

EPDS Frequently Asked Questions (OCTOBER 2021)

1) Login/Registration

a. Who can register with EPDS?

Any representative of a protester, intervenor, or agency may register.

b. How do I create an account?

On the EPDS landing page, select the button labeled “Register as a new Filer” and follow the onscreen instructions. Detailed how-to information is available in the E-Filing section of GAO’s website, which is available at <https://www.gao.gov/legal/bid-protests/file-a-bid-protest>, or from the “Help” menu in the corner of the EPDS landing page.

c. How long does it take to gain access to the system?

You can create an account and file a new protest immediately, but completing the registration process may take several minutes. Be sure to begin the filing process well in advance of any deadlines. If you’re seeking access to an existing protest (as a new attorney on an existing case, or as an intervenor), some additional time is required for GAO to evaluate your request to access the case.

d. How do I change account information?

Most account information can be edited by using the “Manage User Profile” option in the drop-down menu labeled with your name in the upper right corner of the window when on the EPDS website. If you find that you need to change account information not accessible through that menu, please call GAO at 202-512-5436, or send an email to protests@gao.gov.

e. I forgot my credentials, what do I do?

Select the “I forgot my password” hyperlink on the login page to reset your password, and you will be emailed a temporary password. The email account used to register with EPDS is your username, and you will need access to that email address in order to complete this process.

2) Technical Support/Troubleshooting

a. What are the system requirements (software, etc.)?

i. Do I need an internet connection?

Yes. EPDS is a web-based application available at <https://epds.gao.gov>.

ii. What browser do I need?

Please use one of these supported web browsers: **Google Chrome, Firefox, Safari, or Microsoft Edge.**

iii. Do I need portable document format (PDF) compatible software?

You do not need PDF software to access EPDS. However, you will need Adobe Reader or Acrobat (or another PDF compatible software) in order to submit or access most filings in the system.

iv. Are there hardware/OS requirements?

There are no hardware or operating system requirements. EPDS can be used on both Windows and Mac operating systems.

b. *Why doesn't the system work as intended?*

i. *What internet browser are you using?*

For the best experience, please use one of these supported browsers:

- Google Chrome
- Firefox
- Safari
- Microsoft Edge

Please note that there are known issues that could affect your experience if using Internet Explorer (IE).

ii. *Are pop-ups currently disabled?*

Please go into your internet browser settings and enable pop-ups. Please refer to your internet browser's instructions for enabling pop-ups.

iii. *Are cookies disabled?*

Cookies need to be enabled in order for EPDS to work correctly. Please refer to your internet browser's instructions for enabling cookies.

iv. *Slow Internet connection?*

You might be experiencing timeouts in the system if you have a very slow internet connection. Please check your internet speed and contact your service provider if required.

c. *Why didn't I receive a notice, confirmation, or other notification that I should have received?*

Please verify that messages originating from EPDS are not in your spam folder. Please refer to the instructions of your email service for ensuring that emails from epds@epds.gao.gov are not sent to your spam folder. Additionally, users should check with their respective organization's IT administrators to ensure that emails from epds@epds.gao.gov are added to any necessary safe sender lists or granted related permissions.

d. *I received an error message that says "The system is currently experiencing technical difficulties" - what should I do?*

Please retry the action on the webpage after waiting, at a minimum, **30 seconds**. If you continue to get the error message, please email or call GAO at 202-512-5436 or protests@gao.gov.

e. *Document issues.*

i. *What file formats are allowed/required?*

All files must be **PDF or Excel files**. The size limit for these types of files is 50 MB per file. Agency users may also add **Zip** files (e.g., when filing the exhibits to the Agency Report). The size limit for these types of files is 250 MB per file.

ii. *Do PDF files that I attach need to be text searchable/use OCR?*

Yes. Please refer to the instructions for the software program that you are using to create your PDF file.

f. *Who do I contact/call for help?*

Please contact GAO at 202-512-5436, or protests@gao.gov.

3) Usage Instructions

a. *What are the rules related to filing and document submission?*

Please see our [Bid Protest Regulations](#) and [Descriptive Guide](#) for procedural rules relating to protest filing and document submission. Additionally, please see the EPDS Instructions available in the E-Filing section of GAO's website, which is available at <https://www.gao.gov/legal/bid-protests/file-a-bid-protest>, for authoritative procedures and terms of use for the EPDS system.

b. *How do I file a new protest?*

To file a new protest, select the "Submit New Protest" button in the left menu when logged into EPDS and follow the on-screen instructions. Note that your protest is not "filed" until payment of the filing fee is completed. For more detailed help during the process, you can access the EPDS User Guide through the pulldown menu labeled "Help" on the EPDS website. Additional detailed how-to information is available in the E-Filing section of GAO's website, which is available at <https://www.gao.gov/legal/bid-protests/file-a-bid-protest>.

c. *How do I access my existing cases?*

Your existing cases are accessible through your EPDS dashboard, which is accessible through the "Active Cases" button on the left menu when logged into EPDS. Detailed how-to information is available in the E-Filing section of GAO's website, which is available at <https://www.gao.gov/legal/bid-protests/file-a-bid-protest>.

d. *Why can I not access the associated document(s) for a docket entry?*

You likely do not have access to the document because you currently do not have access to protected material in the system. EPDS is designed to limit access to materials that may contain material that is confidential, proprietary, source selection sensitive, or otherwise not subject to public disclosure. Detailed how-to information is available in the E-Filing section of GAO's website, which is available at <https://www.gao.gov/legal/bid-protests/file-a-bid-protest>. For procedural or substantive questions please consult GAO's Bid Protest Regulations, Descriptive Guide, and Protective Order Guide.

e. *But how do I . . . ?*

For additional technical help with the EPDS interface, you can access the EPDS User Guide through the pulldown menu labeled "Help" on the EPDS website. Additional resources, including the EPDS Instructions, and detailed how-to information are available in the E-Filing section of GAO's website, which is available at <https://www.gao.gov/legal/bid-protests/file-a-bid-protest>. For procedural or substantive questions please consult GAO's Bid Protest Regulations, Descriptive Guide, and Protective Order Guide.

4) Billing and Payment

a. *Is there a filing fee?*

Yes, filing a protest requires payment of a \$350 filing fee. When you file your protest, you will be automatically redirected to <http://www.pay.gov>. Currently, the only acceptable payment method is credit card. Help for <http://www.pay.gov> can be found at <https://www.pay.gov/WebHelp/HTML/about.html>.

b. What should I do if something went wrong with my payment?

If you think you may have processed a duplicate payment, or could not process a payment due to a technical fault in EPDS or <http://www.pay.gov>, follow the steps outlined in the EPDS Instructions available in the E-Filing section of GAO's website, which is available at <https://www.gao.gov/legal/bid-protests/file-a-bid-protest>.