Federal and Washington State Contracting

**What is government contracting?**
The public sector buys a wide variety of goods and services from private sector businesses to support its functions. Government contracts are the agreements that legally bind the buyer and the seller to a deal.

**How does contracting work?**
Public agencies have procurement specialists or contracting officers that buy goods and services the agency needs to purchase. Contracts are awarded to businesses based on a number of factors including cost, value, and ability of the business to perform. The Federal Government is mandated to buy 23% of all goods and services from small businesses.

**What is a “small” business?**
The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) determines the size of a business by its primary North American Industrial Classification Specification (NAICS). The SBA assigns a dollar amount and/or an employee quantity limit for each NAICS code. If a business operates under the limits, then it is small. See the SBA Table of Small Business Size Standards (To find your NAICS, visit [http://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/files/Size_Standards_Table.pdf](http://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/files/Size_Standards_Table.pdf))

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<th><strong>Federal Government</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Who is in charge of government purchasing?</strong></td>
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<td>Each federal agency* has its own procurement offices. Many federal agencies have what is known as an Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) or an Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP) <a href="http://www.osdbu.gov/">http://www.osdbu.gov/</a></td>
<td>The Department of Enterprise Services (DES) has Procurement Coordinators that analyze bids received to ensure all terms, conditions and bidder capabilities meet the requirements of the solicitation <a href="https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/apps/ContractSearch/Contact.aspx">https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/apps/ContractSearch/Contact.aspx</a></td>
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<td>*Official departments of the federal government (e.g. FBI, GSA, DoD)</td>
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<td><strong>How do they select companies?</strong></td>
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<td>Each federal agency has contracting officers that oversee the contract, negotiation and selection</td>
<td>Department of Enterprise Services Washington’s Electronic Business Solution (WEBS) <a href="http://www.des.wa.gov">www.des.wa.gov</a></td>
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<td><strong>Where can I find contracting opportunities?</strong></td>
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<td>Federal Business Opportunities (FBO) website contains all current Federal agency solicitations above $25,000 <a href="http://www.fbo.gov/">www.fbo.gov</a></td>
<td>Department of Enterprise Services Contracting and Purchasing <a href="http://www.des.wa.gov/services/ContractingPurchasing/Business/BidOpportunities/Pages/default.aspx">http://www.des.wa.gov/services/ContractingPurchasing/Business/BidOpportunities/Pages/default.aspx</a></td>
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How to Get Started

**Step 1: Research** - Learn what public agencies buy, then determine if your business can provide what they seek.

**Step 2: Register** - Post your business on the necessary registries to be considered for awards.

**Step 3: Refine** - See if your company qualifies to be in a special small business category.

### Federal Government
Understand the federal marketplace; find opportunities currently up for bid, what agencies have purchased and more at: [http://www.sba.gov/content/federal-contracting-resources-small-businesses](http://www.sba.gov/content/federal-contracting-resources-small-businesses)

### State of Washington
Department of Enterprise Services Contracting and Purchasing
[http://www.des.wa.gov/services/ContractingPurchasing/Business/BidOpportunities/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.des.wa.gov/services/ContractingPurchasing/Business/BidOpportunities/Pages/default.aspx)

Register your small business with the System for Award Management (SAM)
www.sam.gov

Register your small business with Washington’s Electronic Business Solution (WEBS)
www.fortress.wa.gov/ga/webs

### Small Business Administration (SBA)
Visit: www.sba.gov

### Office of Minority & Women’s Business Enterprise (OMWBE)
www.omwbe.wa.gov

**Bonding and Bidding:**
Determine whether or not your business needs bonding in order to bid on a solicitation. If you would like bonding support, learn about SBA’s Surety Bonding: [www.sba.gov/surety-bonds](http://www.sba.gov/surety-bonds). Follow the bidding requirements of each agency. Bid on the contracts you believe your company can have success delivering on.

**Tips on increasing your business’ competitiveness:**
Learn More. Find and attend free contracting workshops put on by SBA Portland District Office at [www.sba.gov/or](http://www.sba.gov/or).

**Special Small Business Categories** In some cases, contracts can be reserved for small businesses that are certified in preferred categories. See Step 3.

**Market** Find and promote your business to agency contracting officers and business liaisons. See Step 1.

### Contracting Resources

**PTAC**
Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce
1101 Broadway, Suite 100
Vancouver, WA 98660
Phone: (360) 567-1092
Email: swwa@washingtonptac.org

The Procurement Technical Assistance Center’s (PTAC) mission is to maximize the number of capable U.S. companies participating in the government marketplace.

**Federal Contracting:**
Portland District Office
620 SW Main Street, Suite 313
Portland, OR 97205
Ph: 503-326-2682
Email: pdxhelp@sba.gov

**State of Washington Contracting:**
Washington State Department of Enterprise Services
Contracting & Purchasing
PO Box 41401
Olympia, WA 98504-1401
Ph: 360-407-2210
Email: contractingandpurchasing@des.wa.gov