

Risk to Small Business Federal Contract Access

By NSBA

WASHINGTON, DC—The National Small Business Association (NSBA) warns of a newly proposed size standards change that would upend small business access to federal contracts.

On August 20, 2026, the United States Small Business Administration (SBA) issued a new proposed rule which would dramatically increase the size of companies considered “small” for purposes of federal programs, including procurement preferences. While the proposed rule cites a goal of simplification, it upends decades of precedent and is a major revamp that would merge nearly 1,000 categories under the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to just 338, and would create a significant competitive disadvantage for many small businesses.

“The SBA estimates that an additional 114,541 firms will now be classified as small, which may sound small given there are millions of small businesses, but don’t be fooled: Those companies have significant economic heft and already have

federal contracts worth more than \$71 billion, 40 percent of the total held by the entire small business community last year,” stated NSBA President and CEO Todd McCracken.

Many of the NAICS categories would undergo massive size increases, such as Custom Computer Programming Services—it would skyrocket in revenue caps from \$34 million today to a whopping \$531 million, a 1,462 percent increase. This means that a company with around \$20 million in revenue, because many of these contractors are far under the current cap, would compete with a company earning more than \$500 million. This is not the only massive increase.

Further complicating matters, the proposal allows only a 30-day comment period (until September 21, 2026), a wildly expedited timeline for such a massive rewrite of rules that impact millions of small businesses.

“If simplification is truly the goal here, why give small businesses just 30 days to respond? Do we as small businesses want regulatory simplification? Of course, but the simplification in this rule will actually benefit large businesses and federal

contractors far more,” stated NSBA Board Chair Bill Belknap of AEORNG, a federal contracting firm in Pennsylvania. “The so-called ‘solution’ this rule provides is actually far worse than the clunky nature of the current NAICS.”

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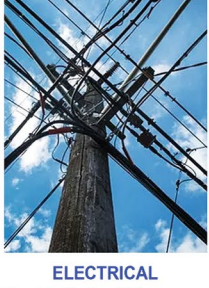
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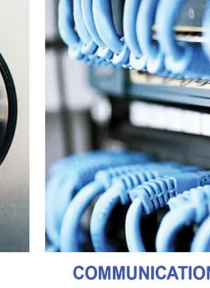
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Tuesday, September 8, 2026, 11:00 am–12:30 pm CDT Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: Irene Gonzalez, 208-334-1673, irene.gonzalez@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
Learn the essentials of federal contracting for small businesses. This event will cover the basics of navigating the federal contracting process, as well as the various certifications available to help your small business succeed in the government marketplace. Certifications include: 8(a) Business Development Program, HUBZone Certification, Woman Owned Small Business (WOSB/EDWOSB), and Veteran Owned Small Business (VOSB). Don't miss this opportunity to gain valuable insights and resources to help your small business. Register at https://www.eventbrite.com/e/federal-contracting-basics-and-certifications-for-small-businesses-tickets-1977729664666

SBA 101: Introduction to SBA Programs Webinar
Monday, September 14, 2026, 8:00 am–9:00 am CDT Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration, Rhode Island District Office
Contact: Brian Hopkins, 401-528-4575, brian.hopkins@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
This free workshop, presented by the Rhode Island

District Office, is designed to help entrepreneurs understand the various SBA programs and services available to help them as they start, expand, grow, and recover their businesses. This overview presentation covers: Introduction to the SBA; SBA Resource Partner Network—Business Training and One-on-One Counseling; Selling to the Federal Government—SBA Contracting Certification Programs; Access to Capital—Loan and Surety Bond Programs; International Trade Assistance; Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Assistance Loans. Register online for the free workshop webinar at https://legacy.sba.gov/event/80674

Federal Contracting: Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Certification Program Webinar
Tuesday, September 15, 2026, 1:00 pm–3:00 pm CDT Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: Patrice Dozier, patrice.dozier@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
SBA is creating a space for Woman-Owned Small Businesses, via WOSB certification! Are you a woman owner of a small business? The federal government's goal is to award at least five percent of all federal contracting dollars to woman-owned small businesses each year. Join us for training on how to register for SBA's Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) program, which helps eligible small businesses to qualify for federal contracting opportunities. Sessions include an overview of self-certification and a discussion of the NAICS codes that qualify as WOSB or EDWOSB. Register at https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sba-is-creating-a-space-for-women-owned-small-businesses-via-certification-tickets-1996758601729

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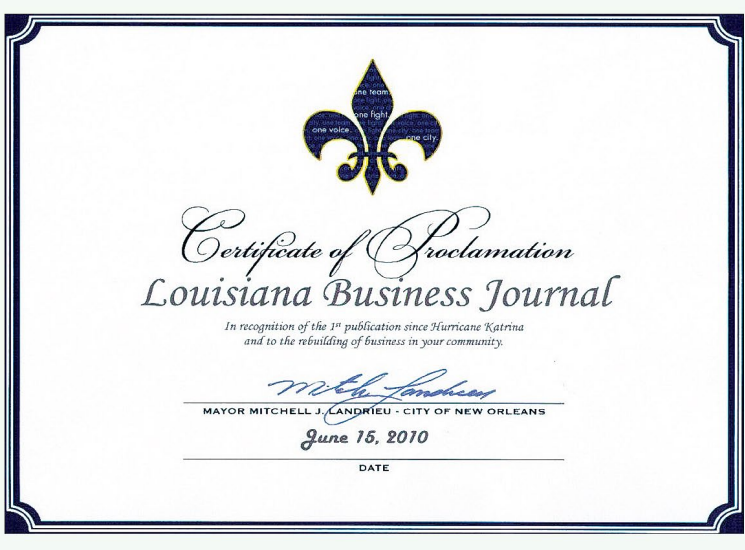
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