

(g)(1) Protests may be submitted in person or by facsimile, express delivery service, or U.S. mail (postmarked within the applicable time period) to the Director/HUB, U.S. Small Business Administration, 409 3rd Street, SW., Washington, DC 20416, Fax (202) 205-7167.

(2) The Director/HUB will notify the protester and the contracting officer that the protest was received and indicate whether the protest will be processed or dismissed for lack of timeliness or specificity. A protest will be dismissed if SBA determines the protester is not an interested party.

(h) SBA will determine the HUBZone status of the protested HUBZone small business concern within 15 business days after receipt of a protest. If SBA does not contact the contracting officer within 15 business days, the contracting officer may award the contract to the apparently successful offeror, unless the contracting officer has granted SBA an extension. The contracting officer may award the contract after receipt of a protest if the contracting officer determines in writing that an award must be made to protect the public interest.

(i) SBA will notify the contracting officer, the protester, and the protested concern of its determination. The determination is effective immediately and is final unless overturned on appeal by SBA's Associate Deputy Administrator for Government Contracting and Administrator for Government Contracting and 8(a) Business Development(AA/GC&BD).

(j) The protested HUBZone small business concern, the protester, or the contracting officer may file appeals of protest determinations with SBA's AA/GC&BD. The AA/GC&BD must receive the appeal no later than 5 business days after the date of receipt of the protest determination. SBA will dismiss any appeal received after the 5-day period.

(k) The appeal must be in writing. The appeal must identify the protest determination being appealed and must set forth a full and specific statement as to why the decision is erroneous or what significant fact the Director/HUB failed to consider.

(1) The party appealing the decision must provide notice of the appeal to the contracting officer and either the protested HUBZone small business concern or the original protester, as appropriate. SBA will not consider additional information or changed circumstances that were not disclosed at the time of the Director/HUB's decision or that are based on disagreement with the findings and conclusions contained in the determination.

(m) The AA/GC&BD will make its decision within 5 business days of the receipt of the appeal, if practicable, and will base its decision only on the information and documentation in the protest record as supplemented by the appeal. SBA will provide a copy of the decision to the contracting officer, the protester, and the protested HUBZone small business concern. The SBA decision, if received before award, will apply to the pending acquisition. SBA rulings received after award will not apply to that acquisition. The AA/GC&BD's decision is the final decision.

[63 FR 70269, Dec. 18, 1998, as amended at 64 FR 51831, Sept. 24, 1999; 75 FR 77729, Dec. 13, 2010]

19.307 Protesting a firm's status as a service-disabled veteran-owned small business concern.

(a) For sole source acquisitions, the SBA or the contracting officer may protest the apparently successful offeror's service-disabled veteran-owned small business status. For service-disabled veteran-owned small business set-asides, any interested party may protest the apparently successful offeror's service-disabled veteran-owned small business concern status.

(b) Protests relating to whether a service-disabled veteran-owned small business concern is a small business for purposes of any Federal program are subject to the procedures of Subpart 19.3. Protests relating to small business size status for the acquisition and the service-disabled veteran-owned small business status requirements will be processed concurrently by SBA.

(c) All protests must be in writing and must state all specific grounds for the protest. Assertions that a protested concern is not a service-disabled veteran-owned small business concern,

without setting forth specific facts or allegations, are insufficient. An offeror must submit its protest to the contracting officer. The contracting officer and the SBA must submit protests to SBA's Associate Administrator for Government Contracting. The SBA regulations are found at 13 CFR 125.24 through 125.28.

(d) An offeror's protest must be received by close of business on the fifth business day after bid opening (in sealed bid acquisitions) or by close of business on the fifth business day after notification by the contracting officer of the apparently successful offeror (in negotiated acquisitions). Any protest received after these time limits is untimely. Any protest received prior to bid opening or notification of intended award, whichever applies, is premature and shall be returned to the protester.

(e) Except for premature protests, the contracting officer must forward to SBA by mail or facsimile transmission (202-205-6390) any protest received, notwithstanding whether the contracting officer believes that the protest is insufficiently specific or untimely. The protest must be accompanied by a referral letter, with the notation on the envelope or facsimile cover sheet: "Attn: Service-Disabled Veteran Status Protest," and be sent to Associate Administrator for Government Contracting AA/GU, U.S. Small Business Administration, 409 3rd Street, SW., Washington, DC 20416.

(f) The referral letter must include information pertaining to the solicitation that may be necessary for SBA to determine timeliness and standing, including the solicitation number; the name, address, telephone number and facsimile number of the contracting officer; whether the contract was sole-source or set-aside; whether the protestor submitted an offer; whether the protested concern was the apparent successful offeror; when the protested concern submitted its offer (*i.e.*, made the self-representation that it was a service-disabled veteran-owned small business concern); whether the procurement was conducted using sealed bid or negotiated procedures; the bid opening date, if applicable; when the protest was submitted; when the protester received notification about the

apparent successful offeror, if applicable; and whether a contract has been awarded.

(g) The Associate Administrator for Government Contracting will notify the protester and the contracting officer of the date the protest was received and whether the protest will be processed or dismissed for lack of timeliness or specificity.

(h) All questions about service-disabled veteran-owned small business size or status must be referred to the SBA for resolution. When making its determinations of veteran, service-disabled veteran, or service-disabled veteran with a permanent and severe disability status, the SBA will rely upon determinations made by the Department of Veteran's Affairs, Department of Defense determinations, or such determinations identified by documents provided by the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration. SBA will determine the service-disabled veteran-owned small business status of the protested concern within 15 business days after receipt of a protest. If SBA does not contact the contracting officer within 15 business days, the contracting officer may award the contract to the apparently successful offeror, unless the contracting officer has granted SBA an extension. The contracting officer may award the contract after receipt of a protest if the contracting officer determines in writing that an award must be made to protect the public interest.

(i) SBA will notify the contracting officer, the protester, and the protested concern of its determination. The determination is effective immediately and is final unless overturned on appeal by SBA's Office of Hearings and Appeals (OHA) pursuant to 13 CFR part 134.

[69 FR 25277, May 5, 2004, as amended at 70 FR 14954, Mar. 23, 2005]