Contracting Tips for the State of Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Department of General Services’ Bureau of Procurement is responsible for the acquisition and coordination of services, supplies and equipment for the Commonwealth. Additionally, the Bureau provides guidance and consultation to state agencies, boards and commissions concerning individual procurements. Part of the Department of General Services includes The Bureau of Small Business Opportunities (BSBO). This Bureau is charged with assisting small businesses and small diverse businesses, which include minority, women, service-disabled veteran-owned and veteran-owned business enterprises, to compete for Commonwealth contracting opportunities. This installment of the GACO eBusiness newsletter will discuss several contracting tips for working with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Registration

Depending on the size and classification of your business there are several steps for registering as a vendor with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Step One—Pennsylvania (PA) Supplier Portal (All Businesses)

Register as a Supplier:

Go to www.pasupplierportal.state.pa.us and select "New Supplier Registration."

Step Two—Small Business Procurement Initiative (SBPI) (Only Small Businesses)

The Small Business Procurement Initiative (SBPI) reserves certain Commonwealth procurements for competition among only self-certified small businesses.

Eligibility Requirements:

Businesses interested in participating as a small business in the Small Business Procurement Initiative, must first register to do business with the Commonwealth (step one) and self-certify as a "small business." To self-certify and participate in the Small Business Procurement Initiative, a business must meet each of the following requirements:

- The business must be a for-profit, United States business.
- The business must be independently owned.
- The business may not be dominant in its field of operation.
- The business may not employ more than 100 full-time equivalent employees.
- The business, by type, may not exceed the following three-year average gross sales:
  - Procurement Goods - $20 million
  - Procurement Services - $20 million
  - Construction - $20 million
  - Building Design Services - $7 million
  - Information Technology Goods and Services - $25 million
To begin the SBPI self-certification access [www.pasupplierportal.state.pa.us](http://www.pasupplierportal.state.pa.us) and click "Log On" in the upper right corner. Once logged in click Bidder, Enterprise Applications and Small Business Procurement Initiative.

**Step Three-Third Party Certification (Small Diverse Businesses)**

Currently the State of Pennsylvania is only accepting third party certification for women-owned, minority-owned, service disabled veteran-owned and veteran-owned businesses and no longer acts as a certifying agency. Certifications accepted are: the PA Unified Certification Program (PAUCP); the Minority Supplier Development Council (MSDC); the Women’s Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC); the United States Small Business Administration (SBA) 8(a) Business Development Program; and the VetBiz VIP Verification Program (vetbiz.gov).

Once an applicant business has successfully registered in the SBPI and obtained an approved third party Certification they can verify as a small diverse business online. In Step 5 of the SBPI registration select “Verify as an SDB” and upload proof of certification. Detailed information on the verification process can be found at [http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/verification_process/1359](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/verification_process/1359).

**Finding Bidding Opportunities**

At PA eMarketplace, [http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us](http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us) bidding opportunities for the state of PA can be found. On this site you can search current notices, ITQ contracts, awards and upcoming procurements. The state of PA offers automatic bid notification at [http://www.itqrp.state.pa.us/EAlerts_V2/Login.aspx](http://www.itqrp.state.pa.us/EAlerts_V2/Login.aspx). If you are a registered vendor with the Commonwealth use your current username and password. If not a current registered vendor you can still receive notices by filling out the registration form at this site.

**RFP Scoring Formula Overview**

To ensure complete transparency, the Bureau of Procurement provides the Request for Proposals (RFP) scoring methodology for the procurement of goods or services through competitive sealed proposals. The RFP scoring process includes three main components: technical, cost and small diverse business which is explained in detail at [http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/rfp_scoring_formulas_overview/20124](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/rfp_scoring_formulas_overview/20124).

**Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)**

PEMA's Mission is to save lives, reduce suffering, and protect property and the environment by leading and coordinating Commonwealth agencies and resources to prevent, protect, prepare, respond and recover from any man-made or natural disaster. To fulfill this mission PEMA purchases various products and services in a time of emergency. Some of these products and services include: materials such as blankets, batteries, latex gloves and rope; services such as catering, mechanical contractors, mold control and excavating; raw materials such as chemicals, piping, concrete and fuels. For information on working with PEMA contact Scott Cross at fcross@pa.gov.

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<td><strong>08/15/13</strong> – Veteran-Owned Business Seminar, VA Butler Healthcare, Butler, PA</td>
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<td><strong>10/23/13</strong> – 26th Annual Procurement Opportunities Fair, Four Points by Sheraton Pittsburgh North, Mars, PA</td>
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