

Are You Ready to Bid on Government Contracts?

Winning a government contract starts long before you write your first proposal. Agencies require businesses to meet specific eligibility and compliance requirements before they can even consider your bid. If you're missing key registrations, certifications, or financial documents, you could waste valuable time preparing a proposal that's ultimately disqualified.

■ Use this checklist to evaluate your readiness before you start bidding on government contracts.

1. Business Registration & Legal Standing

Before bidding, your business must be legally registered and in good standing:

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| ☐ Your business is officially registered and recognized by your federal, state/provincial, and local government. | ☐ Your business complies with all federal, state/provincial, and local tax requirements and has no outstanding tax issues. |
| ☐ You have an EIN (Employer Identification Number) (U.S.) or Business Number (Canada) for tax purposes. | |

2. Supplier Participation

Many agencies require vendors to be registered before submitting a bid:

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| ☐ You are registered in the appropriate procurement portals, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• U.S.: SAM.gov, state or local vendor databases• Canada: https://canadabuys.canada.ca/en, provincial supplier databases | ☐ You have an active D-U-N-S Number (if required). |
| | ☐ You've applied for and obtained any necessary business or industry-specific certifications (e.g., minority-owned, women-owned, veteran-owned, HUBZone). |

3. Financial & Compliance Readiness

Government contracts require financial stability and transparency:

- ☐ Your business has financial statements and tax records from the past two years.
- ☐ Your business can provide references or past performance documentation for similar work.
- ☐ You have proof of required business insurance coverage (liability, workers' comp, etc.).
- ☐ If applicable, you've gathered required bonding or security deposit information.

4. Capability & Readiness

Bidding is only worthwhile if your business can actually perform the work:

- ☐ You have reviewed past awarded contracts in your industry to understand pricing and requirements.
- ☐ You have team members assigned to handle proposal writing, pricing, and compliance review.
- ☐ Your company has the resources, staff, and capacity to fulfill a contract if awarded.

What's Next?

If you checked off every box—congratulations! You're ready to start searching for bid opportunities and crafting a strong proposal. If you're missing anything, take the time to get everything in order before moving forward. A little preparation now will save you from last-minute roadblocks that could cost you a contract.

When you're ready, move on to **Step 1 of the Proposal Writing Guide** to start searching for the right government contract to bid on.