

Lunch With Leaders: Disaster Recovery Opportunities Q&A

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in your Lunch with Leaders event in order to present “How to do Business with FEMA”. We appreciate the questions attendees posted to the webinar’s chat. Below are the responses provided, most which are paraphrased from what was discussed during the live session.

- Q. Will the event recording and presentation be posted?
- A. *Yes, the recorded event and presentation can be found at hmsdc.org on the homepage.*
- Q. Do you get opportunities to repair homes through FEMA or is it through local agencies? Houston with one?
- A. *FEMA itself does not contract out for home repairs. It will depend on factors to include homeowner’s insurance and the disaster declaration.*
- Q. I am an approved TSP for FEMA but was not contacted for Texas disaster, who would I contact as a liaison for transportation. It seems like larger companies were contacted so how would I get added to that list?
- A. *You may contact the Tender of Service Program: FEMA-Transportation-Programs@fema.dhs.gov. The FEMA Tender of Service Program allows FEMA to schedule and book transportation with pre-approved private sector Transportation Service Providers (TSPs). FEMA invites TSPs serving any mode of transportation (air, maritime, rail, or trucking) to register with the Program to become a FEMA-Approved TSP. More information by accessing this site: <https://edit.fema.gov/business-industry/doing-business/transportation>*
- Q. Can you share link/where to go to register for the Disaster Registry?
- A. *The Disaster Response Registry is a listing of those contractors who are willing to provide debris removal, distribution of supplies, reconstruction, and other disaster or emergency relief supplies and/ or services. The site is: <https://www.acquisition.gov/disaster-response-registry>*
- Q. What is considered local business; citywide or statewide and what is the picking order for these businesses?
- A. *Various factors help determine the local business designation, such as the Disaster Declaration (counties within the declaration, or subsets of counties); primary place of company’s business activities. The solicitation has to make that distinction of local area set aside with the list of counties. The following regulations are used in determining local vendors, Federal Acquisition Regulations can be found at <https://www.acquisition.gov/content/regulations>:*
- **Stafford Act: Sec. 307 – Use of Local Firms and Individuals**
 - **Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR): Sec. 26.202 – Local Area Preference**
 - **FAR: Sec 52.226-3 – Disaster or Emergency Area Representation**
 - **FAR: Sec 26.203 – Transition of Work**
- Q. If a supplier can provide the top commodities, how can the supplier get ahead of the need to be included in the procuring process?
- A. *A supplier can ensure that they are prepared to do business with the agency by:*
- *Completing the sam.gov registration process (making sure they select to be included in the disaster registry),*
 - *Understand FEMA’s mission and goals*

- *Actively monitor contracting opportunity sites (i.e. beta.sam.gov)*
- *Review the agencies Advanced Contracts ([Advanced Contracting for Goods and Services | FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov/advanced-contracting)) and reach out to the primes for possible subcontracting opportunities*
- *Potentially become an advanced contract holder by submitting a proposal when a solicitation is released for those requirements.*

Q. It is very important that all small/diverse business participate in the market research. This is the only way they can stop a sole source and go out for RFP?

A. *FEMA is constantly conducting market research and analysis, and will support mission needs in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations and applicable policies and procedures.*

Q. Are set asides determined by the market research?

A. *Yes, they are determined by the market research.*

Q. Are NGOs considered as primes? If so, how can suppliers develop relationships? NGOs such as Association of the Blind.

A. *Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) can be prime vendors. Suppliers can engage with these NGOs and establish business relationships by reaching out directly to those organizations.*

Q. I see that the enrollment period is closed for transportation on the FEMA website is there any other way we can enroll for this year or do we wait till next year?

A. *Once the enrollment period closes, interested parties are recommended to monitor the website for future updates: <https://edit.fema.gov/business-industry/doing-business/transportation>*

Q. Does FEMA require Primes to subcontract with a small business?

A. *In accordance with procurement policies and regulations, large businesses Primes that have won a procurement have to submit a subcontracting plan to the agency before being officially awarded a contract. Small business Primes can subcontract with other businesses, as long as more than 50% of the products/services is provided by that Small business Prime.*

Q. Can you go more in details on how we can submit our capabilities statement? Is this separate from the vendor profile?

A. *Yes, these are different. The Vendor Profile Form is used to get general company contact information and the purpose of their outreach request. Capability statements are generally a one to two-page document that summarizes the company's capabilities, experience and past performance. The capability statement can be submitted to the agency through the Vendor Profile Form found on the "Doing Business with FEMA" website: <https://edit.fema.gov/business-industry/doing-business>. These documents should be emailed to: fema-industry@fema.dhs.gov*

Q. I have a really small business I have an MBE designation with Houston, in order to bid on a large contract can I bid and partner with a bigger company that does not meet the small business standards if we already work together?

A. *Yes, you are able to partner with another supplier, considering requirements that would need to be complied with as a Prime, such as the Limitation of Subcontracting that will apply if the requirement is a small business set-aside (FAR 52.219-14).*

Q. Can anyone talk about the mental health vendors opportunity?

- A. *The tools provided in this session are applicable to doing business with the federal government in general. Opportunities for mental health services can be found in beta.sam.gov*
- Q. Are you aware if Temp Agencies are used often?
- A. *Opportunities for temporary services can be found in beta.sam.gov. Please note that FEMA does not contract for temporary services often, but you may find opportunities with other agencies.*
- Q. We have a new product for the construction industry that we would like to present to FEMA, how do we go about finding the right liaison to take a presentation?
- A. *To request a vendor presentation meeting please go to the “**Doing Business with FEMA**” website and follow the instructions found there: <https://edit.fema.gov/business-industry/doing-business>
It is highly recommended that in preparation for your product or service presentation, your company should consider the challenges faced within the FEMA mission and/or organization, understand what FEMA is responsible for (or mission assigns to) within the National Response Framework, and identify how the company can bridge the gaps to meet survivor needs.*
- Q. How do we find Prime contractors bidding on these opportunities in order to reach out to them to be considered as a subcontractor?
- A. *You can find information for federally awarded contracts at beta.sam.gov under “Contract Data Reports”.*
- Q. What’s the name of construction contract vehicle again?
- A. *FEMA does not have a contract that is solely construction for disaster response. Public works and engineering responsibilities are mission assigned to the US Army Corp of Engineers (Emergency Support Function #3). However, the Individual Assistance (IA) - Support Contract (SC) does have some construction aspects within it.*
- Q. Is there an advantage to being a HUB in getting a FEMA contract?
- A. *Joining the HUBZone program makes your business eligible to compete for the program’s set-aside contracts. HUBZone-certified businesses also get a 10 percent price evaluation preference in full and open contract competitions. HUBZone-certified businesses can still compete for contract awards under other socio-economic programs they qualify for.*
- Q. Where can a small construction company start to be utilized for rebuilding after the fact. And is there a list to even just get in with the bigger companies already getting the pre-arranged contracts already in place?
- A. *Information regarding Advanced Contracts can be found here, [Advanced Contracting for Goods and Services | FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov/advanced-contracting-for-goods-and-services)*
- Q. Can you speak to FEMA's involvement in Electrical Powerline restoration services due to natural disasters and finding qualified companies to do the work in the event of hurricanes, tornadoes, wind storms and winter freezes?
- A. *FEMA mission assigns certain activities, such as power restoration, to other Federal partners when responding to a disaster.*
- Q. Water is a Major problem during Gulf state Hurricanes. What Department of FEMA handles Emergency Preparedness in this area?
- A. *FEMA’s Office of Resilience, [Resilience | FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov/resilience) would be the main component of FEMA that would lead preparedness efforts.*

- Q. What current opportunities do you have now that small businesses can take advantage of?
- A. *Opportunities, for FEMA and other federal agencies, can be found at beta.sam.gov. Further, as a requirement of our acquisition process, FEMA posts advance notifications on the DHS Acquisition Planning Forecast System <https://apfs.dhs.gov/>*
- Q. How does FEMA determine how long they are in an area of disaster and how long does it take to make awards?
- A. *There is no specific length of time that the agency determines for being in an area. It is dependent on the needs of the recovery effort. Length of time to make an award is dependent on the acquisition strategy and the urgency of the request.*
- Q. Has COVID changed requirements for businesses to do business with FEMA?
- A. *COVID has impacted certain areas of how we conduct and implement our mission, e.g. follow CDC guidelines to operate in the environment, what part of the work can be done virtually vs. in person, additional safety requirements incorporated in scope of works, etc.*
- Q. We have commercial real estate MBEs that can help FEMA and primes locate space to operate out of when they come into an area?
- A. *Identification of office and warehouse space is typically identified by FEMA personnel with the assistance of the General Services Administration (GSA).*
- Q. Are there opportunities for relocation companies to know FEMA's needs coming into a market to help provide housing and hotels to short and long term FEMA employees?
- A. *It will depend; it is not something typically acquired if sufficient hotel room availability exists in or near the impacted area. If not, then FEMA may look to find alternative housing options, such as rental properties, to house responders.*
- Q. Are SBE companies eligible to gain assistance?
- A. *Please visit the Small Business Administration website to obtain information regarding assistance <https://www.sba.gov/>*
- Q. Which department handles security services for FEMA? And how to get connected with those departments?
- A. *Security Services are managed through the FEMA Office of the Chief Security Officer. Capabilities can be submitted through the Industry Liaison Program via the Vendor Profile Form.*
- Q. Can you go more in details on how we can submit our capabilities statement? Is this separate from the vendor profile?
- A. *Yes, these are different. The Vendor Profile Form is used to get general company contact information and the purpose of their outreach request. Capability statements are generally a one to two-page document that summarizes the company's capabilities, experience and past performance. The capability statement can be submitted to the agency through the Vendor Profile Form found on the "Doing Business with FEMA" website: <https://edit.fema.gov/business-industry/doing-business> These documents should be emailed to: fema-industry@fema.dhs.gov*
- Q. What would be helpful as new vendors seeking contracting opportunities, can you do a separate webinar to walk through the beta.sam.gov website. This would help small businesses to navigate. Can this be made available?

- A. *The Association of Procurement Technical Assistance Centers is a good resource for businesses wanting more information on how to do business with the government and able to assist with this.*
- Q. Other than Market Research are there any other services needed by FEMA during a disaster (for example, accounting, marketing, engineering, legal, etc.)?
- A. *Products and services needed vary by disaster. Therefore it is recommended that companies monitor opportunities can be found at beta.sam.gov and the DHS Acquisition Planning Forecast System ([Home / Acquisition Planning Forecast System \(dhs.gov\)](https://www.dhs.gov/procurement/forecast)). While the majority of those services listed as example are performed by FEMA employees, there may be times additional resources are needed and we would contract for support in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations.*
- Q. There is a current opportunity that indicates that only 2 prime contractors will be selected regarding the vaccines. So how would we know if the IDIQ will be from a pre-awarded contractor or will be identified from a new listing? We are trying to identify primes that may be submitting because none are listed interested parties listing on beta-sam.gov regarding this procurement.
- A. *The vaccine support solicitation on beta.sam.gov is for new contracts. From an open solicitation, the awardees will be determined in accordance with the evaluation criteria from those vendors who submit proposals in response to it. The awardees information can be found on the Federal Procurement Data System site: <https://www.fpds.gov/fpdsng/cms/index.php/en>*
- Q. Are you aware if Temp /Staffing Agencies are use often?
- A. *While we do not use temporary/staffing agencies often, you may find opportunities for temporary services in beta.sam.gov*
- Q. Top Commodities Procured during disaster list on the slied has temporary labor listed. You stated that you do not use temp / staffing agencies, so how do you get temp labor.
- A. *The agency can hire local individuals directly to support the recovery effort when needed for specific amounts of time.*
- Q. Are insurance requirements standard limits? And are there bonding requirements.
- A. *Assuming the question is in relation to contract opportunities in general, if there are any insurance requirements, they would be specified within the requirements of the solicitation.*
- Q. Is there a program that awards contracts prior to disasters in an area so that when the disaster happens or is predicted to happen a vendor company is able to know if they will be needed in advance and ready?
- A. *The agency has Advanced Contracts in place, they can be found <https://www.fema.gov/businesses-organizations/doing-business/advanced-contracts>*

Unidentified Answers

Contract opportunities are available on SAM.gov for people who make, receive and manage federal awards. This is where organizations within the federal government publish notices on proposed contract actions valued at more than \$25,000. Direct all questions to the Federal Service Desk at 1-866-606-8220.

Individual Assistance Services Contract. You can find the information at the site that list all of FEMA Advanced Contracts: [Advanced Contracting for Goods and Services | FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov/businesses-organizations/doing-business/advanced-contracts)