Understanding the Difference Between Login.gov and SAM.gov

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Login.gov and SAM.gov are both official U.S. government websites, but they serve different purposes. It's important to know how they work – especially if you're a municipal official or volunteer helping with grants or federal programs.

What is Login.gov?

Login.gov is like a secure digital key that lets you sign in to many government websites with just one username and password.

A Login.gov account is unique to an individual (a personal account).

- **It's used across agencies**: You might use it for Social Security or for your work in local government (like accessing a federal grant site).
- **Security is a priority**: You'll need a personal email, a strong password, and an extra layer of security (like a text message code or fingerprint scan).
- **One account only**: You can add more than one email (like both personal and work), but you should only have one Login.gov account. It should be set up using your personal email in case you change jobs.
- **Help is available**: Visit login.gov/help if you need to reset your password or change your email.

Note: Never share your Login.gov credentials with anyone. It's tied to *your personal information*.

What is SAM.gov?

SAM.gov (System for Award Management) is where organizations – like your municipality – register to do business with the federal government. This includes applying for federal grants.

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A SAM.gov *account* is unique to an individual (a personal account). A SAM.gov *registration* is unique to the municipality (a business account).

- **Public searches**: Anyone can look up basic information, such as wage determinations, without an account.
- **Full access requires a user account**: To view or manage your municipality's registration, you'll need an account.
- **Roles matter**: Municipal staff are given specific roles (like Administrator or Contract Manager) to access and update the municipality's SAM.gov profile.
- **Annual renewal required**: Your municipality must renew its registration every year.
- **Help is available**: Call 866-606-8220 or visit www.fsd.gov for help.

Important: Only people with official roles should have access to the municipality's SAM.gov profile. If someone leaves their position, their access should be removed.

How Login.gov and SAM.gov work Together

- You need a **Login.gov account** to sign in to **SAM.gov**. It's your secure login method.
- **Login.gov doesn't store any information** about your SAM.gov profile - it just lets you sign in.
- Use the **same email address** for both accounts if you're managing SAM.gov activities. This ensures a smooth connection between the two systems.
- If you change your email in one system but not the other, you could lose access.

Best Practice for Municipal Officials

If you've just been assigned to help manage your municipality's SAM.gov registration:

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- If you already have a Login.gov account with a different email, just **add your work email** to it. You can do this by signing in at Login.gov, going to "My Account," and adding the email (don't remove your personal email).
- If you already have a role in a SAM.gov account and are setting up a new Login.gov profile, **use the same email** you used for your SAM.gov account to create your Login.gov account.

Final Tips

- Both accounts are **free** to set up and use.
- Keep your Login.gov login info private.
- Keep your municipality's SAM.gov profile updated and renewed annually.
- Use consistent email addresses between systems to avoid access issues.

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