

Application Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Where do I go if I have trouble with [certify.SBA.gov](https://certify.sba.gov)?

First, check the Certify Knowledge Base (CKB), accessible [here](#), or by visiting certify.SBA.gov and selecting the “Certify Knowledge Base” link. If the information you’re looking for is not available, the Certify Help Desk is available to assist with questions [here](#).

Where can I find resources to help me with my application?

You can find resources designed to help you with your application at the [Certify Knowledge Base](#) (CKB). Recordings and transcripts from most training sessions can also be found at the same link. Two key documents to review when completing your 8(a) application are the [Document Checklist](#) and [Quick Start Guide](#).

What is a UEI?

A unique entity identifier (UEI) is a 12-character alphanumeric identifier used to uniquely identify a specific entity. The UEI is used within SAM.gov and other government award and financial systems as a primary key to identify a unique entity. For more information about obtaining a UEI, visit <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>

What is an MPIN?

MPIN stands for Marketing Partner Identification Number, and it is mandatory for all SAM registrants to create. The MPIN is nine characters in length, must contain both letters and numbers, and can’t have spaces or special characters. You can view more details on the MPIN and SAM.gov process [here](#).

What should I do if the information on my SAM.gov account is not complete/up to date?

If your SAM.gov profile needs to be updated, login to SAM.gov to make the change. Visit the [help](#) section of SAM.gov to request your login credentials, if needed.

Does Certify provide a template for documents it requests (examples: Profit and Loss form, Balance Sheet, etc.)

No, Certify does not provide templates at this time.

What accounting methods does the SBA typically acknowledge?

The SBA typically acknowledges generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and needs to review multiple years of reliable financial statements as part of the initial eligibility review process. If you are not familiar with this terminology, we recommend reaching out [local assistance](#) near you.

What are the Certify document upload requirements?

Documents uploaded into Certify must be saved as a PDF of 25MB or less and must not be password protected. Documents must be uploaded in response to the relevant question in the application questionnaires; you should not zip together multiple files. However, you can upload as many documents as you need in each document upload box for the relevant question; therefore, if you know that SBA will likely ask for additional documents based on your response, upload those in the same upload box.

Can I hire someone to help me complete my 8(a) application?

Yes, although companies are able and encouraged to submit your application in Certify without paying a third party, and resource partners are available to assist companies at no cost. However, you can hire someone to assist with your application; if you do, you must complete the [Signed Representative Information Form](#) as part of your application.

Note: As the business owner, you must be the person to register in Certify and submit your 8(a) initial application.



I am working with a company to complete their 8(a) application. How can I access their application in Certify?

Currently, there is no functionality in Certify for third-party consultants or SBA Resource Partners to be granted access to the system. SBA is aware that many companies utilize third-party consultants and SBA Resource Partners (SCOREs, PTACs, SBDCs and District Offices) for assistance with their 8(a) application submission, and we apologize for any inconvenience. Companies can print or save PDFs of the final “review” pages of each section of their application to show a third party for review prior to pressing sign and submit.

How do I send the Individual Contributor application to other people with a connection to my Company?

You will enter each contributor’s name and email address in the Individual Contributor section of your 8(a) application. Each contributor will receive an email with instructions on how to register in Certify to complete their application. You will not be able to submit your application until all contributors have completed their portions of the application.

How will I know if my individual contributors have completed their portion of the application?

You will be able to see the status of your individual contributors’ applications by the Individual Contributors section and reviewing the “Application Status” for each contributor. You can send an email reminder to any individual contributor if you see that one has not completed their portion.

How long does it typically take to hear back from the SBA after I submit my application?

After a 15-day screening phase to check your application for completeness, applications take approximately 90 days to be completed after being accepted for processing.

I submitted my 8(a) application more than 15 days ago. Why haven’t I received an update from the SBA?

Applications are reviewed on a first come first serve basis and will be completed as soon as possible.



I received an email notification telling me I have a message in Certify. What should I do next?

The SBA uses the Certify messaging feature as the sole method of communication between applicants and SBA. The email notification is to inform you that you have a new message about your application. Log in to certify.SBA.gov, access your 8(a) application, and review the Messages tab to view the message. The message may request information from you that is time-sensitive, so be sure to review as soon as possible to avoid processing delays.

Can I add attachments to messages I send to the SBA?

No. At this time, the messaging feature only allows a text response. If the SBA requests a document from you, then you will find that a section of the application has been unlocked for you to upload the requested document in response to that specific question.

Don't see your question?

Check out the FAQ created for companies or search for answers from the overview page of the [Certify Knowledge Base](#).