

GovConcepts

GACO APEX ACCELERATOR QUARTERLY INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

New SAM.gov Phishing Scam Reported

A recent SAM.gov scam is hitting emails and costing unaware users \$99.00. This scam is unlike any others, appearing as if it is from the official Federal Service Desk with a link to the official SAM system. The subject line is “SAM Registration Renewal Guide Notification.” The body of the email uses renewal details, which are public, such as, company details, cage code, FEMA registration, and DSBS. The scam email provides instructions and tips for creating a SAM profile. The trap in the email is a hyperlink called “SAM Quick Start Registration Guide,” which asks you to pay \$99 for the guide.

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To appear official, the scammers used the SAM.gov logo on their website and a similar company name to SAM: System for Award Management Center. Additionally, they provided a required opt-out link for receivers to decline receiving emails. The law requires this for for-profit entities. However, it looks different from the regular UNSUBSCRIBE links. Remember that SAM.gov is free.

Here are some common indicators to help you avoid being a victim of email scams:

- Be suspicious of unsolicited phone calls, visits, or email messages.
- Pay attention to poor readability, spelling, and grammar errors.
- Malicious websites may look identical to a legitimate site, but the URL may use a variation in spelling or a different domain (e.g., .com vs., .net).
- Generic greetings and signatures, such as Dear Valued Customer or Sir/Ma'am, and a lack of contact information in the signature block are strong indicators of a phishing email.

The General Services Administration (GSA) has been notified of this new SAM scam, and they have added the company System for Award Management Center to their scam watch list.

New in 2025: PA Department of Community & Economic Development - Historically Disadvantaged Business Assistance Program

PA Governor Josh Shapiro recently launched the “Historically Disadvantaged Business Assistance Program” initiative as part of his 2024-25 budget. The new program’s aim is to help historically disadvantaged small businesses with technical assistance, support services and funding.

Initially, grants will be awarded to educational institutions, community non-profits and economic development organizations to create and fund a network of Business Assistance Centers. Once established, these centers will provide a variety of resources to small, diverse businesses across the Commonwealth of PA, with at least one Business Assistance Center in every Pennsylvania region.

The HDBA will contribute to the success of minority companies and overlooked communities as well as foster economic development and job creation. Eligible applicants must be located in Pennsylvania and have established experience and expertise in business and economic development, preferably with historically disadvantaged communities and will be a community-based nonprofit organization. Interested parties can visit [Historically Disadvantaged Business Assistance Program Guidelines](#) for more information.

SBA Launches New Certification Portal

In late 2024, the Small Business Administration opened its new certification platform, designed to be more user friendly and helpful in increasing the speed of the certification process. The new platform has only been open for a few months, but users are generally pleased with the updates.

The portal streamlines business’ applications for multiple SBA certifications. If qualified for the SBA program, applicants only need to upload documents one time.

This update is timely with veteran self-certifications no longer being accepted after December 2024. If your certifications are set to expire, or you are applying for the first time, use the [new SBA portal](#) or click the GACO link to reach out to your [GACO APEX Accelerator](#) office for assistance.

Hurry Up and Wait

January was supposed to be the start of a nationwide requirement for companies to report their Beneficial Ownership Information (BOI). The requirement from the U.S. Department of the Treasury, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) agency is intended to use the information given to prevent fraud and criminal activity like money laundering by identifying who financially benefits from a company's ownership.

On December 26, 2024, a federal court in Texas, questioning the constitutionality of the federal government's ability to interfere with states' rights to regulate businesses, granted an injunction placing the BOI mandatory reporting requirement on hold. Therefore, businesses are no longer required to submit their company's beneficial ownership information to the U.S. Department of Treasury.

Check out the "Further Reading" section of this newsletter to access information on what businesses will need to know and to sign up for updates.

Suggested Govology Trainings Government Contracting Basics

An Introduction to Winning Business in the Government Marketplace

Breaking Down Government Solicitations

(Contact GACO for the discount code.)

Upcoming Events

February

National 8(a) Association

2025 National Small Business Conference

Hyatt Regency | New Orleans, Louisiana

February 11-13, 2025

[Register](#)

ENGAGE FEDGOV: AI, Automation, Acquisition Data and Digital Transformation

Samuel Riggs IV Alumni Center, College Park, MD

February 19, 2025 | 10:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

[Register](#)

SBDC Export Training: Go Global Export Documentation and Logistics | February 20, 2025 | 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

[Register](#)

March

American Defense Alliance 2025 Southeast Defense Procurement Conference

Hilton Atlanta | Atlanta, GA

March 11-12, 2025

[Register](#)

April

Sea-Air-Space 2025

Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center

National Harbor, MD

April 6-9, 2025

[Register](#)

June

U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization

2025 Small Business Forum & Expo

McCormick Place Convention Center, Chicago, IL

June 25-26, 2025

[Register](#)

Further Reading

SUBSCRIBE TO BOI COMPLIANCE EMAIL UPDATES

READ BEFORE INCREASING WAGES! UNRAVELING THE MINIMUM WAGE AND SALARY BASIS TEST MAYHEM

7 OF THE MOST COMMON SAM REGISTRATION MISTAKES AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

WHAT SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BOI AND THE DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY FINCEN

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER: DOD AMENDS DFARS IMPLEMENTING SBIR/STTR DATA RIGHTS, WHAT IT MEANS FOR SMALL BUSINESS

5 FACTORS CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES SHOULD CONSIDER BEFORE PURSUING FEDERAL CONTRACTS - WASHINGTON BUSINESS JOURNAL

**Please note: the GACO website address has changed.
Our new address is: <https://www.pennwest.edu/gaco>**



Sports Trivia Challenge

Q: What did the Steelers Owners do in 1943 and 1944 to save the team?

A: Merge with the Philadelphia Eagles and the Chicago Cardinals due to player shortages.



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