DemandStar User's Guide

Welcome to DemandStar

Welcome to the DemandStar network! Whether you're looking to win your first government contract or you're an experienced supplier, we're here to make the bidding process clear, simple, and easy so you can win more government work.

With DemandStar, you'll find out about relevant bid requests instantly and with way less effort than searching on your own. You can submit your proposals with confidence, knowing you're responding to the most up-to-date bid request and submitting directly to the government.

We'll even help you discover new opportunities to grow your business by showing you other governments looking to buy from companies like yours.

This guide will walk you through how to use the DemandStar network to win more bids and build better relationships with governments.

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How to get bid notifications

As a member of the DemandStar network, you can receive automatic notifications about bid requests for goods or services you provide. But before we can do that, we need to know more about what governments you serve and what goods and services you offer. That's why it's so important to complete your account set-up!

Fortunately, it's a very easy process. We'll walk you through it.

Tell us what agencies you want to work with

When you choose an agency, you effectively "subscribe" to that agency, so that you will be notified about any relevant bid requests that they post on the DemandStar platform. As a member of the DemandStar network, you get to subscribe to your first agency for free. You may have already selected your free agency when you created your account. If not, you'll want to go back and choose at least one agency that you want to work with. You can do this from the "Subscriptions" section.

Click on your account name in the top right corner, and then select "Subscriptions". You can also go here to check your existing subscriptions or add your first agency if you haven't already selected one.
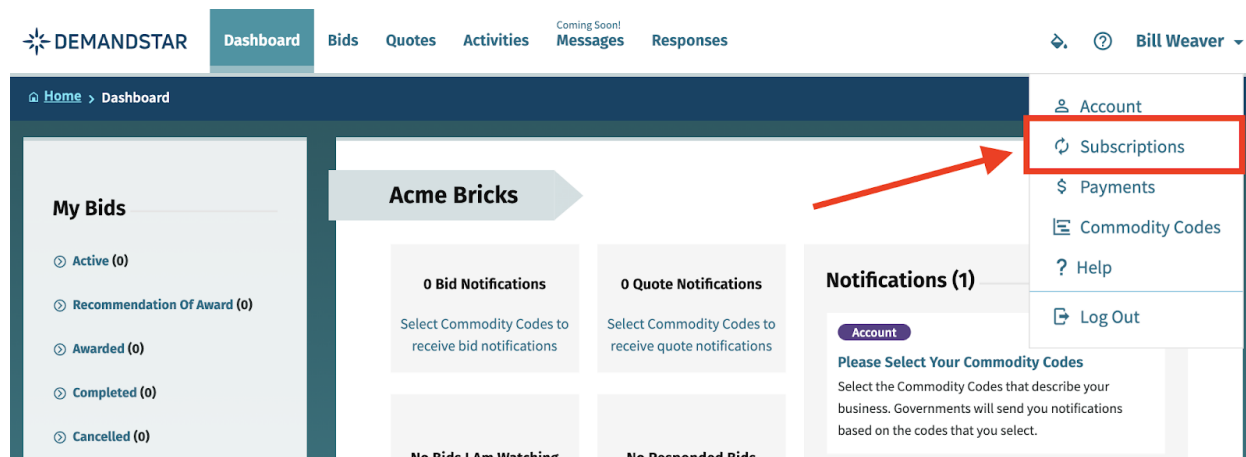
Want to subscribe to more than one agency? That's great! You can subscribe to agencies by county, by state, or nationwide at any time by upgrading your account.

Tip: If you work with multiple agencies and would like to start by subscribing to just one, we recommend looking at how active each agency is on the DemandStar platform and picking the one that's the most active to start. For more information about how to browse bid requests, read ahead to "How to Search for Bids".

Tell us what goods and services you offer

Before we send you relevant bid notifications, we need to know what kinds of goods and services you offer. You can do this by adding Commodity Codes to your account.

What's a commodity code? Commodity codes are standard classification codes for goods and services used for procurement and tracking of expenditures. They consist of 8 numbers and look like this: 022-909-10 (that's the code for Airport Facility Construction).

1. Log in to your DemandStar account.
2. Click on the drop-down menu below your username in the upper right corner and select "Commodity Codes".
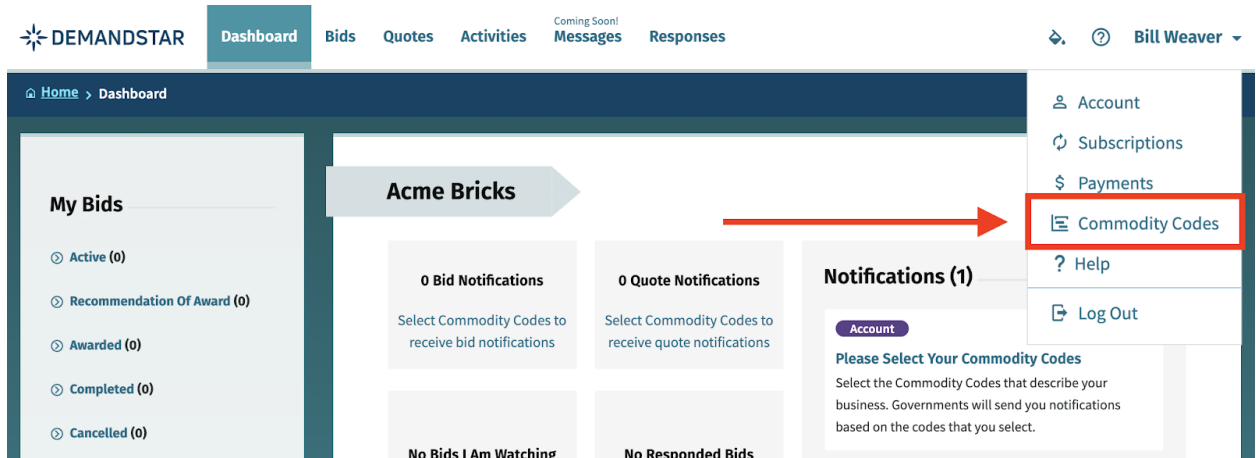
3. Click on "Edit"
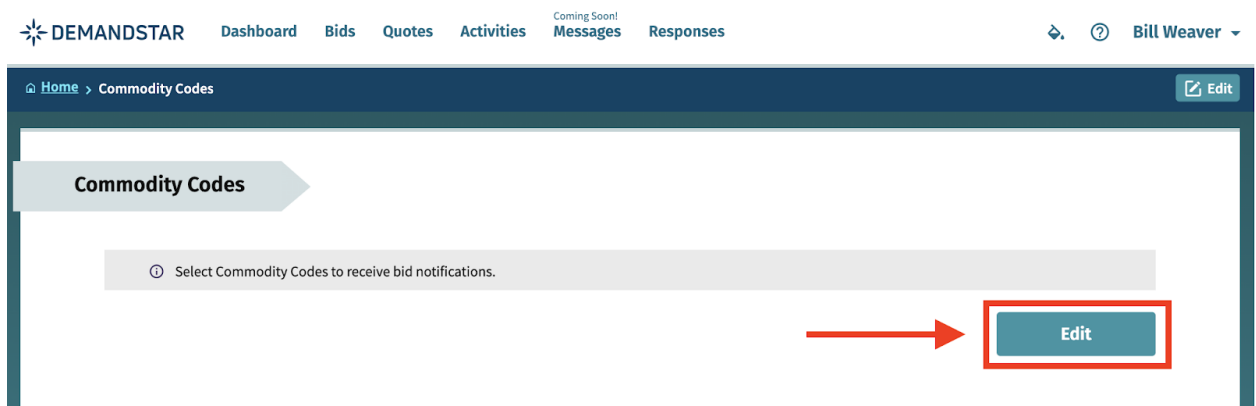
4. Then use single words in the search field, for example: "hose" (Tip: Think of this like a Google search)
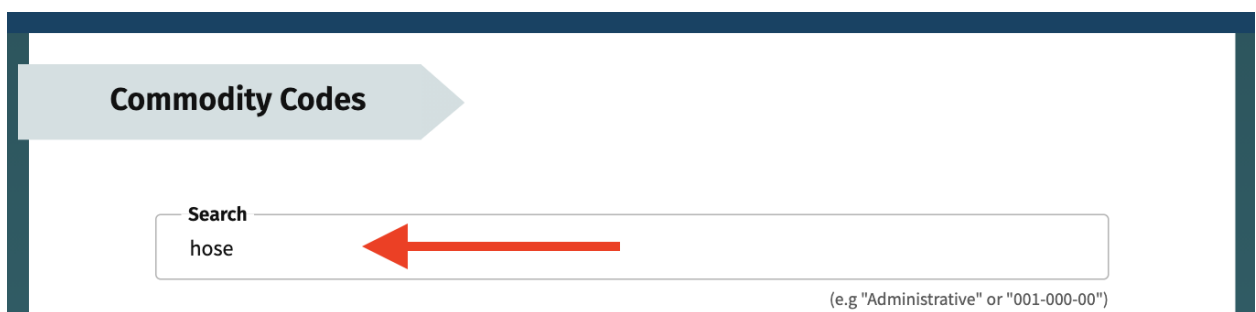
5. Select the codes that you want to add by checking the boxes.

6. Don't be shy - the more you pick, the better our chances of matching you with an agency's bid. Pick as many as could possibly apply to your business.
7. The commodity codes you have selected will appear at the top of the box to the right under "Your Commodity Codes". When you have finished selecting codes click on "Submit"

Does your business qualify?

One common misconception about government contracts is that governments prefer to work with large companies. But that's not true! Many governments prefer - and in some cases are required - to work with smaller businesses and minority-owned businesses when they can.

Some governments invite certain types of businesses to bid on contracts. Does your business fall into any of the following categories?

- African American Owned
- Asian/Hawaiian Owned
- Hispanic Owned
- LGBT+ Owned
- Native American Owned
- Small Business
- Veteran Owned
- Woman Owned

If your business matches one or more of these categories, you'll want to declare it. That way, governments who are looking for suppliers like you can easily find your business in searches and invite you to bid. Here's how to declare what categories describe your business:

1. Login to your DemandStar account.
2. Click on your name in the upper right-hand corner and click on "Account".
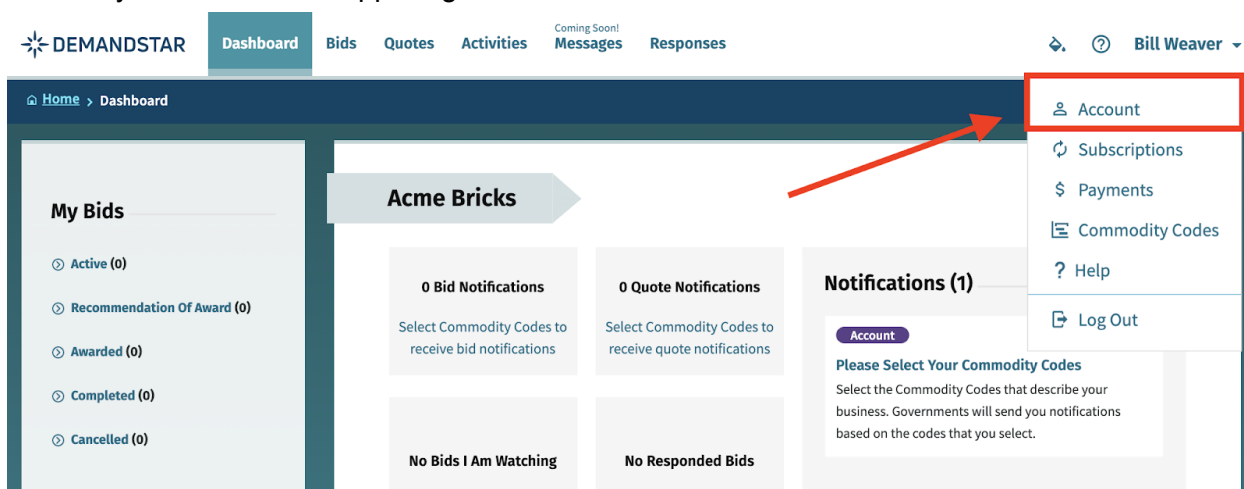
3. Across the top, click on the tab for "Self Declarations".
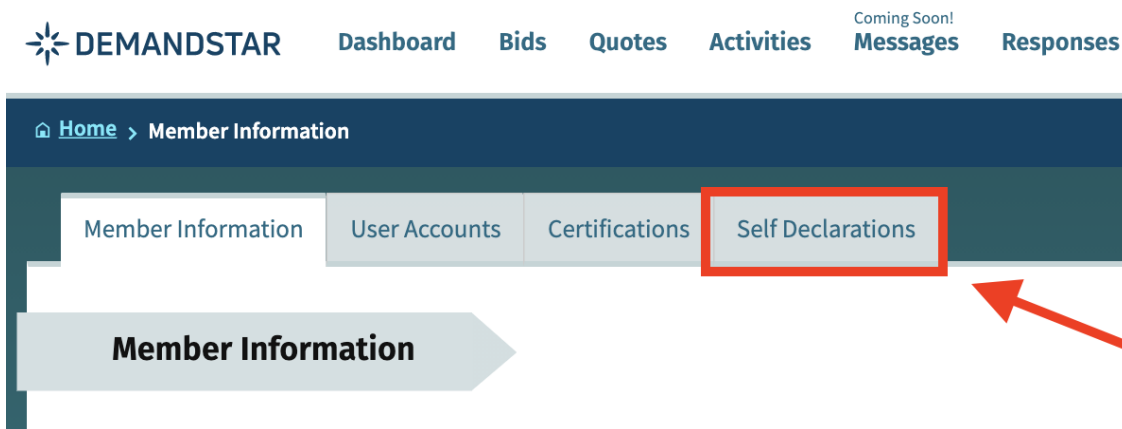
4. Click the attributes that apply, and click "Save Changes".

How to search for bids

In addition to receiving notifications from agencies you follow, you can also browse all active and past bid requests on the DemandStar network from hundreds of agencies. This is a great

way to learn about different types of projects you could bid on, additional agencies you could work with, or see how governments classify and name the types of projects you are interested in.

To search DemandStar:

1. Log in to your DemandStar account.
2. From your Dashboard Homepage, click on "Bids" at the top of the screen.
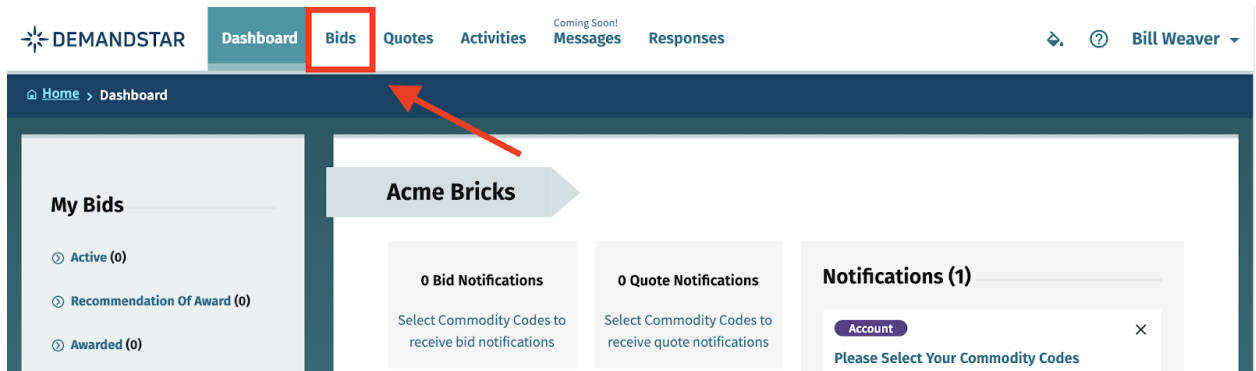
3. You'll see a list of all the recent bids posted to DemandStar.
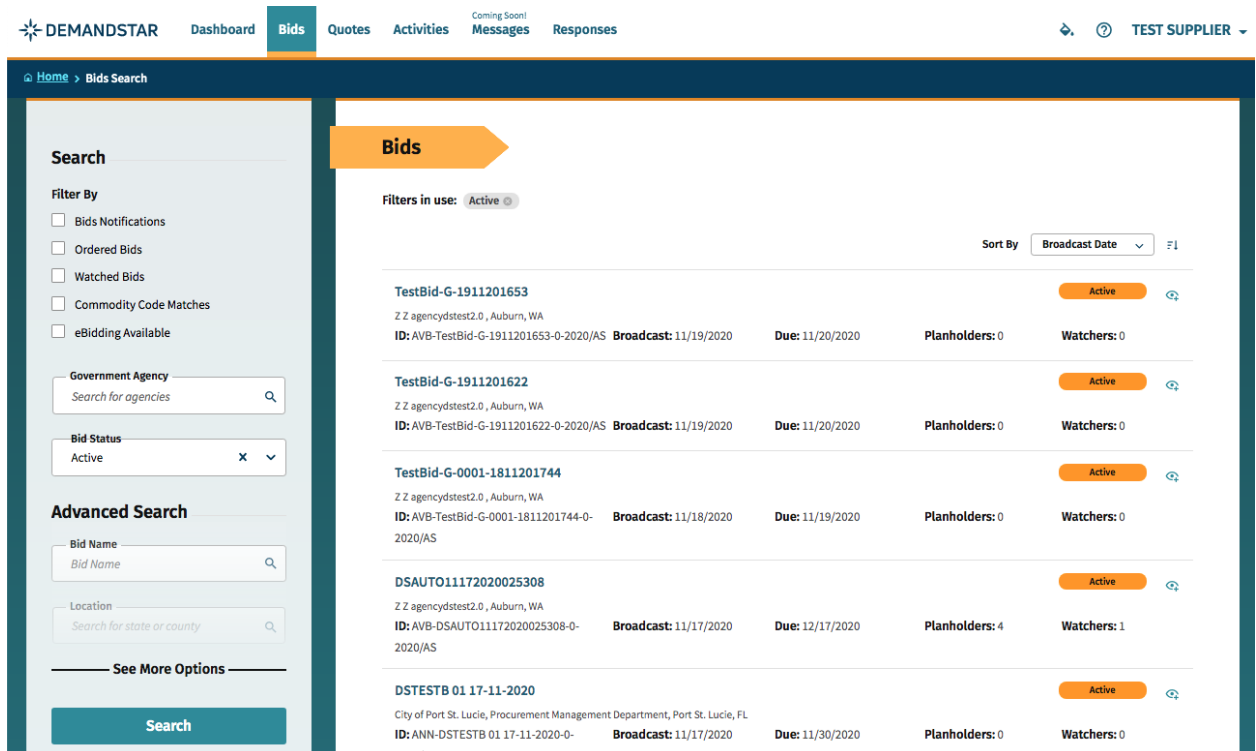
4. On the left side of the screen, there are several Filters and Advanced Search features you can use to narrow down the search results.

5. Review your results, then click on one that's interesting to see the details.

After doing a few broad searches, you may want to try using additional filters like commodity codes and locations to narrow in on bid requests that are more relevant to your business.

How to respond to a bid request

Once you're ready to respond to a bid request, the DemandStar platform will walk you through how to submit your response. You can submit your bid response with confidence, knowing that the bid information on DemandStar was entered directly by the government and represents the most up-to-date version of the bid request.

Many governments require or provide the option for you to submit your bid electronically through DemandStar. Even if they don't, the bid request on DemandStar will provide clear instructions about how to submit your bid response.

Here's how to submit a bid electronically through DemandStar:

1. Click on the solicitation name.

TIP: Occasionally, a government partner will require the word "EBID" in the Bid ID, and sometimes not. Be sure to review the requirements to make sure you respond appropriately.

2. Once you are in the bid solicitation, you will see the Bid Details page, which is standard for all solicitations.

3. When you are ready to submit your bid, click on "Submit eBid Proposal".

4. Enter the information requested page-by-page. You can see what will come next via the menu bar on the left under "eBid Progress".

5. After you click NEXT on the Contact Information page, you will be directed to enter the documents required. In this example, they only ask for one document, however, in others, they may ask for multiple documents that each need to be uploaded separately.

6. Review Your eBid Response, and if everything is correct, then press "Submit Response".

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You are all done! The government can now download your responses and documents and see the date and time at which you submitted your proposal.

Managing your account

You can access your account settings at any time by clicking on your name in the upper right-hand corner once you login.

From your account settings, you can:

- Add more users to your account
- Upgrade or change your subscription to access more governments
- Add and manage government certifications

Upgrade your Subscription

Upgrading your DemandStar account is one of the easiest ways to see more bids and more opportunities on the DemandStar network. Here's how to upgrade:

1. Login and click on your name in the upper right-hand corner and click on "Subscriptions."
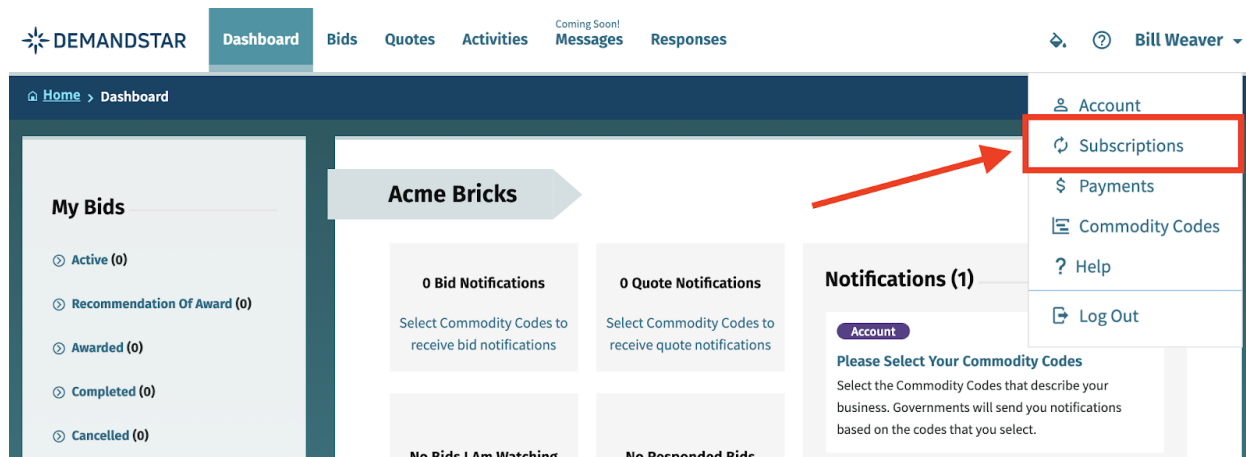
2. Click on Renew/Upgrade and follow the steps to add agencies to your account.

3. You can choose a State, then drill down to add counties. You can get notifications for every agency on DemandStar in a county for only $25 per county, per year.
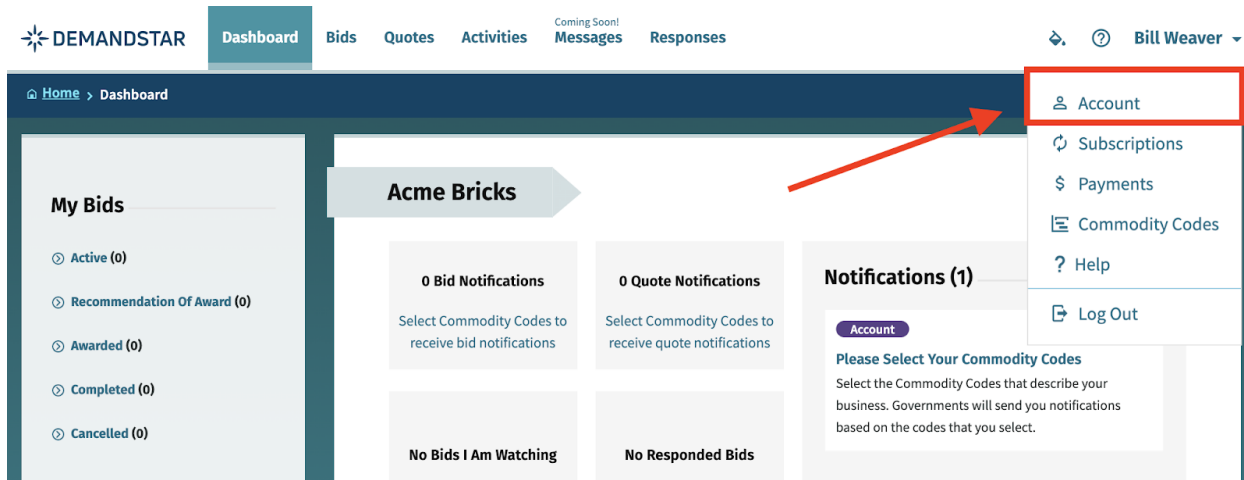
Add another user

If you want to give someone else on your team access to DemandStar so that they can search and respond to bids, you can add them as a user on your account for no extra charge. Here's how you do it:

1. Login to your account
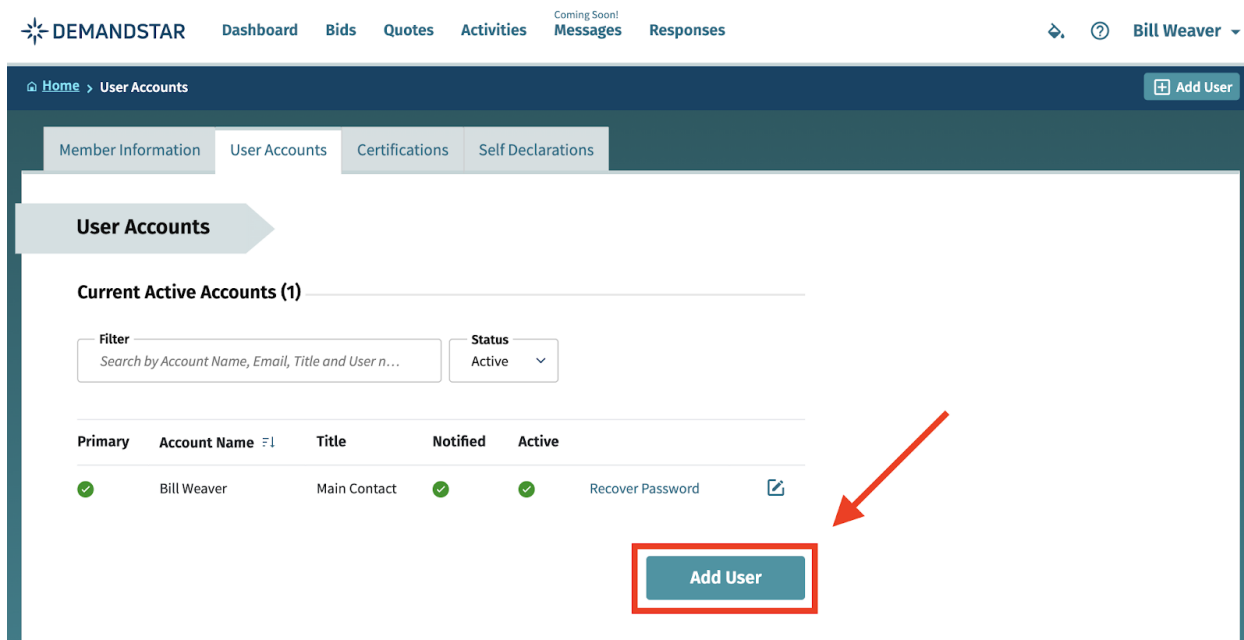2. Scroll over the upper right-hand corner, click on the little down arrow next to your name and click on "Account".

3. Across the top you will see four tabs, click on "User Accounts."
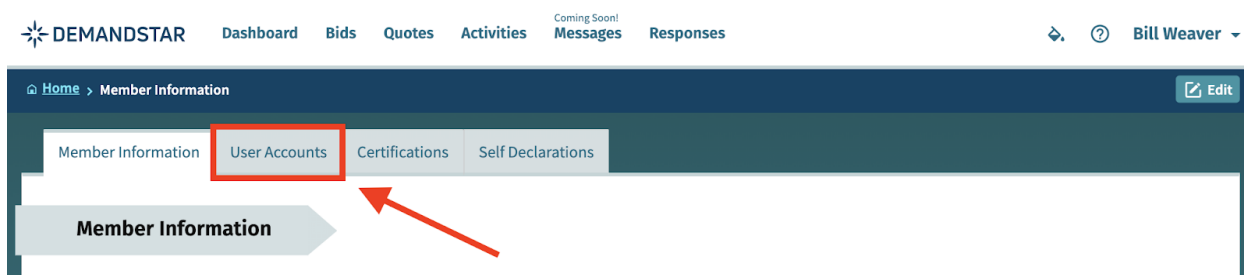
4. Scroll down to the bottom of the page, and click the big teal button that says "Add User".
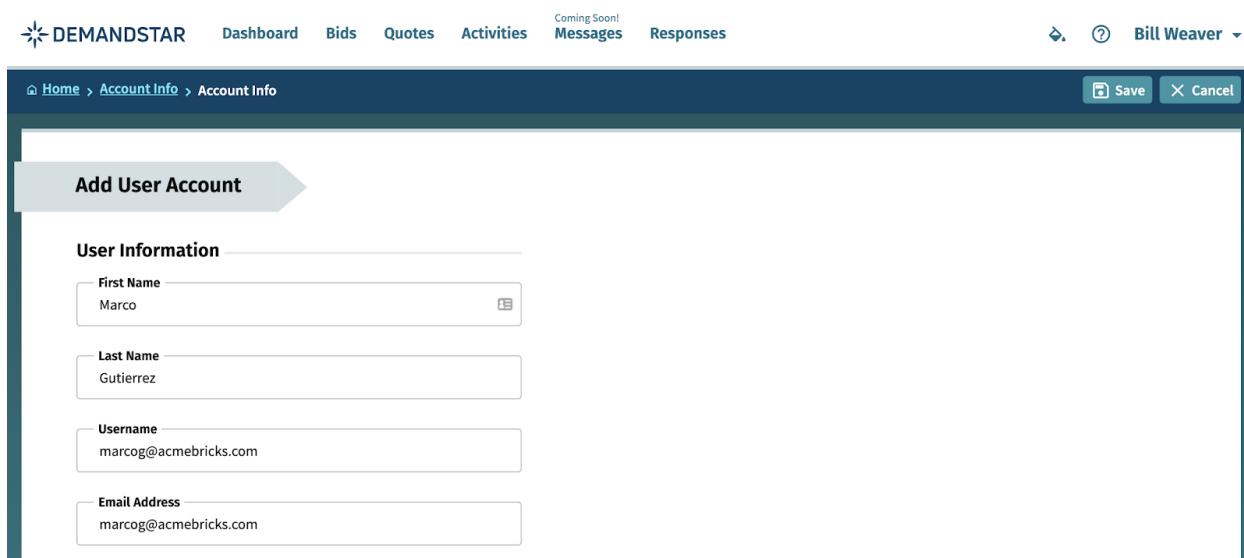
5. Fill-in the requested information.
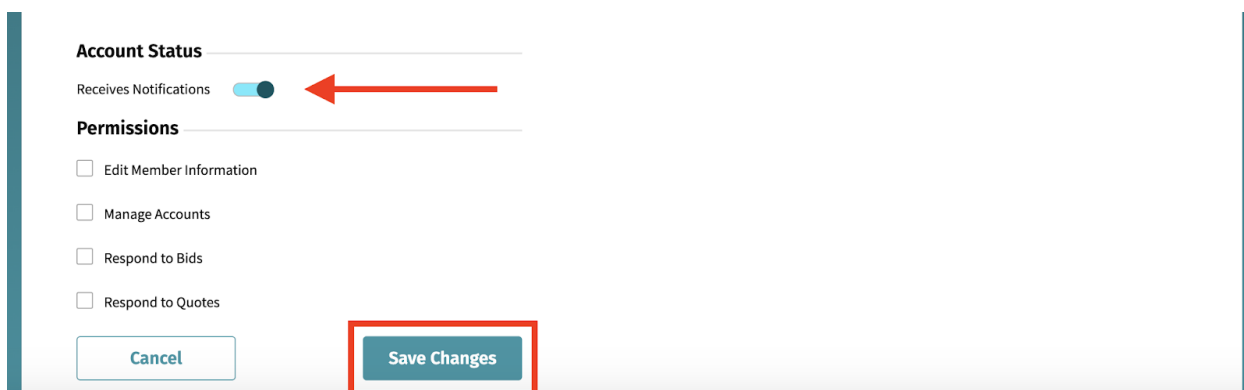
6. Scroll to the bottom and make sure the toggle is switched on to "Receive notifications". Then click "Save Changes".
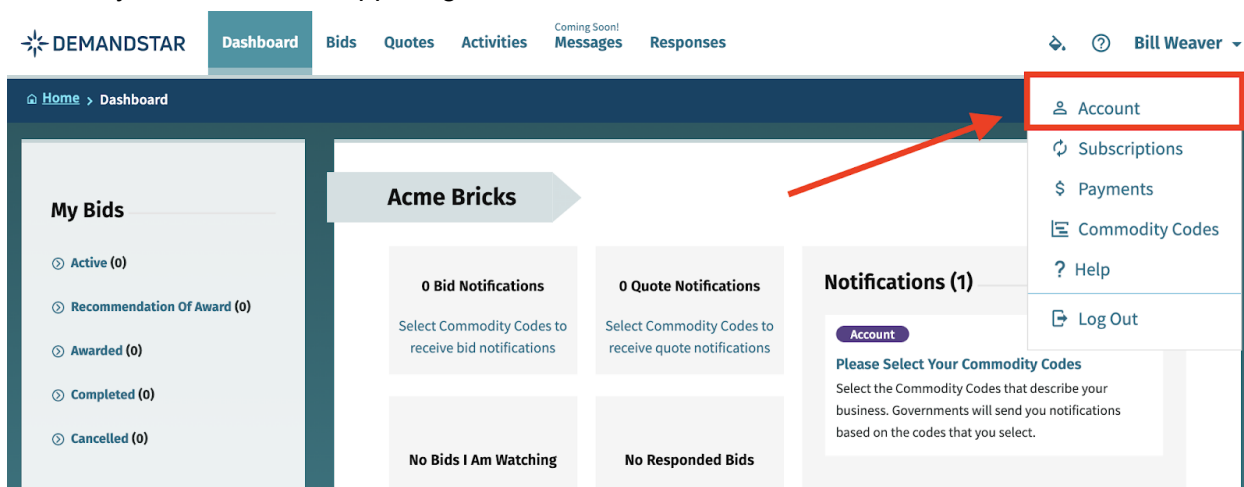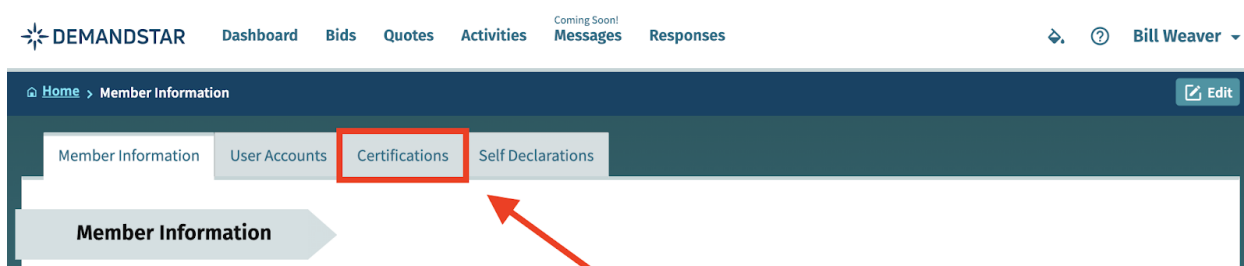
7. User-name now appears under "User Accounts".

Manage certifications

DemandStar makes it easy for you to manage your certifications across multiple agencies.

1. Login to your DemandStar account.
2. Click on your name in the upper right hand corner and then click on "Account".

3. Click on the tab for "Certifications".

4. Here you will see a list of agencies that government agencies use to track suppliers that meet specific certification or qualification criteria. These will all be listed here and you can apply for them here, by clicking on "Apply".

5. Simply click on "Apply" and follow the prompts.

How to get help

DemandStar has amazing customer support available from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Pacific Daily (9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern).

If you ever have an issue, give us a call at (206) 940-0305 or toll-free at 1 (866) 273-1863. We will happily walk you through the product and answer any questions. You can also email us (support@demandstar.com) and we will respond to your request in the order it is received.

- Phone Support: (206) 940-0305 or toll-free at 1 (866) 273-1863
- Help Desk: support@demandstar.com

Note that most DemandStar support tickets are resolved within 4 working hours.