

8(a) Initial Application in Certify.SBA.gov Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Contents

Where do I go if I have trouble with certify.SBA.gov?	1
Where can I find the resources presented from the SBA’s webinars/training sessions?	1
What is the Document Checklist and where can I find it?	1
What is the Quick Start Guide and where can I find it?.....	2
What is a DUNS Number?.....	2
What is an MPIN?.....	2
What should I do if the information on my SAM.gov account is not complete/up-to-date?	2
Does Certify provide a template for documents it requests (examples: Profit and Loss form, Balance Sheet, etc.).....	2
What accounting methods does the SBA typically acknowledge?	2
What are the Certify document upload requirements?	2
Can I hire someone to help me complete my 8(a) application?	2
I am working with a firm to complete their 8(a) application. How can I access their application in Certify?.....	2
How do I send the Individual Contributor application to other people with a connection to my Firm?	3
.....	3
How will I know if my individual contributors have completed their portion of the application?.....	3
How long does it typically take to hear back from the SBA after I submit my application?.....	3
I submitted my 8(a) application more than 15 days ago. Why haven’t I received an update from the SBA?.....	3
I received an email notification telling me I have a message in Certify. What should I do next?	3
Can I add attachments to messages I send to the SBA?	3
Will any numbered forms be collected on the application in Certify?.....	3
Don’t see your question?	4

Questions

Where do I go if I have trouble with certify.SBA.gov?

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

Where can I find the resources presented from the SBA’s webinars/training sessions?

The resources presented in training sessions can be found on 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 the Document Checklist and where can I find it?

The Document Checklist should be used to gather documents that will need to be uploaded as part of your 8(a) Initial Application. The checklist is found on the [Certify Knowledge Base](#).

What is the Quick Start Guide and where can I find it?

The Quick Start Guide provides instructions on how to get started and complete your 8(a) Initial Application, from registering in Certify through submission of your application. The guide is found on the [Certify Knowledge Base](#).

What is a DUNS Number?

A DUNS Number is a unique nine-digit identifier for businesses and it is used to establish a business credit profile. The government uses this number as a way to verify your existence as a business and obtain more information about your firm. For help with your DUNS Number, visit www.dnb.com/duns-number.

What is an MPIN?

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). If you are not familiar with this terminology, we recommend reaching out to an Accountant or one of our resource partner offices to help ensure you have clear financial records for us to review.

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 firms are able and encouraged to submit your application in Certify without paying a third party, and resource partners are available to assist firms at no cost. However, you can hire someone to assist with your application; if you do, you must complete the [SBA-1790 Compensation Paid](#) form to be included 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 firm 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 firms 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. Firms 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 Firm?

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 processed.

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

If you have submitted your application through certify.SBA.gov, our response time may be a little slower as we continue to transition completely into Certify.

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.

Will any numbered forms be collected on the application in Certify?

The most common forms - 1010-BIZ, 1010-IND, 413, 912 - have been incorporated into the application questionnaire and are no longer required. Other forms that are still required at this time, such as fingerprint cards and entity-owned firm and ANC forms, are available for firms to download, fill out and upload into Certify. The fingerprint card will still be required to be mailed, but all other forms can be submitted electronically.

Don't see your question?

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