Frequently Asked Questions for SAM.gov Registration for International Entities

These Frequently Asked Questions are intended to address general guidance and best practices for successfully registering in SAM.gov, which is required for all recipients of federal assistance awards. For additional information, please see:

New Registrations:

https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd_sp?id=gsafsd_kb_articles&sys_id=e465a4b61b2e8d54937fa64ce54bcbf6

Registration Renewals:

https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd_sp?id=gsafsd_kb_articles&sys_id=0575c1c81b8138905465eaccac4bcb16

UEI Validations:

https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd_sp?id=gsafsd_kb_articles&sys_id=f1e47a8f1babc5903565ed3ce54bcb28

What is SAM.gov?
The System for Award Management (SAM.gov) is a system operated by the General Services Administration (GSA). Organizations are required to obtain a UEI and register in SAM.gov for a federal assistance action (Grants, contracts, etc.) to be obligated and for the Department of State to issue payments against those obligations.

What is NCAGE?
NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) codes are unique identifiers for foreign entities that do business with and/or seek financial assistance from the U.S. government for Department of Defense (DOD) awards only. Foreign organizations must first obtain an NCAGE code to register in SAM.gov only if they want to bid and receive funding from DOD.
SAM.gov stopped asking in Nov 2022 for organizations who responded they were not applying for DOD awards. Help guides in SAM.gov should be updated by Jan 2023 to reflect this change for NCAGE/CAGE

What is login.gov?
Login.gov is a secure sign in service used to sign in to participating government agencies. Login.gov is utilized by the GSA for accessing SAM.gov. This is required to verify that only authorized people have access to the information. For assistance with login.gov, see: https://www.login.gov/help/ or contact login.gov: https://www.login.gov/contact/.

I am an international applicant / recipient. How do I register in SAM.gov?
To register in SAM.gov an entity must follow all the steps and ensure information provided is both accurate and constant across all systems. Furthermore, the entity must be diligent in being responsive to requests for additional information. Failure to be respond to these requests in a timely matter may cause additional delays in registering on SAM.gov.

Steps & Timeline for New Registrations (Foreign Organizations)

1. **Obtain an NCAGE code – NO LONGER REQUIRED! Unless you also do business with DOD**

For help: NCAGE support team

2. **Create a login.gov account (instantaneous; but involves multi-factor authentication)**
   For help: login.gov help center There is no call-in number. Hours of operation are Monday-Friday 8:00 am to 8:00 pm ET. Allow two business days for a response.
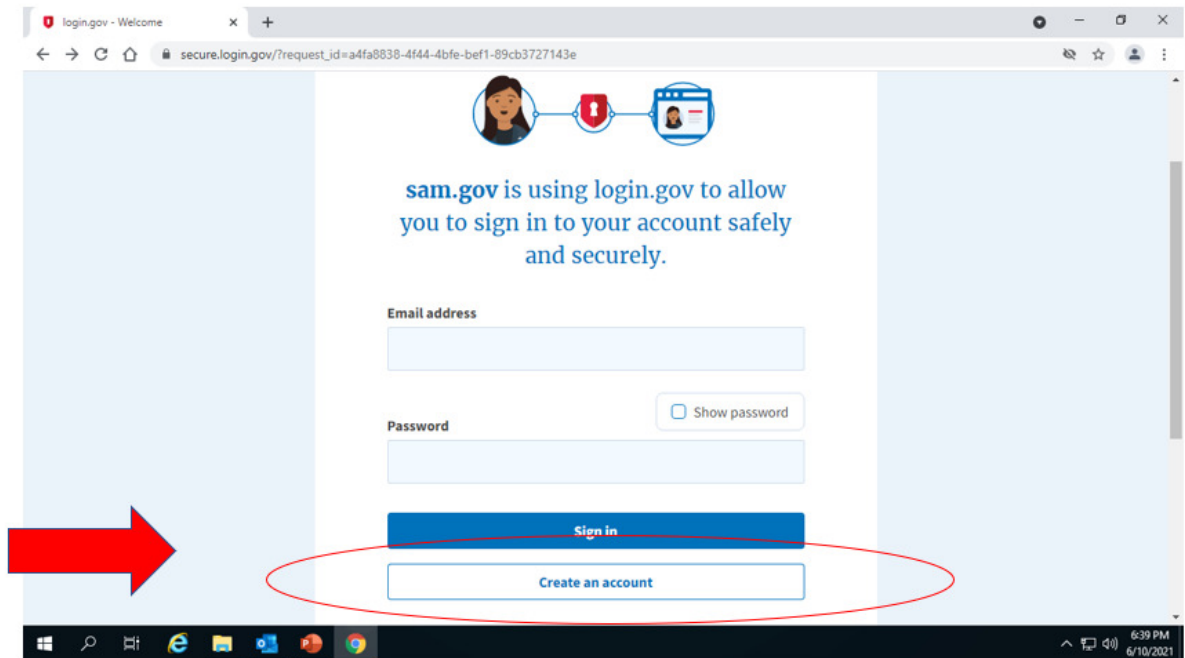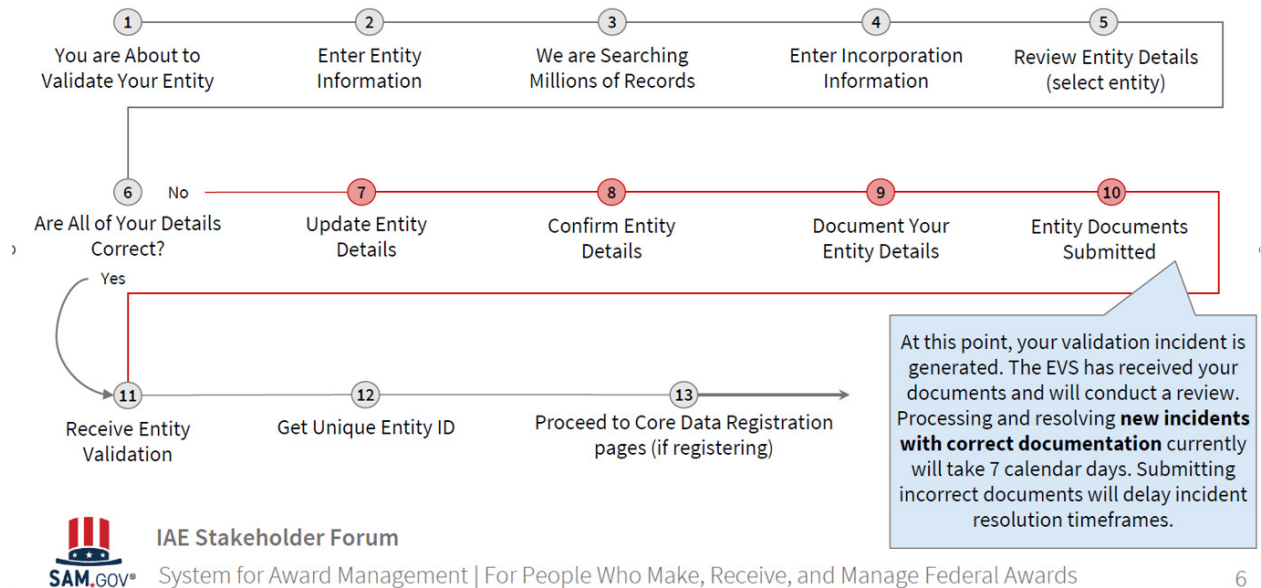

Getting a login is NOT the same as finishing your entity registration

- Have working devices (phone, tablet, computer) for multifactor authentication ready
- Know that creating this is not the same as completing sam.gov registration
- Use the same email address you previously used at sam.gov, if applicable, to automatically link info
- Use individual email address not group email or distro list
- For help: login.gov help center

3. **Begin sam.gov registration to validate entity and obtain UEI. Up to 45 business days. Current average is 14.**

How Does Entity Validation Work in SAM.gov?

1. You are About to Validate Your Entity
2. Enter Entity Information
3. We are Searching Millions of Records
4. Enter Incorporation Information
5. Review Entity Details (select entity)

6. Are All of Your Details Correct? — No
7. Update Entity Details
8. Confirm Entity Details
9. Document Your Entity Details
10. Entity Documents Submitted

Yes

11. Receive Entity Validation
12. Get Unique Entity ID
13. Proceed to Core Data Registration pages (if registering)

> At this point, your validation incident is generated. The EVS has received your documents and will conduct a review. Processing and resolving **new incidents with correct documentation** currently will take 7 calendar days. Submitting incorrect documents will delay incident resolution timeframes.

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Reviewing Entity Details

14

a. For help: Entity Validation Service (EVS) specialists - through a Federal Service Desk (FSD) ticket/incident but not by contacting FSD's general team but not by contacting FSD's general team separately by phone or chat

b. Only pick an exact match that shows up in the system for your organization, not a close match.

c. Respond promptly (within 5 business days) to requests/emails

d. Follow instructions carefully

e. Check status in your sam.gov workspace and fsd.gov (tickets) daily
f. Follow detailed requirements for acceptable documents
g. Upload documents to sam.gov workspace, not the ticket
h. Physical address not PO box
i. Include several points of contact for your entity
j. After 14 days you can use ticket to inquire about status
k. Do not create multiple submissions/incidents/tickets -- this will slow things

4. Continue sam.gov registration to complete it (not required for subrecipients)

What Happens After Entity Validation?

If you had to submit documentation to add or update your entity, your documents will be reviewed by the entity validation team. You will receive an email notifying you when your entity is validated. At that time, you may continue registering, renewing, or getting your Unique Entity ID.
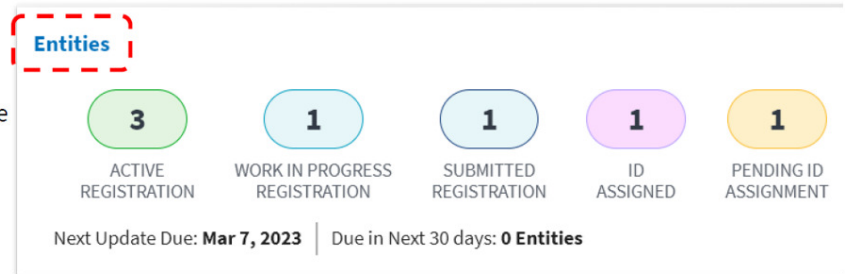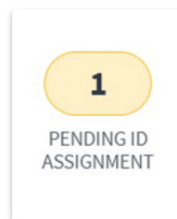
Go to SAM.gov and select the "Entities" widget.

Your next action will depend on your entity's status. If you manage multiple entities, go to the entities workspace to select the entity referenced in the email.

What Do I Do Next After My Entity is Validated?

If your entity is in the **Pending ID Assignment** status, select "Get Started" from your Entities Workspace.

Enter your entity information. This time, you should see an exact match for your entity's name and physical address.

What Do I Do Next After My Entity is Validated?

If your entity is in the **ID Assigned** status, go to your Entities Workspace by selecting the ID Assigned bubble.

If your entity has a "Validation Required" alert, select "Validate Entity" from the Actions menu (the three vertical dots) to complete the Entity Validation process.

You should find an exact match for your entity's name and physical address.
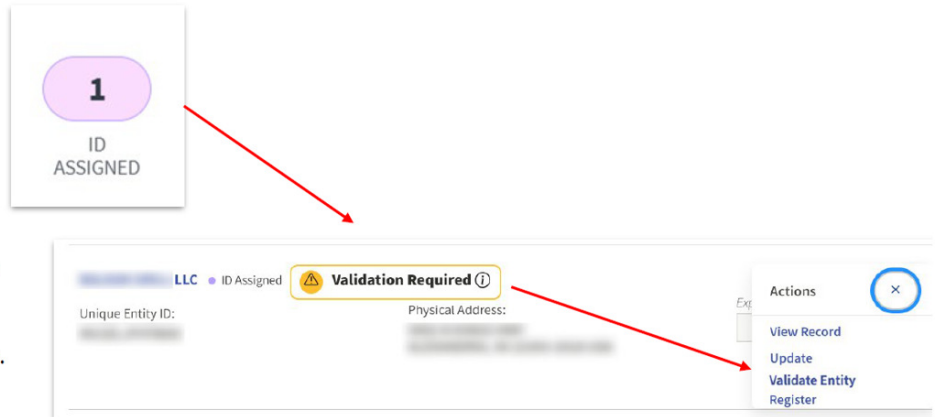
a. Takes up to 10 business days
b. For help: Federal Service Desk (FSD) general team
c. If not completed within 90 days, the process restarts from Step 3; all registration info must be reentered and documents resubmitted.
d. Check sam.gov workspace and fsd.gov daily and respond promptly and carefully to any requests/instructions.
e. Add comments to existing ticket; Do not create multiple submissions/incidents/tickets.

What do I do if my address is not found or does not match with the address in the system during entity validation or when entering the NCAGE number?

Entity Validation is the process during which SAM.gov verifies that the organization registering is a valid organization. Entity validation is the first step of the SAM.gov registration process. If the organization's correct entity name and address do not match what is displayed in SAM.gov, or there is no address at all, the organization should select "Create Incident" on the SAM.gov page. The entity should attach documents that identifies their information and fully describes that there was no match for the organization in the provided text box. SAM.gov will automatically create an entity validation ticket for the entity. This is the only way to create a ticket for entity matching issues. See this knowledge base article for follow steps:

- Validation with no EXACT match: GSAFSD Tier 0 Knowledge Base - Validation Results with No Exact Match
- Validation with no results: GSAFSD Tier 0 Knowledge Base - No Results in the Entity Validation Search

SAM.gov reviews incident tickets in the order received. If the customer service agent has questions or needs additional information or documentation, they will update the ticket and the entity will receive an email notification for additional action. The answer will require the entity to log in to their workspace in SAM.gov to reply. DOS employees may not submit tickets/documents on behalf of recipients.

What is the role of entity validation in obtaining a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)?
Entity Validation is required to obtain a UEI. This only needs to be done once, when validating an organization, the system may ask for date and state of incorporation, some entities may be asked to provide additional business documents to verify their identity.

Why is annual renewal of my organization important?
SAM.gov requires organizations to maintain registration by verifying and updating information annually. Having an active registration is required for organizations to receive payments on current awards and to receive new awards (or amendments). It is important to renew registration before, not after, it expires. SAM.gov gives priority first to organizations renewing their registration; organizations who have allowed their registration to lapse are assisted with lower priority.

Why do I need to validate my entity when I have been registered in SAM.gov for years?
On April 4, 2022, the federal government stopped using Dun and Bradstreet to verify entities. Even entities that were already registered in SAM.gov must validate their entity information through the new service provider. Data rights limitations require SAM.gov to collect the data from the user directly, not using previously validated data. This means entities may have to provide supporting documentation to update the new service provider's data which is used to provide the UEI. This will only be needed the first time it renews.

What should I do once I have submitted all required information?
Check for messages requesting additional information. This requires the organization to login to SAM.gov and check their workspace for alerts for requests for additional information. Tickets are closed after five days of not replying. If unable to provide requested information within five days, reply to the ticket that the organization is working on the request and give an estimate of when the organization will have the requested information. This way the help ticket will not be closed. See section **Entity Validation Incidents (Help Tickets)** for additional information: GSAFSD_kb_articles - GSA Federal Service Desk Service Portal.

Seven Common Reasons Documents are Rejected and How to Address

Tips for Success and Troubleshooting:
- To validate your entity, sam.gov requires you upload documents that prove your name, physical address, etc.
- If your documents contain other language(s), you must also include a full English language translation of that document.
- The translator must certify their competency and the translation as complete and accurate. Certification < 30 days old.
- At least one document that is less than five years old must contain both your correct legal business name and your correct physical address (Not a PO Box).
- If you provide documentation that is not current (e.g., with an old entity name or address), you must also submit documentation of the change (e.g., transfer of business).

- Explain discrepancies and provide backup.
- If you have not heard anything back in more than 14 business days since you last replied/submitted documents, use FSD incident ticket to ask about the status.

Additional Common Issues:
- Not submitting correct, acceptable documents
- Not responding to emails/requests promptly and ticket is closed
- Not using ticket to describe your specific request or uploads
- Logo on documents not same as name
- Submitting docs that are too old or have mismatched documents or have no date on them at all
- Translations not dated within 30 days of upload
- Need to spell out the month in dates so difference between American and European formats of writing dates does not make meaning unclear. Note: Spelling it out doesn't change translation
- Scans are low quality or cut off
- You attached your original application or typed document or screenshots of a form where you entered data on a website (but wasn't approved yet).

How do I know if I need to provide additional information?
An e-mail will be sent requesting additional information. Or the organization can log in to SAM.gov and look for "Alerts" in its workspace. All requests for information should be answered in a timely manner.

What documentation (self-certified English translation) may be required for to validate an organization's legal business name?
- Certificate/Articles of Organization or Incorporation
- Operating Agreements
- Doing Business As (DBA) Documentation
- Company Bylaws
- Stock Ownership
- Share Certificates

What documentation (self-certified English translation) may be required for to validate an organization's legal physical address?
- Utility Bills
- Bank Statement
- Employer Identification Number Documentation
- Tax Returns/Filings

What documentation (self-certified English translation) may be required for to validate an organization's
date or state of incorporation?
- Certificate/Articles of Organization or Incorporation
- Certificate/Articles of Formation

What might hold up an organization's request or why might it be rejected?
If the name or address on documents submitted for validation do not match the name or address entered in SAM.gov, this could delay validation. Original and self-certified translation not included. Translation not done/dated within 30 days of submission. Documents submitted too old. See link above to verify types and how documents can be.
https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd_sp?id=gsafsd_kb_articles&sys_id=f1e47a8f1babc5903565ed3ce54bcb28

How should self-certification be done?
Certification by Translator
I [insert typed name], certify that I am fluent (conversant) in the English and [insert foreign language] languages, and that the above/attached document is an accurate translation of the document attached entitled [insert translated document name].
[Signature]
[Typed Name]
[Address]
[Certification Date]"

It has past 14 days and EVS/validation is still pending. What should be done?
Submit a ticket to FSD. Either through live chat or create an incident. For security reasons, you must submit any requested attachments in the SAM.gov Workspace for entity validation tickets. Do not attach documents to your ticket at FSD.gov. https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd_sp

What do I need to do if I am a subrecipient?
Subrecipients do not need to register in SAM.gov, unless they are also recipients of federal awards. Subrecipients only need to obtain a UEI. See the following for more information on obtaining a UEI.

- Video: How to get only a Unique Entity ID
- Quick Start Guide for Getting a Unique Entity ID