

Submitting Bids Through Bonfire

Vendor Education Resource – State of Delaware



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Introduction: Why Bonfire Matters

Select Agencies within the State of Delaware uses **Bonfire** as an online bidding platform for certain solicitations to streamline and standardize the submission process.

This tool:

- Replaces paper and email submissions for applicable bids
- Ensures secure, time-stamped submissions
- Provides a structured format for vendor responses

Important: Not all solicitations use Bonfire. Vendors must always review each solicitation to confirm submission requirements.

Understanding When Bonfire is Used

Where to Find Opportunities

All opportunities are still advertised through the State's central procurement portal:

- [MyMarketplace Bid Directory](#)

If a solicitation requires Bonfire:

- It will clearly state that submissions must be made through the Bonfire portal
- A link to the Bonfire project will be provided

Key Takeaway

Bonfire is a **submission tool**—not a replacement for **MyMarketplace**. Vendors must use both.

Getting Started in Bonfire

Registration Basics

To submit a bid through Bonfire, vendors must create an account.

- Registration is **free**
- No paid subscription is required to submit bids
- Vendors only need to register if submitting or asking questions

What Registration Includes

- Account creation and email verification
- Company profile setup
- Optional documentation uploads
- Commodity/vendor type selection

Important Insight

You can view opportunities without registering, but you cannot submit without an account.

Navigating a Bonfire Opportunity

What You'll See in Bonfire

Each project typically includes:

- Project description
- Important dates and deadlines
- Required documents and forms
- Submission requirements

Critical Dates to Watch

- Intent to Bid (if applicable)
- Question deadline
- Submission (closing) deadline

Questions & Addenda

Engage with the Procurement Team and Stay Compliant

Bonfire provides built-in tools to ensure vendors receive consistent information and remain compliant with solicitation updates.

- **Ask Questions:** Use the Vendor Q&A feature within the opportunity **before the Q&A Close Date**.
- **Addenda:** Follow the opportunity to receive alerts when updates are posted. Download and review all new documents.

Compliance Tip: If an addendum includes updated forms or requirements, use the latest version only. Submitting outdated documents may result in disqualification.

Preparing Your Submission

Plan your response carefully:

- **Read the entire solicitation** (scope, timeline, evaluation criteria, mandatory requirements).
- **Checklist (sample):**
 - ✓ Scope understood and feasible
 - ✓ Mandatory qualifications met
 - ✓ Pricing completed on official forms
 - ✓ Technical response complete & compliant
 - ✓ Required certifications signed
 - ✓ Subcontractor details provided (if applicable)
 - ✓ Insurance/financials included (if requested)
 - ✓ File naming conventions followed
- **File Types:** Commonly accepted: PDF, XLSX, DOCX, ZIP (check the solicitation for exact allowed types).
- **Formatting:** Avoid password-protected files unless explicitly permitted.

Submitting a Proposal (Where Errors Happen Most)

How Bonfire Works

Bonfire structures your submission into required sections:

- Upload fields for documents
- Mandatory vs. optional items

What Makes It Different

Unlike email or paper:

- You cannot submit unless all required fields are complete
- The system enforces compliance before submission
- Submissions are locked after the deadline

Submission Process (Step-by-Step)

To ensure a complete and compliant submission:

- Upload documents to each specified slot
(*e.g., Technical Proposal, Price Proposal, Certifications*)
 - If requested, complete pricing directly in the portal **or** using provided templates
- Review all required components:
 - Compliance Checklist
 - Declarations / Attestations
- Click **“Submit”** or **“Finalize Submission”** to lock your response
- **Confirmation:** Save your submission receipt and timestamp for your records

Critical System Insight

* Uploading documents does **not** mean your proposal has been submitted.

If you do not click **“Finalize”** (or equivalent):

- Your submission may remain **“In Progress”**
- It will **not be visible to the buyer**
- It may be considered **not submitted**

Withdrawing / Resubmitting

Prior to the deadline, vendors may:

- Withdraw a submission
- Revise documents or responses
- Resubmit an updated version

Important: Ensure the final version is submitted and finalized before the deadline. Only the finalized version will be considered.

Common Vendor Mistakes

- Waiting until the last minute to upload files
- Uploading incorrect or incomplete documents
- Ignoring required fields or attachments
- Not clicking “Submit” (uploading ≠ submitting)

Deadlines: Submissions must be “submitted” prior to the stated Due Date & Time (Local Time).

Understanding Submission Requirements

What “Complete” Really Means

A complete submission in Bonfire includes:

- All required documents uploaded
- All mandatory questions answered
- Final submission confirmed before deadline

Key Insight

Bonfire reduces administrative errors—but **it does not protect you from content errors.**

Vendors are still responsible for:

- Accuracy
- Completeness
- Compliance with solicitation requirements

After You Submit

What Happens Next

Once submitted:

- You receive confirmation of submission
- You may receive communications from the contract manager

Bonfire provides **real-time communication and tracking**, which improves transparency compared to traditional methods.

Troubleshooting

Common Issues and How to Resolve Them

Can't log in?

- Reset your password
- Verify your email address
- Clear browser cache
- Try another browser

Upload errors?

- Check file size and type limits
- Compress large PDFs
- Split large files into smaller sections
- Avoid special characters in file names

Access blocked?

- Ensure your firewall allows Bonfire domains
- Try accessing from a non-VPN network

Submission won't finalize?

- Confirm all required upload slots are completed
- Ensure all forms and required fields are filled out

Still Having Issues?

Contact Bonfire Support. Allow time for any technology challenges you may experience. Be advised that Bonfire Support Service Level Agreement **has a maximum response time of 2 hours**. Support tickets submitted should be specific, in order to minimize the “research” time before responding. Technical questions related to your submission should be directed to the portal provider at Support@GoBonfire.com or visit their help forum at <https://vendorsupport.gobonfire.com/hc/en-us>.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q1: Do I need a paid subscription to submit?

A: No. Vendors can register and submit responses at no cost.

Q2: Can multiple team members work on a bid?

A: Yes. You can add users to your vendor account and assign appropriate roles.

Q3: What if I miss the deadline?

A: Late submissions cannot be accepted. Monitor deadlines and submit early.

Q4: How will I know if the State updated the solicitation?

A: Follow the opportunity and monitor for addenda. Email alerts may also be sent.

Q5: Are my uploads secure?

A: Yes. Bonfire uses secure, role-based access. Buyers cannot view sealed components until the appropriate stage, based on solicitation settings.

Key Takeaways

- Not all solicitations use Bonfire—always verify
- Registration is free and required to submit
- Uploading documents is not the same as submitting
- Deadlines are strict and system-enforced
- Early preparation is critical to success