



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

SMALL BUSINESS DESIGN

Question:

Do all base bids that are part of the total project cost have to be within the allocation?

Answer:

NO, but at least one must be.

Question:

The only as-built record drawings required under the SB program are the ones that go to L&I. Must these be sealed by the SB Design Professional?

Answer:

The Design Professional must send sealed 'Revised Design Drawings' to L&I, who issues the Occupancy Permit. Red lined 'As-Built' drawings must be provided by Contractor to the Professional. Professional provides DGS with scanned pdf files of 'As-Built' and pdf and CAD files of the 'Revised Design Drawings'.

Question:

What if the project work might violate a warranty or service agreement?

Answer:

Most projects should not violate a warranty or service agreement; especially with the proprietary approval process. However, if such a situation is not apparently resolvable, contact the project coordinator.

Question:

There is a conflict of information and direction being given - who is person for scope definition? Who is the point of contact on an agency work request?

Answer:

Person listed on work request – or person at UA that signed off on project. Box #8 on the Agency Work Request lists the institution's representative at the job site. This person is the point of contact for the facility. The using agency may also have a central facilities department that oversees agency projects. These two entities are the points of contact for the project. The institution's representative or the central office knows that if the scope changes, it needs to be approved by the Secretary or their Designee before proceeding with the project.

Question:

How do we access available drawings, existing L&I or DOH permits and CAD files if any; for the project assigned to us?

Answer:

The Using Agency will provide current data available for the project including drawings, CAD files, copies of L&I certificates and site contacts. Contact the Using Agency Project Coordinator for available files and data in their Central Office. They will often refer you to the Site Manager or FMM (Facility Maintenance Manager) who usually has the most current drawings and pertinent permits for all the site facilities.

Question:

What if my own internal cost estimate varies significantly from the Survey Cost Estimate (SCE) that was provided by another firm?

Answer:

The SCE is only an initial evaluation, but it is part of the Small Business Design Professional's Basic Services to work together with the Using Agency to define the exact scope of work to be documented for the project.

Question:

The project's estimated cost is \$40,000 and the majority of the work is general construction. It also includes some minor electrical work, but its' value is less than \$25,000. Does the project have to be bid with multiple prime contracts?

Answer:

The Commonwealth's Procurement Code states that if a project's cost is over \$25,000 there must be separate contracts for any plumbing, heating, ventilating and electrical work. There does not have to be a general construction contract.

Question:

If I'm given a work order for the Survey Cost Estimate (SCE) will I automatically get the design? Would I be excluded from submitting for the design?

Answer:

Receiving a SCE work order will not guarantee or prevent you from receiving the design work order.

Question:

I performed a Survey Cost Estimate (SCE) for a project 6 months ago and I haven't seen it advertised for design yet. What happened and who can I call to find out about the status?

Answer:

Don't call anyone, after a SCE is performed, many factors can delay the further development of a project including budgets, other priorities, etc. When and if the project goes to design, you would be notified.

Question:

When will I get paid for my design work?

Answer:

Article 4 of the General Conditions to the Small Business Design Contract explains the payment process.

Question:

How many meetings do I have to attend during the design phase and do I have to come to Harrisburg for them?

Answer:

The Small Design Business must organize and attend meetings as needed during the design phase to progress the design to completion; they are mostly at your discretion. Most meetings will occur at the project site or at the Using Agency's Facility. The final submission review meeting may be required in Harrisburg.

Question:

During construction, do I have to be at the job site every 2 weeks like a typical DGS project?

Answer:

No. At a minimum, the Small Design Business must be on site for the Initial Job Conference, 1 Job Conference during an appropriate phase of construction and also the Final Inspection. The actual number of construction phase visits will be spelled out in the individual project specific work order along with the amount to be charged for additional visits if required.

Question:

Do I really have to give you the final submission on vellum?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

Can I just submit everything electronically (drawings and specifications)?

Answer:

No.

Question:

Can I just put my specification on the drawings instead in a separate manual?

Answer:

No.

Question:

Can I include manufacturer's catalog cut sheet information in my specifications?

Answer:

No.

Question:

Who applies for and secures the L&I Building Permits?

Answer:

The Small Business Design Professional obtains the L&I Permits.

Question:

Do I have to seal every submission?

Answer:

No, only the Final (Construction Document) Submission needs to be sealed.

Question:

Do the specifications have to be color coded (colored paper)?

Answer:

No, the specifications should be unbound, single sided on white paper.

Question:

Will my design fee get adjusted if the bids come in high?

Answer:

No.

Question:

Can I include unit price items in the project?

Answer:

DGS discourages the inclusion of unit prices in a project due to the limited ability to verify quantities in the field. However, if the Professional feels that unit prices would be beneficial, the specifics should be discussed with the Project Coordinator.

Question:

Can I include allowances in the bid form?

Answer:

No. DGS does not allow allowances to be used.

Question:

Do I have to list the number of days of temporary heat like you do on a large DGS Capital project?

Answer:

No.

Question:

Do I have to include multiple Base Bids?

Answer:

No, but the project may include up to 3 Base Bids especially if there is concern that there could be budget issues with the complete scope. It must be noted that the scope of Base Bid No. 1 must always result in a variable project.

Question:

I only want to specify 1 window manufacturer because I think they have the best product. Is that okay?

Answer:

No, at least 2 manufacturers (that are known to provide the product) plus the wording 'or approved equal' must be listed for each product. In rare occasions, proprietary items such as security system equipment, hardware, etc., are required. If proprietary equipment is felt to be necessary, DGS has a detailed specific approval process that the Professional will be required to follow.

Question:

My project is just a parking lot. Do I have to contact PHMC on this project?

Answer:

Yes, PHMC review must occur on each project.

Question:

I have my own Division 1 – General Requirements that I want to use. Is that okay?

Answer:

No. DGS's Division 1 – General Requirements must be used; however, they must be edited for each project.

Question:

I expect a lot of rock on this site. Can it be bid as 'classified excavation'?

Answer:

No. All excavation must be 'unclassified'. The Professional should refer to Section 1102 of the Small Business Project Procedure Manual (SBPPM) for specific wording/paragraphs that must be inserted in all projects that include earthwork.

Question:

Who will be responsible for reviewing submittals and addressing requests for information (RFI) during the construction phase?

Answer:

The Small Business Design Professional will be responsible for these construction phase tasks.

Question:

Who is responsible for soil and concrete testing during construction?

Answer:

The Contractors are responsible for all Quality Control on the project. The Small Business Design Professional is responsible for Quality Assurance. See Section 1001 of the Small Business Project Procedure Manual (SMPPM).

Question:

Are the “days” referenced throughout DGS’s documents “business” or “calendar” days?

Answer:

All “days” in DGS documents are “calendar days” unless specifically called out otherwise.

Question:

May I contact the Firm or Using Agency that developed the SCE to ask a related question?

Answer:

You may contact the Using Agency for clarifications, but not the Small Business Design Professional.