities exceeding \$25,000. Managed by the General Services Administration, FedBizOpps allows businesses to sign up for e-mail notification of open contracts related to specified fields. Visit <https://www.fbo.gov/> to learn more.

DHS Advance Acquisition Planning System - To monitor the DHS Acquisition Planning Forecast System for contract actions exceeding \$150,000 visit <http://apfs.dhs.gov/>

Potential Subcontracting Opportunities with DHS Prime Contractors - Information on large business Prime Contractors who are interested in subcontracting with small, small and disadvantaged, women-owned small, HUBZone-certified, 8(a), veteran-owned small, and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses, complete with tips on how to pursue subcontracting opportunities with them. Visit <https://www.dhs.gov/prime-contractors> to learn more.

Procurement Technical Assistance Centers

Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC) provide local, in-person counseling and training services for you, the small business owner. They are designed to provide technical assistance to businesses that want to sell products and services to federal, state, and/or local governments. PTAC services are available either free of charge, or at a nominal cost.

For more information, visit <https://www.sba.gov/tools/local-assistance/ptac>

Small Business Development Centers

Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) offer one-stop assistance to individuals and small businesses by providing a wide variety of information and guidance in local, easily accessible branch locations. They also set up and run Disaster Business Recovery Centers to match businesses in need with business able to assist.

Visit <https://www.sba.gov/tools/local-assistance/sbdc> for more information.