



The IAE Digest

Volume 5, Issue 4
4th Quarter FY18

News and Program Updates from the Integrated Award Environment



From the Deputy Assistant Commissioner



Fiscal year 2018 was a monumental one for The Integrated Award Environment (IAE). Building upon our progress of launching beta.SAM.gov in late 2017, we made significant advancements in our long-term goal of bringing 10 separate websites into one unified system. Not least among them was the merging of CFDA functionality into beta.SAM.gov. This gave us the opportunity to retire the first of our 10 systems, which we did in the third quarter.

Merging the first system, and decommissioning the legacy system, was an important milestone for the work we have ahead. It gave us a roadmap for how to proceed. We're already moving toward the transition and potential migration of two more systems in 2019, with all of the others to follow in succession.



While we made progress in developing beta.SAM.gov, I'm happy to report that 2018 saw our current legacy systems remain strong and operational throughout the year. Where and when appropriate, we made changes to those systems—always seeking to improve the user experience.

Many of our users were affected by the still-ongoing investigation by GSA's Office of Inspector General into alleged third-party fraudulent activity in SAM.gov. We are well aware this led to much consternation among SAM users and a significantly increased wait time at the Federal Service Desk. However, with security always paramount in the IAE, we were able to utilize Login.gov and begin to provide two-factor authentication when registering or renewing accounts in SAM. We're confident that, ultimately, this has led to even greater protection for all SAM.gov accounts.

On a personal note, the fiscal year that just ended once again reinforced my belief that I work with the finest team of professionals on a day-to-day basis. Every individual here at the IAE works tirelessly to bring our users the best and most secure systems possible, while working to migrate them all into one streamlined tool which will accomplish many things for everyone.

The future of the IAE and the systems we manage is bright, indeed.

Vicky Niblett
Deputy Assistant Commissioner

Fourth Quarter Stakeholder Forum

Thank you to everyone who participated in the fourth quarter IAE Stakeholder Forum program. On September 25, the IAE hosted another Stakeholder Forum online event in our ongoing series aimed at creating and increasing conversation and dialogue between stakeholders and the teams here who make the systems work.

Kicking off the session was Federal Business Opportunities (FBO) Product Owner Katherine Rollins, who talked about the transition of FBO—referred to as Contract Opportunities—into beta.SAM.gov. Rollins then gave a demonstration of the beta site, which included how to use the search tool and find contract opportunities. This was followed by Program Manager Zack Sionakides, who demonstrated how to use the APIs to find contract opportunities under the Data Services section in beta.SAM.gov.

Lastly, the almost 200 attendees also heard from beta.SAM.gov Design Lead Christy Hermansen. She provided an update about Wage Determinations OnLine (WDOL.gov), what will happen when it's decommissioned, and what users should know and do to prepare for the transition, including these key points:

- Subscriptions will not migrate to beta.SAM.gov.
- Monitor WDOL.gov for announcements about the transition.
- Visit the site and create a user account.
- Start “following” wage determinations.
- Provide us feedback through the feedback tool located on any page on beta.SAM.gov.

Hermansen also provided step-by-step illustrations of the process for finding and viewing wage determinations on the beta site.

Changes from CPARS/PPIRS Merger

In July 2018, a major system enhancement was deployed to merge into one application the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) and the Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS), formerly two separate eGovernment applications.

Key to the merge is single sign-on—one location and one account to conduct all performance evaluation functionality. Federal users with a Common Access Card (CAC) or a Personal Identity Verification (PIV) card or a contractor with a Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) certificate, can now log in using the Accept/Login with PKI button. Federal users who don't use PKI/PIV or a contractor who doesn't have a PKI certificate can now log in using an email address and a password.

All CPARS/PPIRS users will need their email address to log in to the system and will be required to reset their password using the

Forgot/Reset Password button located on the login screen. To help prevent unauthorized access, a one-time access code is needed when using a password to log in.

Once you have logged in, you will see the main menu, grouped by functionality. Nothing about your previously existing permissions has changed. You will have access only to items on the Main Menu based on the access role(s) you have previously been granted. For example, the majority of permissions for users who are writing and editing performance evaluations is located under the Generate Performance Records column.

If you need to change any of your profile information or password, the Update Profile button is now located on the Main Menu.

For more details on this CPARS/PPIRS merge, you can view a video [here](#). If you experience

issues logging in, please contact the CPARS/PPIRS Desk at WEBPTSMH@navy.mil.

GSA Issues Request for Proposal for Entity Identification and Validation Services

The General Services Administration recently released in the fourth quarter a Request for Proposal (RFP) for government-wide entity identification and validation services. The announcement was made through a news release that you can read [here](#).

The RFP was [posted on FBO](#) and proposals were due by 5:00 p.m. EDT on Monday, Oct 12. GSA also released a pre-proposal webinar on Monday, Sept 10. GSA took questions submitted in writing from interested vendors through 5:00 pm EDT on Wednesday, Sept 19 and provided answers to the written questions received via solicitation amendment. Solicitation amendments will be posted on FedBizOpps.

For more information, please visit the frequently asked questions on interact.gsa.gov and join the [Integrated Award Environment \(IAE\) Industry Community](#).

Common Access Card Verification Process on Login.gov for SAM.gov Federal Users



Earlier this year, we began utilizing the more secure login authorization service provided by Login.gov. This move provided an extra layer of security when logging in to the System for Award Management (SAM.gov).

Now, as of late August, Login.gov began implementing the use of the common access card (CAC) for a more secure validation and verification process.

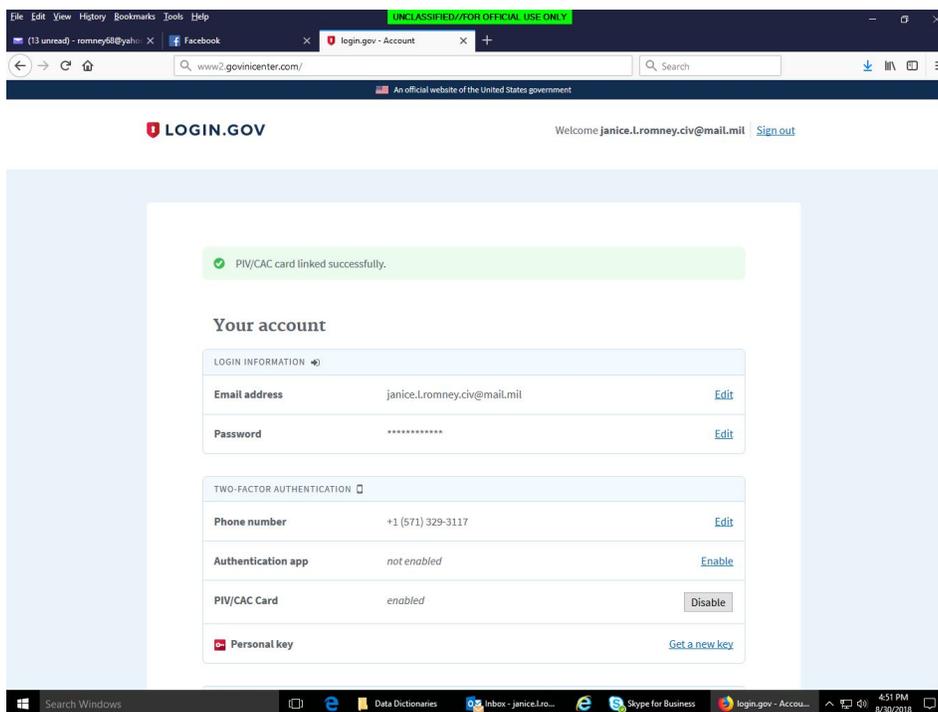
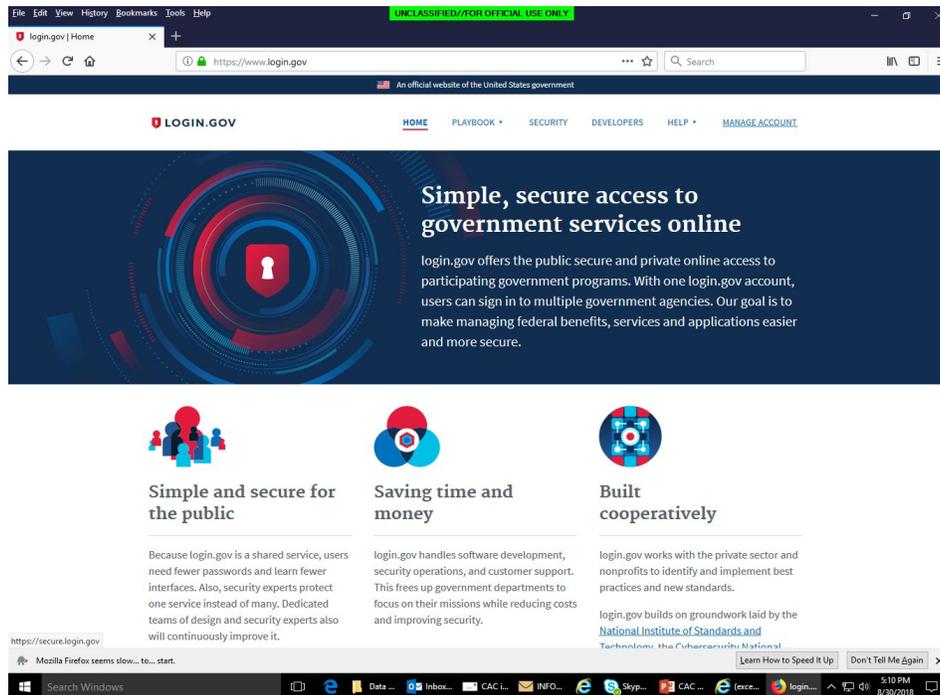
CAC is the principal card used to access federal government controlled spaces, networks, and systems. Instead of an authentication code, users with a “.mil” email address can use their CAC identification to access their SAM.gov account.

Data integrity is important, given the highly sensitive information managed on SAM.gov. This recent move for “.mil” users adds even more security to help protect your SAM.gov profile against any potential compromises.

Follow the steps below to enable your CAC for account authentication on SAM.gov:

Enabling CAC as your authentication on SAM.gov

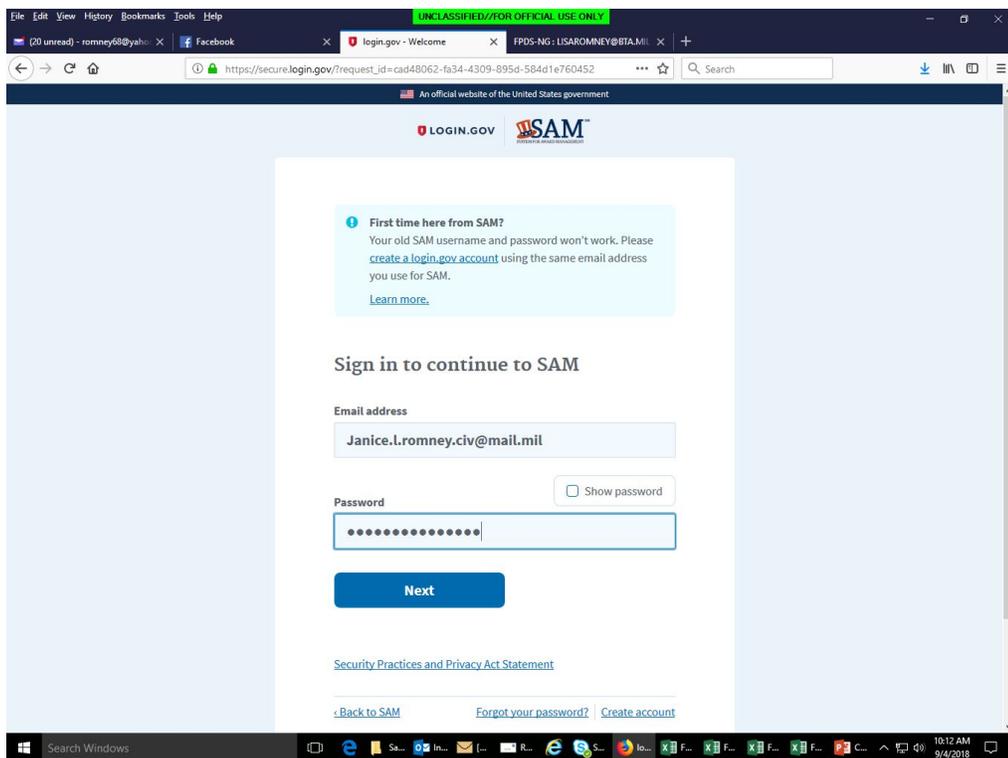
1. Log in at www.sam.gov using your email address, password, and code via Login.gov (the current method of logging in).
2. Once you have logged in, type www.login.gov in your browser and enter.
3. Choose 'Manage Account' in the top right-hand corner.



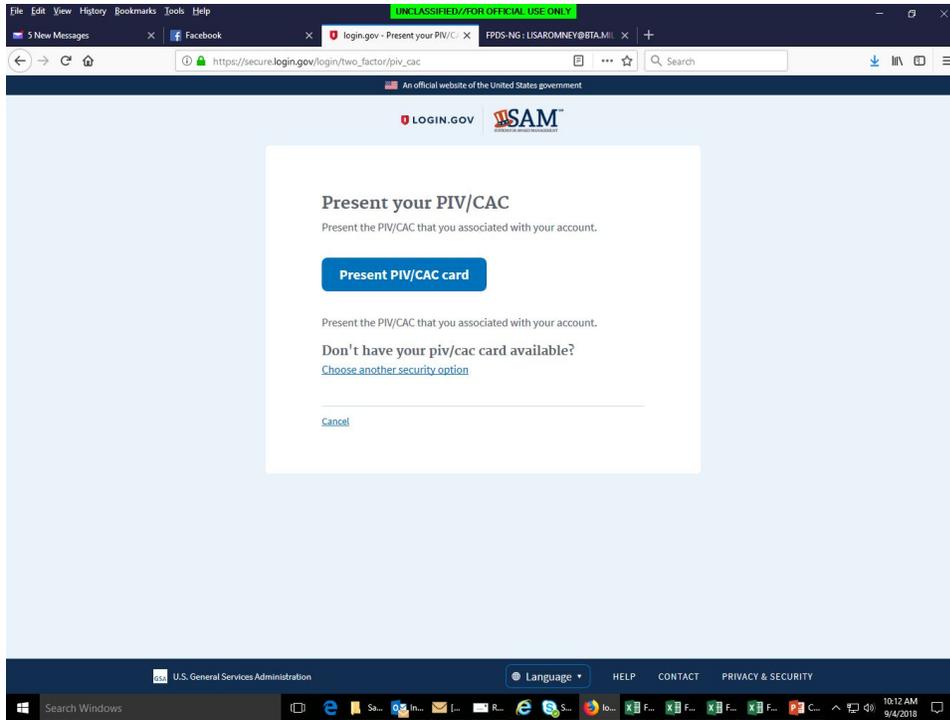
4. Once your profile page appears, the Two-Factor Authentication section will show the PIV/CAC card option with a box that says 'Enable' – click the box (it will change that button to 'Disable' as the slide shows now)
5. Your PIV/CAC card is now set up as your primary method of authentication and you will still have the option to use the other methods of text/phone call if you're ever away from a PIV/CAC card reader.

Logging into SAM.gov once you've enabled your CAC for authentication

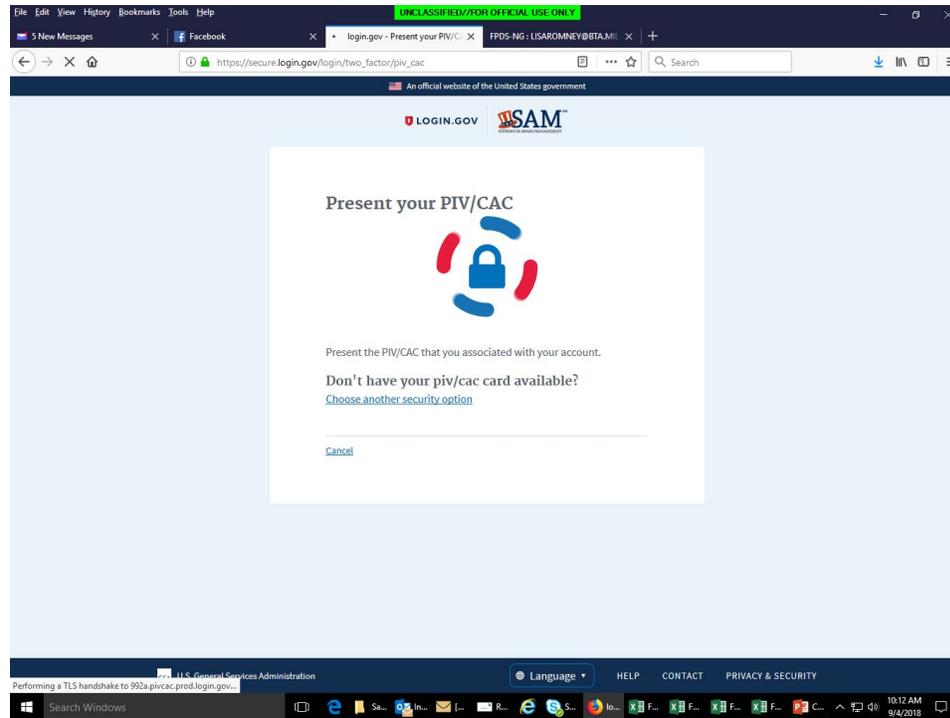
1. Go to www.SAM.gov and select 'Login.'
2. Then you will be taken to the Login.gov site where you select 'Sign In.'
3. Fill out your email address and Login.gov password.



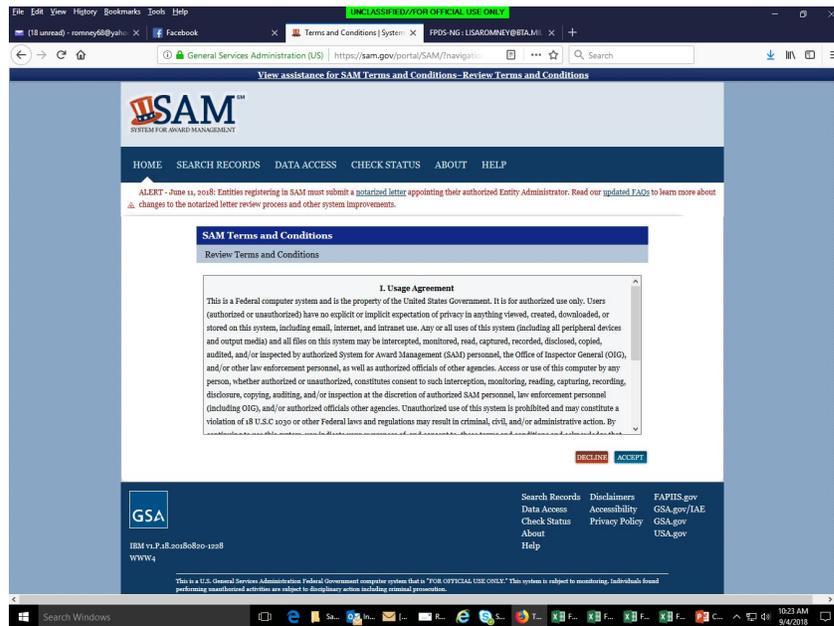
4. Instead of the screen for the one-time code, select 'Present PIV/CAC Card' (Note: if you are not near a computer with a PIV/CAC reader, this is the screen where you can choose another authentication method)



5. You'll see the screen below while it processes.



6. Voila – you’re logged into SAM.gov and taken to the Terms and Conditions screen.



For questions or additional information, comment below or contact us at IAEOutreach@gsa.gov.

Engaging Our Stakeholders PSC Tech Trends Conference 2018

In September, IAE Testing and Transition Manager Salomeh Ghorbani attended the Professional Services Council (PSC) Tech Trends Conference in Washington, D.C., where top government officials came to discuss the current information technology issues facing the federal government.

The conference focused on how industry partners are helping the government deliver more effective mission results through technology adoption. Among them, the IAE’s modernization effort to consolidate 10 legacy procurement systems into beta.SAM.gov. Officials also highlighted the risks we face with cyber attacks and the importance of training government employees on how to detect and mitigate them.

To showcase the advancements made to beta.SAM.gov, IAE provided a hands-on experience of its new features. Ghorbani guided interested users through an online tour of beta.SAM.gov and answered questions about the transition. She also demonstrated how to locate available procurement opportunities even as the site continues to be developed. Visitors who stopped by the GSA booth included small business owners, prime contractors, and federal government representatives—all looking to foster business partnerships. For more information, please contact us at iaeoutreach@gsa.gov.



Release Update 14.03 (September 24, 2018)

Overview

As you may know, the General Services Administration (GSA) manages federal acquisition and awards processes in 10 online websites which are now being merged into one. Through this modernization effort we are continuously releasing new code and fixes to our existing system.

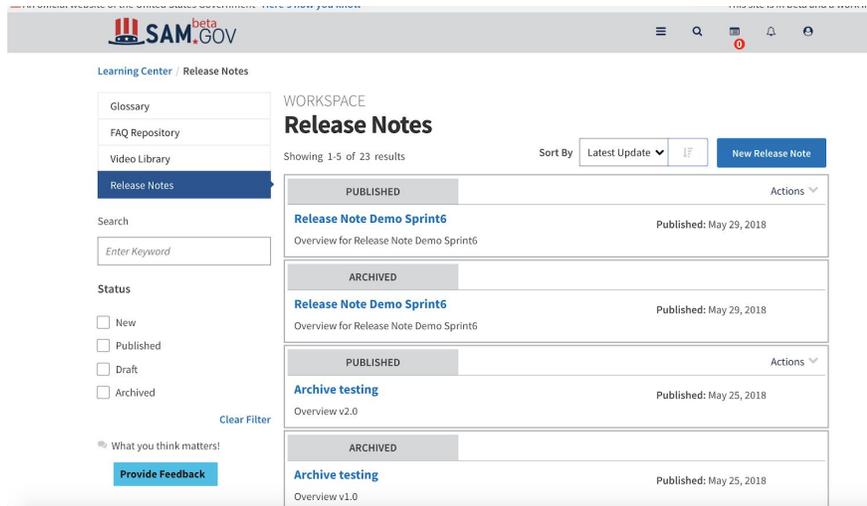
With each software release, we work to improve the user experience, improve the quality of the website, and reduce the burden for those wishing to do business with the U.S. Federal government. We do this through a combination of minor enhancements and fixing known issues. This document summarizes the customer-facing changes that were made to the beta.SAM.gov application and database in the development window culminating in the build to production on September 24, 2018.

Release Notes

Description
User Impact
Trigger Notification of Updates for Followed Awards: A user following a contract award will be notified when a change or update occurs to the contract award.
Trigger Exclusions Notification for Followed Entities: A user following an entity, has the ability to be notified when an exclusion is created, becomes active, or terminates for the entity.
Export to PDF/CSV - Awards display page: Signed in users can export a single Contract Data item from the display page into a PDF and/or CSV.
Search Results Export - Assistance Listing Full Public Data Elements CSV/PDF: Signed in users can export Assistance Listing search results into PDF and/or CSV formats with full listing details.
User Directory and Role Export: Signed in users can download searches made from the user directory or role lists to a csv or pdf.

Release Notes:

Users can search for old releases notes in the Learning Center (as this is not searchable through the header bar) to identify specific changes implemented with each release.



Intraorganizational Change Request Updates (Retain CFDA Number):

A federal assistance listings (FAL) user, is able to change the agency of an FAL without changing the CFDA number when the agency identifier is the same.

- When an Assistance Admin moves an Assistance Listing within its own department or below, the CFDA number is retained.

The IAE's 12 Principles of Agile

The IAE's adoption of and transition to agile began in 2014 as part of the overall modernization effort. Since beginning the change to a common services platform, the IAE has been working to steadily improve its agile practices. As with any agile development effort, each iteration is a learning process for the teams, and the lessons learned and sharing of knowledge has become an integral part of the process.

During the past five years, the IAE has become a leader in the federal work space for incorporating the agile process in developing our new centralized website. We are uncovering better ways of developing software by doing it and helping others do it. Using agile we transitioned the first of 10 systems, the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA), to the beta website, making it the official and authoritative source for federal domestic assistance.

The agile process has been a major reason for our success, as we continue to follow the 12 principles below:

1. Satisfy the users through early and continuous delivery of valuable software.
2. Welcome changing requirements, even late in development. Agile processes harness change for the customer's competitive advantage.
3. Deliver working software frequently, from a couple weeks to a couple of months, with a preference to the shorter timescale.
4. Daily coordination between business people and developers throughout the project.
5. Building projects around motivated individuals. Give them the environment and support they need and trust them to get the job done.
6. Daily conversations are the most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team.
7. Working software is the primary measure of progress.
8. Agile processes promote sustainable development. The vendors, developers, and users should be able to maintain a constant pace indefinitely.
9. Continuous attention to technical excellence and good design enhances agility.
10. Simplicity—the art of maximizing the amount of work not done—is essential.
11. The best architectures, requirements, and designs emerge from self-organizing teams.
12. At regular intervals, the team reflects on how to become more effective, then adjusts its behavior accordingly.

As a leader in these agile principles, we have been able to continue our developments in the new website while managing and updating the legacy systems. For example:

- While decommissioning CFDA and moving it into beta.SAM.gov, we made a major update to SAM.gov by implementing login.gov to authenticate registered SAM users.
- A major system enhancement was deployed in the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2018 with the merging of CPARs and PPIRS.
- Scheduled updates and testing was done to help make beta.SAM.gov a more user-friendly site. Added features include:
 - Convenient links
 - Data set landing pages
 - Enhanced search



IAE By the Numbers

Federal Service Desk Fourth Quarter Fiscal Year

2018:

- Call volume averaged 22,000 calls per month.
- The average speed to answer was less than 60 seconds 34% of time.
- Average handle talk time was approximately 17.35 minutes.
- First Call Resolution Rate was 63%.

System for Award Management Fourth Quarter Fiscal Year

2018:

- Average number of registrations activated per month:
 - New registrations - 9,052
 - Updated registrations - 64,785
- Average cycle time in Q4 FY18 was 1.88 days
- Average number of searches performed per month was 4,803,385.



Best of Fiscal Year 2018

IAE Transitions CFDA to beta.SAM.gov

Readers of this space by now are well aware that the IAE has been working to bring you the new beta.SAM.gov. You may remember that back in Oct 2017, we soft-launched beta.SAM.gov as a test site and we've been focusing on your feedback. We've been working with many of you since the launch, and we thank all of you for your participation, suggestions, and comments.

With that solid background in place, on May 25 we transitioned the first of our 10 systems (what we call legacy systems) into beta.SAM.gov. Everything you used to do in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA.gov) can now be done in beta.SAM.gov. Anybody who goes to CFDA.gov will be redirected to beta.SAM.gov.

This marks a major step forward in our goal to migrate all of the IAE systems into beta.SAM.gov. Don't forget that once the current (or legacy) SAM.gov makes the transition, the "beta" moniker will drop off the new site, and it will forevermore be known simply as SAM.gov.

When we migrated over the functions of CFDA.gov, we made significant improvements. In the case of CFDA.gov, we:

- Improved the overall search engine and keyword search
- Enhanced the search summary, now provided directly in the search results
- Enabled advanced search filtering, enabling search by "active only" or by department/agency, among others
- Created a funded/not funded indicator that allows users to quickly identify funded listings
- Made it easier to read the financial information section with a bar graph and table
- Improved the history section
- Added links to respective opportunities on Grants.gov
- Revised roles and improved administrative functionality
- Made role migration significantly easier

Users can get information and guidance about the new assistance listings functions by visiting the Learning Center on beta.SAM.gov.

For more information about the overall evolution of beta.SAM.gov, stay tuned to IAE's Interact section or visit [GSA.gov/IAE](https://www.gsa.gov/IAE). You also can watch a short video about the CFDA.gov transition [here](#).

Changing the User Experience

The Integrated Award Environment (IAE) has made significant user experience improvements while developing beta.SAM.gov, but there is more to come. As you begin to use the site, you may notice that we are continuing to make changes. We will be regularly delivering new features and streamlining your experience, often in response to comments from customers like you. Your comments can be made through the feedback tool, featured on most pages. Click the tool to provide suggestions about how we can improve your experience. Our feedback tool allows you to tell us whatever you'd like.

Below are some new features, many a direct response to feedback we've received:

- **Search:** We have created a single search experience for all of our data sets that works the same as many popular commercial websites. Let us know how it works for you! Were you able

to find what you expected? If not, let us know what you were looking for. Are the important filters available to you? What else would you like us to know?

- **Single Sign-on:** The topic that has generated the most feedback is the single sign-on. As our original websites decommission and transfer to beta.SAM.gov, new features will become available from your single account. Sign-up and let us know what you think.
- **Workspace:** When you create a user account, there is a single landing page where you can find your information in one place. We call it your workspace. You can access your saved searches, notifications, and all of your work here. Sign-in and let us know if you are able to find everything you would expect.
- **Learning Center:** Most of the help on the new website is searchable from the Learning Center. This should make it easier for you to find the help you are looking for. As you have questions about how to use the site, try searching the Learning Center and let us know if you find what you are looking for. Just know that right now, much of the help support assistance listings since it's the first system to become official on beta.SAM.gov. However, new content is being added all the time.

We encourage you to use the feedback tool for commenting on your experience thus far on beta.SAM.gov and for giving us suggestions about how we can improve. The feedback you provide is important to us and makes the website better for everyone.

GSA Improves Process for Updating Product Service Codes

GSA's IAE is announcing an improvement to the process for updating Product Service Codes (PSCs), which are used to describe the types of products, services, and research and development purchased by the federal government. Please go to https://www.acquisition.gov/PSC_Manual to find the PSC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the improvements to the process for updating PSCs.

The PSCs are critical for government leadership to understand how federal dollars are spent and help determine how much money is being spent on specific products or services. The PSCs are also used to study existing trends in federal spending; report on international agreements; analyze regulatory burden; and reflect changes in technology and terminology.

As outlined in the PSC SOPs, GSA's IAE is now implementing a standard process for updating PSCs that utilizes Category Managers as subject matter experts (SMEs). The SMEs will become the leads in determining whether to add, delete, or revise PSCs for their respective category. This includes PSCs for both product and services that may be in each category.

Historically, PSC code refreshes were managed by two agencies: GSA, which was responsible for managing all PSCs for research, development, and services; and the Department of Defense (DoD), responsible for managing all PSCs for civilian and defense-related products.

To increase the accuracy of reporting, the PSCs are subject to future changes. Periodic updates to the PSCs will help improve system usability by minimizing the use of miscellaneous PSCs when a more specific one is available, leading to more accurate reporting.

For additional questions regarding PSC change requests, please email us at PSC-Codes@gsa.gov.

How to Download Assistance Listings Extracts in beta.SAM.gov

We recently retired the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA.gov) and everything you used to do in that system can now be done in beta.SAM.gov. Users can now download all assistance listings program data in an Excel spreadsheet from beta.SAM.gov.

In order to promote the sharing of assistance listings program data and offer a means for related government systems to download data reliably and efficiently, beta.SAM.gov provides users with the ability to download program data in the common .csv format.

While on beta.SAM.gov, select the main menu (the three parallel lines at the very top of the site to the left of the magnifying glass). A drop-down menu will appear and select **Data Services**. On the next page, click on **Assistance Listings**. There, you have three electronic folders to choose from:

- **datagov**: This folder contains complete extracts published on a weekly basis and all the elements that are part of an assistance listing (program title, number, agency, objective, etc.). If you are familiar with the electronic download option on CFDA.gov, you'll find a similar file named "AssistanceListings_DataGov_PUBLIC_CURRENT.csv" in the main datagov folder.
- **Usaspendinggov**: This folder contains files that provide the complete listings and is published weekly.
- **Grantsgov**: This folder contains files that are published daily and have a more limited set of information (containing program name, number, agency, URL to the listing itself and published date).

The files located within these folders are what GSA provides to data.gov, usaspending.gov, and grants.gov. Once you find the extracts you are looking for, you will be able to use them as you did before. You can also quickly sort any of these extracts by agency and program number. For more information on assistance listings in beta.SAM.gov, you can view an informational video [here](#) or send us an email at IAEO outreach@gsa.gov.

IAE Deputy Assistant Commissioner Vicky Niblett Selected as Recipient of FCW Top Honor



Congratulations to IAE's very own Vicky Niblett for being one of *Federal Computer Week's* "Federal 100 Award" recipients for 2018!

The Federal 100 Award recognizes and celebrates government and industry leaders who played pivotal roles in the federal government information technology (IT) community. Winning this award is a testament to the dedication to leadership and hard work that Niblett has demonstrated this past year managing the IAE systems. As you may know, Niblett provides management and oversight of all aspects of the IAE program initiatives. Vicky's work drove the team toward the major milestones of releasing our new site (beta.SAM.gov) in alpha in Fiscal Year 2016 and in beta in Fiscal Year 2017. In that effort, Vicky challenged the team to adopt user-centered design principles, to use agile practices, and to focus on delivery. When the modernization effort is complete, the unified System for Award Management (SAM) website will become the official U.S. government website for people who make, receive, and manage all federal awards.

The 29th Annual Federal 100 Awards Gala was held on March 22 at the Grand Hyatt in Washington, D.C. to honor all of this year's recipients. Vicky's profile was featured on fcw.com and appeared in the March/April print and digital issue of the FCW newsletter. For more information and a complete list of this year's recipients, go to <https://fcw.com/fed100>.

Did You Know?

What will happen to the SAM.gov URL when SAM is migrated to beta.SAM.gov?

The IAE launched beta.SAM.gov in the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2017. During this modernization process, beta.SAM.gov will coexist with SAM.gov, which means the current legacy system will run in parallel to the beta site and remain the authoritative source until it is migrated to the beta site and decommissioned. Eventually, beta.SAM.gov will become SAM.gov.

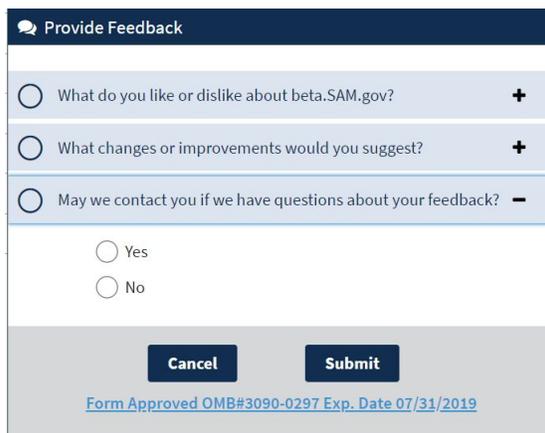


Provide Feedback on beta.SAM.gov!

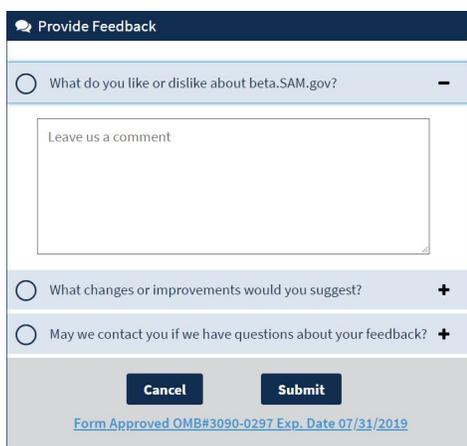
Continuously improving the user experience is a top priority for the SAM modernization process (beta.SAM.gov). Suggestions and opinions about the new site are taken into serious consideration in real-time to help develop new features and functionality, as we build the new environment. As you're exploring the features on the site, let us know what you think!

Look for the Provide Feedback button which is available on almost every page of the site, even in your workspace and search results. Click on it to share any of your comments and concerns. What do you like or dislike about beta.SAM.gov? What changes or improvements would you suggest? Can we contact you if we have questions about your feedback?

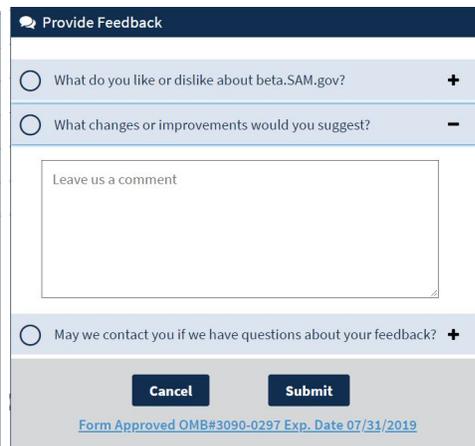
View a sample of the feedback submission forms below.



This image shows a 'Provide Feedback' form with three collapsed sections. The first section is 'What do you like or dislike about beta.SAM.gov?' with a '+' icon. The second is 'What changes or improvements would you suggest?' with a '+' icon. The third is 'May we contact you if we have questions about your feedback?' with a '-' icon. Below these are radio buttons for 'Yes' and 'No'. At the bottom are 'Cancel' and 'Submit' buttons, and a footer: 'Form Approved OMB#3090-0297 Exp. Date 07/31/2019'.



This image shows the 'Provide Feedback' form with the first section expanded. The question 'What do you like or dislike about beta.SAM.gov?' is followed by a text area labeled 'Leave us a comment'. The other sections are collapsed. At the bottom are 'Cancel' and 'Submit' buttons, and a footer: 'Form Approved OMB#3090-0297 Exp. Date 07/31/2019'.



This image shows the 'Provide Feedback' form with the second section expanded. The question 'What changes or improvements would you suggest?' is followed by a text area labeled 'Leave us a comment'. The other sections are collapsed. At the bottom are 'Cancel' and 'Submit' buttons, and a footer: 'Form Approved OMB#3090-0297 Exp. Date 07/31/2019'.

The beta.SAM.gov development teams read and review each comment and suggestion from the feedback tool and use them as a baseline for making enhancements to the site. Not only are we eager to hear feedback, it drives our designs.

Keep checking the site for newly released features and send us your comments if you have any questions.

Viewership Growth on beta.SAM.gov



While still under development since its launch in September 2017, beta.SAM.gov has on average 15,000 viewers each week. Users from all over the world are accessing the site on various devices to test the new search function. This modernization allows users to access the award data via computer and smartphone, making a more convenient process to manage federal awards.

As we prepared to retire CFDA.gov, CFDA users were redirected to the beta site. The federal assistance information from CFDA was transferred to beta.SAM.gov under the domain name Assistance Listing. With that, we are anticipating even more viewership on beta.SAM.gov, particularly those seeking federal assistance.

Users viewing the test site are providing helpful suggestions in the feedback tool on beta.SAM.gov. It is important for us to receive feedback to better the website as we make continual changes. Users are liking the look and feel of the beta website. The majority of the response in the feedback tool has been positive, with many looking forward to using beta.SAM.gov in the future. To stay up to date on the modernization, please visit beta.SAM.gov.

Did You Know?

Common Question About Entity Registration Migration

As the modernization of beta.SAM.gov progresses, many users continue to send questions into the iaeoutreach@gsa.gov inbox. One of the most common inquiries is: “When an entity has an existing SAM.gov profile, will it automatically be added to the new SAM.gov when it is implemented?” All existing entity registration data will be automatically migrated to the new site. You won't need to re-register your entity, but you will need to create a new user account for the beta site. Once you create a new account, you can migrate any existing roles from legacy SAM. This will link your new account with your old one.

As we near transition, SAM.gov will have information posted informing users that the system will be retiring in the future. Once each system retires, users will be automatically redirect to beta.SAM.gov.