

The 18-Month Recompete Clock for Facilities Contracts

Every janitorial, grounds, and facilities-support contract has an end date — and a recompile. The winner usually started working it a year or more before the RFP dropped. This is the clock they run.

T-18 months Pick the target, start the file

- ☐ Find expiring contracts in your NAICS and region on USAspending.gov or FPDS: incumbent name, award value, and the ultimate completion date
- ☐ Confirm how much option period remains — the recompile clock runs from ultimate completion, not the current option year
- ☐ File a FOIA request for the incumbent contract and pricing — responses take months, so file now, not at RFP release
- ☐ Set a weekly SAM.gov check for sources-sought and presolicitation notices on this requirement

Common mistake: Waiting for the RFP. By release day the incumbent has a 15-month head start and the requirements are already shaped.

T-12 months Get known, get positioned

- ☐ Respond to every sources-sought notice in writing — agencies count responses when they decide whether to set the work aside
- ☐ Introduce your firm to the contracting office; ask about acquisition strategy, timing, and set-aside intent
- ☐ Write past-performance narratives now: contract values, square footage or acreage, staffing counts, quality scores — with references who answer
- ☐ Decide teaming: prime it, joint venture, or subcontract for a past-performance seat at the table

Common mistake: Skipping a sources-sought response because “it’s not the RFP.” Silence tells the agency no capable small business is watching.

T-6 months Build the win, price the work

- ☐ Pull the current wage determination for the site’s county — SCA wages plus health & welfare set your labor floor, not your commercial rates
- ☐ Walk the math on incumbent staffing: headcount, shifts, supervision — most facilities recompetes expect qualified incumbent staff to carry over
- ☐ Draft your technical approach and quality-control plan against last cycle’s evaluation factors (from your FOIA file)
- ☐ Line up bonding, insurance, and any state licenses the site requires

Common mistake: Pricing from your commercial cleaning or grounds rates. The wage determination is the floor; bids under it get flagged, and winning under it loses money.

T-3 months Be ready before the drop

- ☐ Attend the site visit — sign the sheet; when attendance is required, absence can end your bid before evaluation
- ☐ Build a compliance matrix from Sections L and M the day the RFP drops; every “shall” gets a row
- ☐ Submit questions before the Q&A deadline — ambiguity you don’t raise becomes risk you own
- ☐ Verify SAM registration, reps & certs, and your certification status are current — an expired registration at submission is a dead bid

Common mistake: A compliant-but-late finish. Facilities proposals are lost to formatting, page limits, and missed submission mechanics more often than to weak technical approaches.