Guidance for Federal Assistance Applicants

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This collection of information is for individuals and organizations applying for federal financial assistance in the form of grants, loans, or other assistance programs. Please browse the table of contents to see what information is contained here.

If you would like a full walkthrough of the SAM.gov registration process with screen-by-screen instructions, please see the last section, Assistance Registrations Walkthrough.

What Is an Entity?

The term “Entity” refers to prime contractors, organizations or individuals applying for assistance awards, those receiving loans, sole proprietors, corporations, partnerships, and any federal government agencies desiring to do business with the government.

Entity can also refer to a party which has been suspended or debarred, is covered by a prohibition or restriction, or is otherwise excluded from doing business with the government.

The Difference between Federal Assistance and Federal Contracts

**Federal Assistance:** The federal government supports a broad range of financial assistance—in various areas such as education, health care, research, infrastructure, economic development, and others—through grants, loans, scholarships, insurance, and other types of financial assistance.

**Federal Contracts:** Unlike grants, which are assistance mechanisms, contracts are a procurement mechanism. Contracts are used by the federal government to purchase goods or services for direct benefit or use by the government.

What Do I Need to Get Started?

**Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)**

You need a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) to register your entity in SAM.gov. UEIs are unique for each physical location you register. In SAM.gov today, all entities are uniquely identified by a DUNS Number, provided by Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). The first step in preparing to obtain a DUNS Number is to ensure that your organization does not already have one. Go to the [Dun & Bradstreet](https://www.dnb.com) portal for federal contractors and grantees and search for your organization. If you find your organization, you already have a DUNS Number and can have it emailed to you. If you do not already have a DUNS Number, you can request one for free. It usually takes no more than 1–2 business days to obtain a DUNS Number.
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You need to provide a physical address to D&B when you apply for your DUNS Number. D&B uses your physical address to verify that your entity is a legitimate and unique organization. Once your address is confirmed with D&B, record exactly, including capitalization and punctuation, the address that you used at D&B. You will need to provide this exact address when registering your entity in SAM.gov.

**Taxpayer Identification Number**

You need your entity’s Taxpayer ID Number (TIN) and Taxpayer Name (as it appears on your most recent tax return). Foreign entities that do not pay employees within the U.S. do not need to provide a TIN. Your TIN is usually your Employer Identification Number (EIN) assigned by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Sole proprietors may use their Social Security Number (SSN) assigned by the Social Security Administration (SSA) as their TIN; however, we strongly encourage you to obtain a [free EIN from the IRS](https://www.irs.gov/ein). Allow approximately two weeks before your new EIN is ready for use when registering in SAM.gov.

If you are uncertain about your TIN or Taxpayer Name in IRS records, we suggest that you compare the information you entered with the Taxpayer Name and TIN information on the following documents from the IRS:

- The original notice you received from the IRS assigning you an EIN
- Your most recent federal tax return for the business activity
- Any other recently received notice for the business activity

If your TIN is an SSN, compare the name and the number with the information on your actual Social Security card.

**What to Prepare before You Begin the Registration Process**

Depending on the type of registration you need, categories of information needed to register in SAM.gov may include the following:

- **Core Data**: Includes, but is not limited to, an entity's DUNS Number, name, address, general information, financial information, and details about any proceedings in which the entity may currently be involved. Core Data is mandatory for all registration types.

- **Assertions**: Includes, but is not limited to, data about the types of goods and services the entity provides, the entity size, NAICS codes, and optional Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and disaster relief data.

- **Representations and Certifications**: Details related to an entity's small business status, responses to commonly used Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) provisions/clauses, and Architect-Engineer Responses (SF330 Part II). Entities registering for federal assistance only review a set of standard certifications.
• **Points of Contact (POCs):** Types include, but are not limited to, contacts for accounts receivable, electronic business, and government business. POC information is mandatory for all registration types.

Before you start, please be sure you also have gathered the following information:

• Your DUNS Number from Dun & Bradstreet, and the name and exact address associated with that DUNS Number.
• Your TIN, which is either your EIN or your SSN, and the name associated with that TIN (from your W-2 or W-9) (U.S. registrants only).
• Your Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) or NATO CAGE (NCAGE) code, if you already have one.
  ○ Note: U.S. registrants do not need to have a CAGE code prior to registration; you may automatically receive one as a part of your entity's registration in SAM. Foreign entities must have an NCAGE code prior to registering in SAM.gov.
• Your Electronic Funds Transfer information, such as your financial institution’s ABA Routing Number and your account number, along with the bank phone or fax number (U.S. registrants only).

You will be unable to submit your registration online unless you provide all mandatory information.

**Guide to Codes Used in SAM.gov Entity Registrations**

**DUNS Number**

• Stands for: Data Universal Numbering System Number
• Description: A unique identifier assigned by D&B; mandatory to begin SAM registration. This is entered into SAM.gov as a nine-digit numeric code, using no spaces.

**MPIN**

• Stands for: Marketing Partner Identification Number
• Description: The MPIN is a self-created access code shared with authorized partner applications (e.g., Grants.gov). It must be nine characters long and include at least one letter, one number, and no spaces or special characters. Registrants create the MPIN on the Business Information page of the entity registration.

**CAGE Code**

• Stands for: Commercial and Government Entity Code
• Description: A unique identifier assigned by the Department of Defense (DoD) Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) for entities located in the U.S and its territories. The CAGE code is a five-character alphanumeric value with no spaces, and displays in uppercase format. It is not necessary to have a CAGE code before registration. If you are an entity located in the U.S.
one of its territories and do not already have a CAGE code, the DLA may assign one to you upon activation of your entity registration.

NCAGE Code
- Stands for: North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) CAGE Code
- Description: A unique identifier required for all foreign entities registering. This identifier is a five-character, alphanumeric value with no spaces, and displays in uppercase format. To locate the right identifier for your entity, go to the [NCAGE Code Application form](#).

TIN
- Stands for: Taxpayer Identification Number
- Description: A TIN is an identification number used by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in the administration of tax laws. There are two types of TINs used in SAM.gov, EINs and SSNs. The IRS issues EINs, while the Social Security Administration (SSA) issues SSNs. These are entered into SAM.gov with no spaces.

What are Representations and Certifications?
SAM.gov is the governmentwide repository for standard information about applicants and recipients. If you are registering in SAM.gov to pursue federal assistance opportunities like grants, loans, and other financial assistance programs, you must complete the Representations and Certifications (Reps and Certs) section. Completing Representations and Certifications during the SAM entity registration process:
- Eliminates the administrative burden of submitting the same information to various organizations;
- Establishes a common source for this information to organizations across the U.S. government; and
- Allows the awarding official to incorporate the representations and certifications in the award.

Beginning Your Registration

Log in to SAM.gov
1. Navigate to [SAM.gov](#).
2. Select the “Sign In” link in the upper right corner. Select “Accept” to accept the US Government System terms.
3. After selecting “Accept,” the system will redirect you to login.gov.
4. Enter your login.gov credentials and select “Sign In.” The system may prompt you to enter a one-time security code. (You will receive this code via the authentication method you selected...
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during account creation.)

*Note: If you do not already have a Login.gov account, please create an account.*

5. After signing in, the system will redirect you to your SAM.gov Workspace.

**Start a New Entity Registration in SAM.gov**

To walk through this process with screenshots, please see the last section of this document.

1. From the Workspace, locate the Entity Registration widget in the main area and select the “Register Entity” button.
2. Select the “Start Registration” button at the bottom of the registration overview page.
3. Review the Before You Start information, and gather all required information needed to complete your registration.
4. Select the “Continue” button to proceed.
5. Begin the online registration. If you have all the necessary information, this should take approximately 45 minutes to complete. The time to complete could vary depending on the size and complexity of your registration.

**Completing Your Registration**

1. Select your entity type.
2. If you are registering in SAM.gov to apply for a federal financial assistance opportunity on Grants.gov and you are NOT interested in pursuing federal contracts, choose the grants only path:
   - Select “I only want to apply for federal assistance opportunities like grants, loans, and other financial assistance programs” in response to the question “Why are you registering this entity to do business with the U.S. government?”
3. Complete the Core Data section:
   - Validate your entity information.
   - Enter business information (TIN, etc.) This page is also where you create your Marketing Partner Identification Number (MPIN). Be sure to remember your MPIN, as it will help identify you in several other government systems. You must have it to apply in Grants.gov.
   - If you have a CAGE code, enter it here. Foreign registrants must enter their NCAGE code before proceeding.
   - Enter general information (business types, organization structure, etc.) about your entity.
   - Provide your entity’s financial information, e.g., U.S. bank Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) information for federal government payment purposes. Foreign entities do not need to provide EFT information.
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- Answer the executive compensation questions.
- Answer the proceedings details questions.

4. Complete the representations and certifications section (for non-federal entities only). Select Yes/No on the Financial Assistance Response page.

5. Complete the Points of Contact (POCs) section:
   - Your electronic business POC is essential to your Grants.gov registration and application process. Other government systems, such as the CAGE program, will use your government POC to contact you. List someone with direct knowledge of this registration for both of the POC fields.

6. After your final review, make sure to select “Submit.” You will receive a confirmation message on the screen. If you do not see this message, you have not submitted your registration.
   
   Note: We will review your registration. SAM.gov will send an email when your registration is active.

Registering an Entity in an Organizational Hierarchy

What Is an Organizational Hierarchy?
If you are an individual or an independent business, you are not part of a hierarchy. If you are a part of a larger organizational structure, you may be part of a hierarchy. For example, an academic department may be part of a university’s hierarchy.

If You Are Part of a Hierarchy...
Once you select “Save and Continue” on the Verify DUNS Number Information page, you must await approval to continue with your registration. The system will show a message that states:

“You are trying to register an entity that is part of a larger organization. We sent your request to an administrator in that organization. They must review and approve your request before you can register this entity. You will receive an email notification from SAM.gov when the organization administrator makes their decision. Until then, you cannot proceed.”

Note: You will also receive an email with this information.

The entity registration will remain in draft status pending review by the entity administrator for the organization. You will not be able to edit or update the registration until approved by the organization administrator. If the entity administrator does not respond within 5 business days, then you will be required to submit a notarized letter to proceed. Please see the Notarized Letter Process section of this document.
Once the organization administrator reviews your request and makes a decision, the system will send you an email notification. It will come from donotreply@sam.gov. If approved, you will be able to proceed with your registration. If rejected, the draft record will be deleted from the system.

**Notarized Letter Process**

In certain instances SAM.gov requires a notarized letter to appoint an entity administrator. Your notarized letter needs to:

- Be on your company/organization letterhead, and be signed by your company president, CEO, or other authorized signature authority
- Contain your company/organization DUNS number
- Contain the new Entity Administrator’s name, phone number, address and email address
- Contain this statement above the signature block of your letter and insert the appropriate names where noted:
  - “The purpose of this notarized letter is to designate [insert name of entity administrator] as entity administrator for [company]. I, [name and title of signatory], hereby confirm that [insert name of entity administrator] is an authorized officer, agent, or representative of [insert entity name, or, for individuals representing themselves, say him/herself]. This letter will authorize [Insert name of entity administrator] to have access to the System for Award Management (SAM). SAM is a computer system managed by the federal government, and it is only accessible by individuals who are either authorized to represent a particular entity, or by individuals representing themselves. Accessing or using SAM, or information contained therein, for any unauthorized or illegal purposes, may have civil and criminal penalties, and may negatively impact the status of the SAM registration maintained on this entity. I, the below-signed, attest to the accuracy of all information contained in this letter.”

Please note that the United States federal government does not charge or require any fees in order to be registered in SAM, nor does it charge any fee to receive assistance from the Federal Service Desk, which is the help desk that services SAM.

If the administration of the company’s SAM record is to be managed by a third-party company, include the following:

- For the purpose of registering with the United States government through the online System for Award Management (SAM), I, the below signed, do hereby authorize the following person who is not directly affiliated with the entity listed above, to act on behalf of the entity: [insert full name, phone number, address, and email address of the third-party agent] (designated third-party agent). This authorization permits the designated third-party agent to conduct all normal, common business functions within SAM while binding the signatory to all actions conducted and representations made as a result of authorization granted herein. I have
checked the third-party agent designation box and completed the above information to indicate that the designated entity administrator is a third-party agent.

If the administration of the company's SAM record will not be managed by a third-party company include the following:

- “For the purpose of registering with the United States federal government through the online System for Award Management (SAM), I do not authorize any third party to act on behalf of [company organization, agency].”

_Note:_ Letters omitting either third-party authorization or denial will be considered unacceptable.

The following notarized letter templates are available to assist with creating your notarized letter:

- [Template 1 - Single Entity](#)
- [Template 2 - Multiple Domestic Entities](#)
- [Template 3 - International Entity (No U.S. Banking Info)](#)

_Note:_ If you are outside of the United States, you may contact the United States Embassy Consulate to get your letter notarized.

### Submitting the Notarized Letter to the Federal Service Desk

The letter must be notarized, scanned, and submitted to the Federal Service Desk (FSD.gov). Follow the steps below to submit the scanned notarized letter to the FSD:

_Note:_ The new entity administrator must have an individual SAM.gov user account created with the email address provided in the notarized letter for the FSD to process your request.

Log in to FSD.gov. You can use the same login.gov account you used to log into SAM.gov.
1. Select “Create an Incident.”

2. Select System for Award Management (SAM) in the “System Name” field.
3. Select SAM: Notarized Letter in the “Issue Type” field.

4. Fill out all remaining fields.

5. Select the “paper clip” icon to add attachments and attach your scanned notarized letter.

6. Once you have filled out all required information and attached your notarized letter, select “Submit.”
What Comes Next

How Long Will it Take for the Submission to Become Active?

Allow up to 7–10 business days after you submit your registration to become active in SAM.gov. SAM.gov must send out some information for validation with outside parties before your registration can be activated; this includes TIN validation with the IRS and CAGE validation or assignment with DoD. This time frame may be longer if the information you provide is flagged for manual validation by either party. You will receive an email alerting you when your registration is active.

If you notice your registration has had a status of Submitted for longer than 14 days, check your spam or junk mail folder for requests for corrections to your information. If you have not been contacted to correct or update the information, please contact the Federal Service Desk.

How to Check the Status of an Entity Registration

1. To check an entity’s registration status, you must either be a federal user or have a role with the entity.
2. Log in to SAM.gov. (Registration status is not available without signing in.)
3. From your Workspace, select Home from the menu, then select “Check Registration Status” on the homepage. The same “Check Registration Status” is also located on the entity information page.
4. From the check entity registration status, you can enter an entity’s Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS Number) with or without the EFT Identifier or CAGE code.
5. The status provides a quick summary for an entity, displaying the progress of that entity’s most recent record. It will also display what steps remain until it is completed. The steps required are determined based on the purpose of registration.
6. Select the topic under “More About” for additional help on any of the status symbols or steps.
7. To get the full entity details with representations and certifications or any exclusions, use the main search

The Entity Administrator Role

SAM.gov grants the entity administrator role to the first user to register an entity in SAM.gov. When there is an existing entity administrator, other users can request this role or an entity administrator can invite other users to become additional entity administrators.
If you are submitting a notarized letter to appoint an entity administrator, consider the actions that will be allowed and use this information, along with your organization’s policies, to make your selection.

An entity administrator can perform the following actions for their entity management registration in SAM.gov:

- View the entity's entire entity management registration. This includes any entities in the organization’s hierarchy
- Update and renew the entity management registration and any entities in the organization’s hierarchy.
- Deactivate the entity management registration
- Create, update, and delete Service Contract Reports (SCRs) and BioPreferred reports
- Manage and assign which users have roles with an entity
- Approve or reject hierarchy registration requests

We recommend that you have more than one or even more than two entity administrators for your organization. In the event that an entity administrator leaves your organization, you will need someone else with the role to assign a replacement for them. When your annual entity registration renewal is due, you don’t want to find there is no one who has the role to complete it. If that happens, you will have to go through the notarized letter process again.
Assistance Registration Walkthrough: A Step-by-Step Guide with Screenshots

1. Launch [https://sam.gov](https://sam.gov)
2. Select “Get Started” under the “Register Your Entity” section on the right.
3. Review the four steps listed in “Before You Get Started” to ensure you are prepared and have set aside enough time to complete your registration.

4. Select “Sign In” on the upper right corner of the screen and log in with your credentials. If you do not have an account, follow the “Get a Login.gov Account” section from the previous step.

5. Once you are logged in, select “Workspace” on the upper right corner. The “Entity Management” widget should appear on the left side panel. Select “Register Entity.”
6. Review the steps in “Registration Overview,” then select “Start Registration.”
7. The “Before You Start” page will appear. Review and make sure you have all the necessary information, then select “Continue.”
8. Select the type of entity you are registering. As an assistance applicant, for “Why are you registering this entity to do business with the U.S. government,” please select “I only want to apply for federal assistance opportunities like grants, loans, and other financial assistance programs.” Then select “Next.”
9. Review the Purpose of Registration page and the sections you must complete, then select “Next.”
Core Data

10. Enter entity information. Note: When entering your address, look at your DUNS information and make sure the address exactly matches, including capitalization and punctuation. Then select “Next.”
11. Verify your entity information and select “Save and Continue.”
12. Enter business information. Be sure to record what you enter for your MPIN, because you will need this number later. Select “Save and Continue.”

*Note: The screenshot above does not capture the entire page. Please make sure to scroll through the entire page and fill in all mandatory and applicable optional fields.
13. Enter all mandatory and applicable optional fields displayed on the IRS Consent page and select “Save and Continue.”

*Note: The screenshot above does not capture the entire IRS Consent page. Please make sure to scroll through the entire page and fill in all mandatory and applicable optional fields.
14. Enter CAGE code information and select “Save and Continue.” If you do not have a CAGE code, one will be assigned to you.
15. Enter ownership detail information and select “Save and Continue.”
*Note: Based on how you answered the previous questions and entity type you have elected, this page may or may not appear.
16. Enter predecessor details information and select “Save and Continue.”

*Note: Based on how you answered the previous questions and entity type you have elected this page may or may not appear.
17. Enter general information and select “Save and Continue.”

*Note: The screenshot above does not capture the entire General Information page. Please make sure to scroll through the entire page and fill in all mandatory and applicable optional fields.
18. Enter financial information and select “Save and Continue.”

*Note: The screenshot above does not capture the entire financial information page. Please make sure to scroll through the entire page and fill in all mandatory and applicable optional fields.

Tip: Make sure to answer the first question in the red box.
19. Answer executive compensation questions and select “Save and Continue.”
20. Answer proceedings questions and select “Save and Continue.”

**Proceedings Questions**

- **Is your business or organization, as represented by the DUNS Number on this entity registration, responding to a Federal procurement opportunity that contains the provision at FAR 52.209-7, subject to the clause in FAR 52.260-9 in a current Federal contract, or applying for a Federal grant opportunity which contains the award term and condition described in 2 C.F.R. 200 Appendix XII?**
  
  Please select a value ▼

- **Does your business or organization, as represented by the DUNS number on this specific SAM record, have current active Federal contracts and/or grants with total value (including any exercised/unexercised options) greater than $10,000,000?**
  
  Not Applicable ▼

Within the last five years, had the business or organization (represented by the DUNS number on this specific SAM record) and/or any of its principals, in connection with the award or performance by the business or organization of a Federal contract or grant, been the subject of a Federal or State:

1. Criminal proceeding resulting in a conviction or other acknowledgment of fault.
2. Civil proceeding resulting in a finding of fault with a monetary fine, penalty, reimbursement, restitution, and/or damages greater than $5,000, or other acknowledgment of fault, and/or
3. Administrative proceeding resulting in a finding of fault with either a monetary fine or penalty greater than $5,000 or reimbursement, restitution, or damages greater than $100,000, or other acknowledgment of fault?

Not Applicable ▼

Cancel  Previous  Save and Continue
21. The SAM Search Authorization page will display. Here you are agreeing to allow only your non-sensitive entity registration data to be displayed in the SAM.gov public search for users that have signed in. No sensitive information—such as your TIN, financial information, and email addresses—will ever be displayed in the SAM.gov public search.

22. Only restrict your record’s public view if you believe displaying your entity’s publicly available registration information—such as your registration status, legal business name, and physical address—in public search results poses a security threat or physical danger to you or your organization.

23. If you do not wish for your entity’s non-sensitive information to appear in SAM public search results and public data file, uncheck the box and select “Save and Continue.” Otherwise, select “Save and Continue” without unchecking the box.
24. Review your entity data information. If you need to modify any information, select the “Edit” button in the upper right corner for each section. Once you have reviewed all sections, select “Save and Continue.”

*Note: The screenshot above does not capture the entire Core Data review page. Please make sure to scroll through the entire page and review all fields.
Representations and Certifications

25. Enter the answer for the Financial Assistance Response question.
26. If you select “Yes,” a page titled “Issue Financial Assistance General Certifications and Representations” will appear. Read through each of the certifications and representations presented on the page, then check the box at the bottom of the page to indicate that you have read each of the certifications and representations presented. Then select “Save and Continue.”
Points of Contact

27. Enter points of contact (POCs) detail information.

*Note: The screenshot above does not capture the entire Points of Contact page. Please make sure to scroll through the entire page and fill all required fields.

28. Optional POCs will display in collapsed blue bars as shown below.
29. Select the applicable POC (blue bar) you wish to enter information for, and the section will expand. Enter all mandatory and applicable optional fields.
Tip: If you need to add additional POC(s), select the gray “Add Optional POC” button. Additional line(s) for optional POC will be displayed at the bottom. Select the line to expand and fill in all mandatory and applicable optional fields. Complete the section and select “Save and Continue.”
30. Review supplemental Small Business Administration information and select “Save and Continue.”

*Note: Based on how you answered the previous questions and entity type you have elected, this page may or may not appear.
31. Review all entity information entered. If you need to modify any information, select the “Edit” button in the upper right corner of each section.

*Note: The screenshot above does not capture the entire Entity Review page. Please make sure to scroll through the entire page and review all fields.

32. Select “Submit” to complete your entity registration.

By submitting this registration, you are certifying the information is accurate and complete. Knowingly providing false or misleading information may result in criminal prosecution under Section 1001, Title 18 of the United States Code. Criminal Penalties could include imposition of a fine, imprisonment, or both. You may be subject to other penalties as well, including, but not limited to, administrative remedies, such as suspension and debarment, ineligibility to participate in programs conducted under the authority of the Small Business Act; or civil liability under the False Claims Act.

CANCEL SUBMIT
33. The confirmation page will display to confirm your registration has been submitted. Review the steps in “What happens next?” Select “Back to Workspace,” and you will be navigated to your Workspace where you can review your entity record and print or save a PDF.
Tip: You can view your entity by selecting the “Submitted” bubble in your Workspace. You will receive an email from “@sam.gov” when your registration passes external validations and becomes active. Then, you can view your entity by selecting the “Active” bubble.