

# Subpart 514.4 - Opening of Bids and Award of Contract

**Parent topic:** [Part 514 - Sealed Bidding](#)

## 514.401 Receipt and safeguarding of bids.

(a) The specific location for receipt and safeguarding of bids and modifications shall be identified in the solicitation. Handle bids as follows:

(1) Authorized personnel mark the envelope (or other covering) of each package identified as a bid or modification with a time-stamp or the place, date, and time of receipt. They then deliver the bid by special handling to the bid custodian.

(2) Deposit hand-carried bids into the designated locked bid box, safe, or secured, restricted-access electronic bid box. At least once daily and immediately preceding the time scheduled for bid opening, the bid custodian removes and time stamps the bids. If a bidder hands a bid to the bid custodian or other GSA employee, the custodian or employee time stamps the bid immediately.

(3) When the solicitation authorizes telegraphic or facsimile bids and modifications, the bid custodian seals each in an envelope immediately upon receipt. The custodian labels the envelope with appropriate identification.

(4) For each invitation, the bid custodian prepares a bidders' list. The list shall include the name and address of all responses, including any bid modifications, received before bid opening time. The list also indicates withdrawn bids.

(5) The bid custodian records each bid and modification delivered before bid opening on the bidders' list on the day of receipt. The custodian stores bids and modifications in a suitable secured cabinet.

(b) At the scheduled bid opening time, the bid custodian delivers all bids received in response to the invitation, with the original and one copy of the bidders' list, to the bid opening official or designee. The bid opening official or designee acknowledges receipt of the bids by signing the copy of the form and returning it to the bid custodian. The original list becomes part of the contract file.

(c) When a regional Small Business Utilization Center (SBUC) is designated to receive bids, the regional SBUC Director may designate an individual(s) working at a Field Office as a bid custodian, provided all the following conditions are met:

(1) The Field Office has adequate space and facilities.

(2) The individual(s) designated as a bid custodian has been trained.

(3) The Field Office has a Small Business Technical Advisor.

(4) The bid custodian(s) must submit monthly reports to the regional SBUC Director. The regional SBUC Director forwards these reports to the Office of Small Business Utilization (E).

## **514.402 Opening of bids.**

### **514.402-1 Unclassified bids.**

(a) *Location of bid openings.* Public bid openings take place in the regional SBUC if the bid custodian is in the regional SBUC. If the bid opening occurs elsewhere, inform the regional SBUC. Give the regional SBUC the invitation number and the location of the bid opening.

(b) *Bid opening officer.*

(1) The contracting officer may appoint a qualified employee of the contracting office as assistant bid opening officer as provided in FAR 14.402-1(b).

(2) The distance between the regional SBUC and the contracting office may make it impracticable for the contracting officer to conduct bid opening. In this case, the contracting officer may request the HCA and the Associate Administrator for Small Business Utilization (E) in Central Office, or the SBUC Director in the Region, to authorize a qualified regional SBUC employee to open, read, and record bids.

(c) Bid openings are open to business representatives, members of the press, and the general public.

### **514.402-70 Preferred practices for conducting bid openings.**

(a) To ensure that bid opening occurs at the exact time specified, verify the accuracy of the timepiece to be used.

(b) For the information of bidders present, provide an audible announcement approximately one minute prior to bid opening.

(c) Announce audibly when the exact time of opening arrives. In the announcement, identify the invitation(s) scheduled for opening.

(d) For construction contracts that provide for bid alternates, announce the amount of funds available for the award before opening bids.

(e) Open the bids in full view of the parties present.

(f) When practicable and feasible, announce the following information from each bid: the bidder's name, item and unit price bid, and other pertinent information, such as delivery and discount terms.

(g) For bids submitted in multiple copies, one copy remains in the bid opening room for public examination until the bid abstract is substituted. The contracting activity uses the original. For bids submitted in original only, see FAR 14.402-1(c). The contracting activity retains all supplemental financial forms or other information submitted with a bid. Do not provide supplemental information for public examination.

(h) Forward any negotiable instruments submitted as bid guarantees to the appropriate Finance Office following procedures established by the Chief Financial Officer. After award, cancellation of

the solicitation, or rejection of all bids, direct the appropriate Finance Office to refund the amount of the bid guarantee to unsuccessful bidders. The contracting officer may authorize return of a bid guarantee before award when requested by a bidder who is not in contention for the award. Retain other forms of bid guarantees (*e.g.*, bid bonds, letters of credit, corporate and individual sureties, etc.) in the contract file.

(i) Prepare a record of the opening for the contract file. Include the names of persons attending the bid opening and the firms or organizations they represent.

(j) Verify the entries on all copies of a bid. Resolve any suspected mistake(s) following the procedures in FAR 14.407.

(k) Retain the envelopes in which bids and bid modifications are received until all awards are made. After award, retain those with notations concerning abnormal receipt or opening for identification in the solicitation file. The contracting officer may destroy the remainder.

## **514.403 Recording of bids.**

(a) As soon as practicable, make a copy of the abstract of bids and any amendments available for public examination at the location of the bid opening. Make the abstract available for public examination for at least 30 calendar days. Include late bids determined eligible for consideration on the bid abstract or, if necessary, in an amendment.

(b) In abstracts for aggregate awards, record: unit prices, weight factors, totals for each aggregate group, and any other information required for bid evaluation.

(c) For building services, contracting activities in PBS may use [GSA Form 3471](#), Abstract of Offers, instead of the [Standard Form 1409](#), Abstract of Offers.

## **514.404 Rejection of bids.**

### **514.404-1 Cancellation of invitations after opening.**

The HCA, or designee, makes any determinations required by FAR 14.404-1.

### **514.404-2 Rejection of individual bids.**

(a) The contracting officer may use the "Remarks" Item on [GSA Form 1535](#), Recommendation for Award(s), or other appropriate documentation to record findings with respect to rejected bids.

(b) Document any bid rejected for nonresponsiveness, nonresponsibility, ineligibility, or because the bid after evaluation is no longer low. Examples of bids which may no longer be low after evaluation include aggregate bids, "all or none" bids, bids evaluated for freight costs, and bids evaluated using Buy American differentials.

(c) For sensitive or controversial bid rejections, include all supporting documentation to justify

awards. This includes copies of the bid to be rejected and the proposed awardee, statements from or records of conversations with the requisitioning activity, plant facilities and financial responsibility reports, and other relevant correspondence or reports (Certificates of Competency, copies of Congressional correspondence or other high level interest, etc.).

## **514.407 Mistakes in bids.**

### **514.407-3 Other mistakes disclosed before award.**

Delegation of authority by head of the agency. Under FAR 14.407-3(e), contracting directors (see [502.101](#)) are authorized, without power of redelegation, to make:

(a) The determinations regarding corrections and withdrawals under FAR 14.407-3(a), (b), and (c); and

(b) The corollary determinations not to permit withdrawal or correction under FAR 14.407-3(d).

### **514.407-4 Mistakes after award.**

The contracting director and assigned counsel are required to review and approve the contracting officer's determinations under FAR 14.407-4(b) and (c).

## **514.408 Award.**

### **514.408-6 Equal low bids.**

To determine the status of bidders in a tie-bid situation, use the bidders' status as of the date the bids were signed.

### **514.408-70 Forms for recommending award(s).**

Contracting activities may use GSA Form 1535, Recommendation for Award(s), and GSA Form 1535-A, Recommendation for Award(s), Continuation Sheet, to document proposed awards. One or more awards may be set forth on each form. Contracting activities have the discretion to use other means of documentation that meet their needs for information to support an award recommendation.