

Government Contract Cheat Sheet

What is a Government Contract?

A government contract is a legal agreement where you provide a product or service, and the local, state, or federal government pays you for it. The government is the #1 buyer in the world - and they're always looking for vendors.

What Can You Sell?

You don't need to own a big business or have federal connections. The government buys everything - literally. Here are common services small businesses and individuals provide:

- Event planning & staffing
- Transportation or delivery services
- Cleaning, maintenance, and landscaping
- Catering & food services
- Business consulting or coaching
- Digital marketing & media production
- Construction, janitorial, or IT services
- Reselling products (buy low, sell to gov high)

Who Can Get a Contract?

- Individuals (sole proprietors)
- Small business owners (LLC, S-Corp, etc.)
- Veterans, minorities, women, and economically disadvantaged entrepreneurs may qualify for special set-aside contracts

Where to Find Government Contracts

Here are the top platforms:

- SAM.gov - Main portal for federal contracts
- USAspending.gov - Research past awarded contracts
- Local city/county websites - Look under "Vendor Registration," "Procurement," or "Doing Business With..."

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sections

- Subcontractor Networks - Sites like SubNet or PTACs (Procurement Technical Assistance Centers)

How to Get Started (Step-by-Step)

1. Get an EIN - Apply for free at irs.gov
2. Register Your Business - Form an LLC or sole proprietorship in your state
3. Get a Unique Entity ID (UEI) - You'll receive this when you register on SAM.gov
4. Create a SAM.gov Account - Register as a vendor on sam.gov
5. Write a Capability Statement - This is your business resume - highlight your services, past experience, and how you can help agencies

Pro Tips

- Network with Contracting Officers - Attend matchmaking events, expos, and webinars. Relationships win contracts.
- Start Local - Your city and county often have easier contracts to win than federal agencies.
- Look for Micro-Purchase & Simplified Acquisitions - These are lower-dollar opportunities that require less red tape.
- Subcontract First - Partner with larger companies to gain experience before going after big prime contracts.

Bonus: Want to Learn How to Actually Get Paid?

Join my 4-Day Government Contract Workshop

Investment: \$250

Learn to find, bid on, and win government contracts

Walk away with real knowledge and action steps

RIRL Government Contracting

Checklist • 7-Day Action Plan • Template • Glossary

How to Reply to a Sources Sought (Super Simple Template)

Hello — We are [Your Company Name]. We provide [service] in [city/area]. We have [X years or “experience”] and have done [short example like “cleaning at 2 local offices”]. We can handle [size — number of sites or hours per week]. Contact: [name, phone, email].

Simple Checklist to Get Started (One Page)

- Pick business name and register locally
- Decide sole proprietor or LLC
- Get UEI at SAM.gov and finish SAM registration
- Talk to insurance agent (get general liability)
- Pick 1–2 services to offer (e.g., janitorial)
- Search SAM.gov for Sources Sought + Solicitation using NAICS/PSC
- Reply to any good Sources Sought (use the short template above)
- Track everything in a sheet/CRM

7-Day Action Plan (What to Do This Week)

- Day 1: Pick a business name and register (or confirm existing business details).
- Day 2: Apply for UEI on SAM.gov.
- Day 3: Pick 1 service and list the tools/insurance you need.
- Day 4: Contact an insurance agent for a quote.
- Day 5: Search SAM.gov for Sources Sought using the service name or NAICS code.
- Day 6: Reply to 1 Sources Sought (use the short template).
- Day 7: Create your tracking spreadsheet and add what you did.

Final Quick Cheat Sheet (Words + What They Mean)

SAM.gov — the website where you register and find government jobs.

UEI — your business ID the government uses.

NAICS — code that shows the type of work (like janitorial).

Sources Sought — early notice asking 'who can do this?' (reply here).

Solicitation — official invitation to send a bid (follow instructions).

Past performance — proof that you have done similar jobs before.

Set-aside — some jobs are saved for small businesses or veterans.