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Advanced Textiles EXPO®

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Paperwork, Pitfalls, and Practical Help

A field guide to large, short-fuse federal solicitations for textile suppliers

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Who We Are: NC Military Business Center

A statewide program of the North Carolina Community College System that helps businesses win and perform on defense and federal contracts. Our services are free.

Find the work

Bid matching and opportunity alerts tied to your NAICS codes and capabilities

Win the work

Proposal reviews, compliance checks, and capture support before you submit

Connect

Introductions to primes, buying commands, and the NC textile supply base



The 100-Page Solicitation with a 30-Day Fuse

Reena

100+

pages of requirements, specs, clauses, and attachments

30

days, or fewer, between release and the due date

1

missed requirement can eliminate the lowest price

Our running example today: a notional DLA clothing and textile buy. Lowest price technically acceptable, a purchase description with referenced test methods, pre-award samples, first article testing, and Berry Amendment requirements. We will come back to it in every section.



Anatomy of a Big Bid Package

Reena

What you deliver

- **B** Supplies and prices
- **C** Specs and purchase descriptions
- **D** Packaging and marking
- **E** Inspection and acceptance
- **F** Deliveries
- **H** Special requirements

The terms

- **I** Contract clauses
- **J** Attachments and exhibits
- **K** Reps and certifications

How you are evaluated

- **L** Instructions to offerors
- **M** Evaluation factors

Commercial buy on an SF 1449? Same content, different wrapper: check the addenda, attachments, and clauses incorporated by reference.

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The First 48 Hours: Triage and Go/No-Go

Reena



Download everything

Solicitation, every attachment, drawings, amendments, and the Q&A deadline

Map the package

Sections B through M into one outline; note page limits and format rules

Pull referenced documents

Purchase descriptions, MIL specs, ASTM and AATCC test methods

Flag the risks

Disqualifiers, samples, first article testing, long-lead fabric, Berry sources

Go/No-Go

Can we comply, deliver on time, and still make money? Decide in writing

A no-bid decided on day 2 costs far less than a rejected offer on day 30.

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The Compliance Matrix in 2026: Let AI Do the Shred, You Own the Judgment

Reena

Let the tool do the shred

- Pull every shall, must, and will into rows
- Cross-reference Sections C, L, and M
- Compare amendments line by line
- Draft the first-pass matrix in minutes

You own the judgment

- Read the referenced specs and test methods
- Interpret ambiguity and submit questions
- Assign an owner to every row
- Decide on exceptions (ideally none)

The tool found 80 requirements. The one that would have disqualified you was on page 14 of the purchase description, which the tool never opened.

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Sample Compliance Matrix

Reena

Notional DLA textile solicitation

#	Requirement	Source	Owner	Response	Status
1	Acknowledge all amendments	SF 30 / offer form	Contracts	Offer form	Done
2	**Cloth meets shade and colorfastness limits**	**Purchase description, p. 14**	Production	Tech volume	Open
3	Submit two pre-award product samples	Section L	Quality	Sample shipment	In progress
4	First article test report after award	Sections C and E	Quality	FAT plan	Open
5	Berry compliant: fiber to finished item	DFARS 252.225-7012	Contracts	Supplier certs	In progress
6	Mark and label per MIL-STD-129	Section D	Shipping	Packaging plan	Open
7	Current SPRS score posted	DFARS 252.204-7019	IT / Security	SPRS	Done

Row 2 only exists in a referenced document. Add a source-document column so every row traces back to its page.

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Tracking Amendments Without Losing the Thread

Reena



Log it

Keep an amendment register: number, date, and a plain-language note of what changed



Acknowledge it

Sign the SF 30 or the offer-form block for every amendment, every time



Re-run the matrix

Update rows, owners, and page counts after each change



Keep a Q&A log

Government answers can change requirements as much as an amendment can



Watch for the quiet changes

- A new revision of the spec or purchase description
- A changed test method or acceptance limit
- Revised quantities or delivery schedule
- A moved due date, time, or time zone
- A new sample or certification requirement

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Top 10 Reasons Good Offers Get Rejected

Reena to Lee

1. Late submission, even by one minute
2. Amendments not acknowledged
3. SAM registration or reps and certs expired
4. Missing Berry Amendment compliance
5. No current SPRS score posted
6. Exceptions taken to terms or specs
7. Page limits or format rules violated
8. Missing samples or product literature
9. Pricing not in the required format
10. Unsigned or incomplete forms

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CMMC and NIST SP 800-171: What's Paused, What Still Applies

Lee

Paused

- Phase 2 transition suspended July 13, 2026, pending a Reform Task Force review
- Level 2 (C3PAO) and Level 3 requirements coming out of solicitations at the next modification
- Task Force report not yet public

Still applies

- DFARS 252.204-7012 safeguarding and 72-hour incident reporting
- NIST SP 800-171 Rev 2, all 110 requirements
- Level 1 and Level 2 self-assessments, a current SPRS score, and annual affirmation
- Primes may still flow CMMC down to you

Your SPRS score is a legal statement. A $2.04M False Claims Act settlement in September 2026 turned on NIST 800-171 gaps.

Status as of October 12, 2026. Refresh the week before the session.

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DFARS and FAR Changes to Watch

Lee

FAR Overhaul

Clauses are being rewritten and renumbered, with agency class deviations in the meantime. Read the clause list in each solicitation; don't rely on last year's cheat sheet.

DFARS rewrite

DoD is following the FAR Overhaul with its own rewrite. Expect DFARS citations in solicitations to shift during the transition.

FAR CUI rule

The government-wide rule on controlled unclassified information (FAR Case 2017-016) is still pending. It matters if you sell outside DoD.

FY2027 NDAA

House and Senate versions are headed to conference. Textile and Berry provisions can change late, so watch the final text.

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Berry Amendment: Fiber to Finished Product

Lee



Every step must be performed in the United States. There is no percentage test.

Where suppliers get caught

- Imported thread, webbing, or elastic
- Labels and hook-and-loop from offshore sources
- A mill that changes its yarn source mid-contract
- No paper trail back to the fiber

What to know now

- Clause: DFARS 252.225-7012
- The exception for buys at or below the simplified acquisition threshold survived the FY2026 NDAA
- Get supplier certifications in writing before you price

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First Article Testing: Plan for It Before You Bid

Lee

Price it in

First article testing is a post-award cost and schedule risk that you agree to when you submit your offer.

Timeline
The FAT clock starts at award. Build lab turnaround and shipping into your delivery schedule.

Who pays
Testing and any retest are usually on you. Get lab quotes before you price.

Lab selection
Confirm the lab is accredited for the specific test methods in the spec.

Waiver requests
Passed FAT on this item before? Ask for a waiver in your offer if the solicitation allows it.

If you fail
Retest cost, delivery slips, and possible default. It all lands in past performance.

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MIL-STD-129 Packaging and Marking Pitfalls

Lee

Wrong label for the level

Unit pack, intermediate, and shipping container each carry different marking requirements

Bar code errors

Unreadable or incorrectly formatted bar codes get shipments rejected at the depot

Missing RFID

Passive RFID tagging when the contract calls for it (DFARS 252.211-7006)

Receiving report mismatch

PIEE / WAWF entries that don't match what is on the box

Section D overrides

Contract-specific packaging instructions that take priority over your usual practice

Last-minute changes

Packaging requirements updated by amendment and never passed to the shipping floor

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Where to Get Free, Expert Help

Both

NCMBC

Bid matching, proposal and compliance reviews, and textile industry connections

APEX Accelerators

Registrations, bid reviews, and CMMC readiness guidance

ATA

Advocacy, Berry and policy updates, and the military markets group

Manufacturing Solutions Center

Textile testing lab, first article test support, and product development

Use them before the due date, not after the rejection letter.



Questions?

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