<u>Business Entity Registration:</u>
A Guide for Registering Your Business Using the BEREP Website

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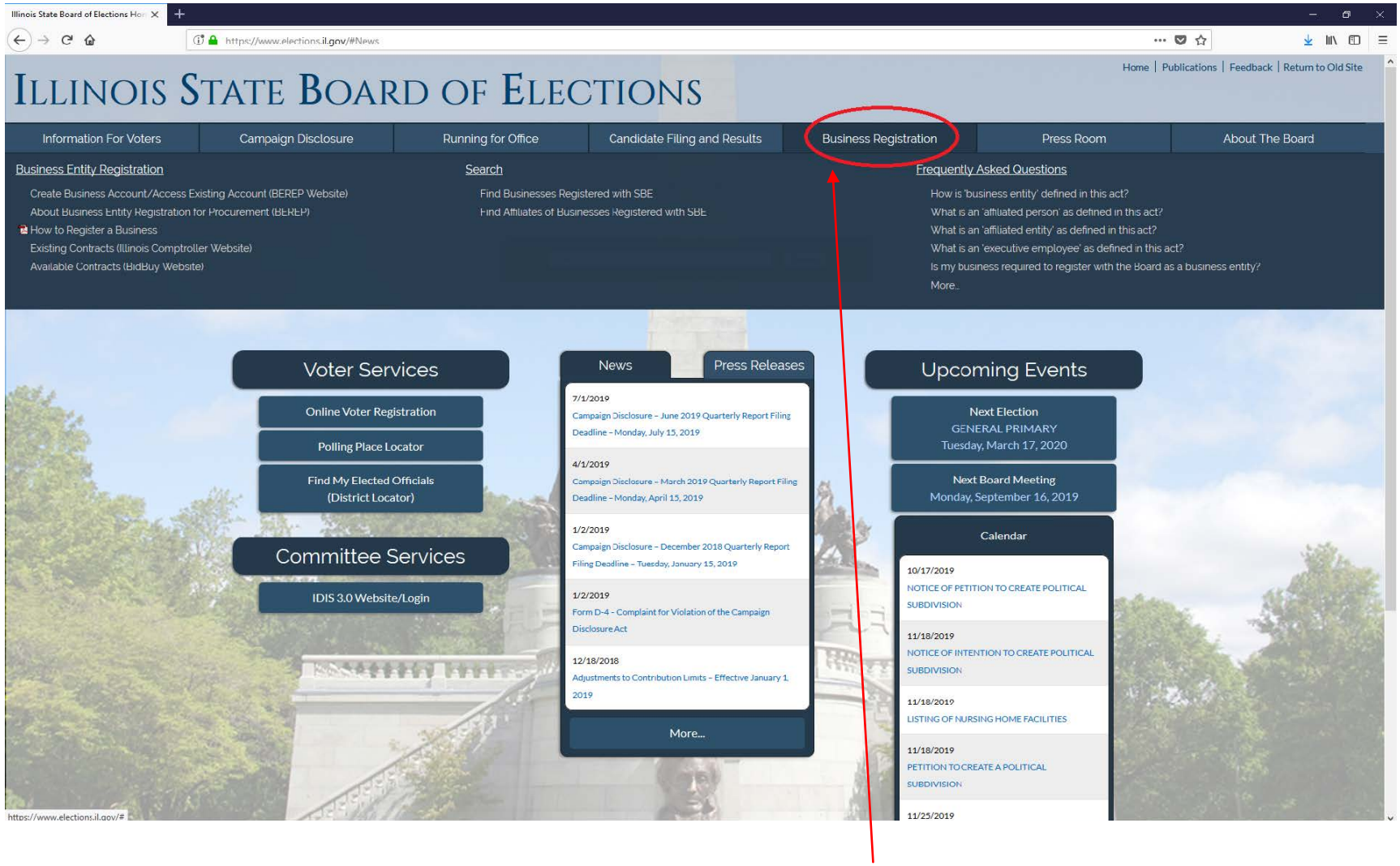
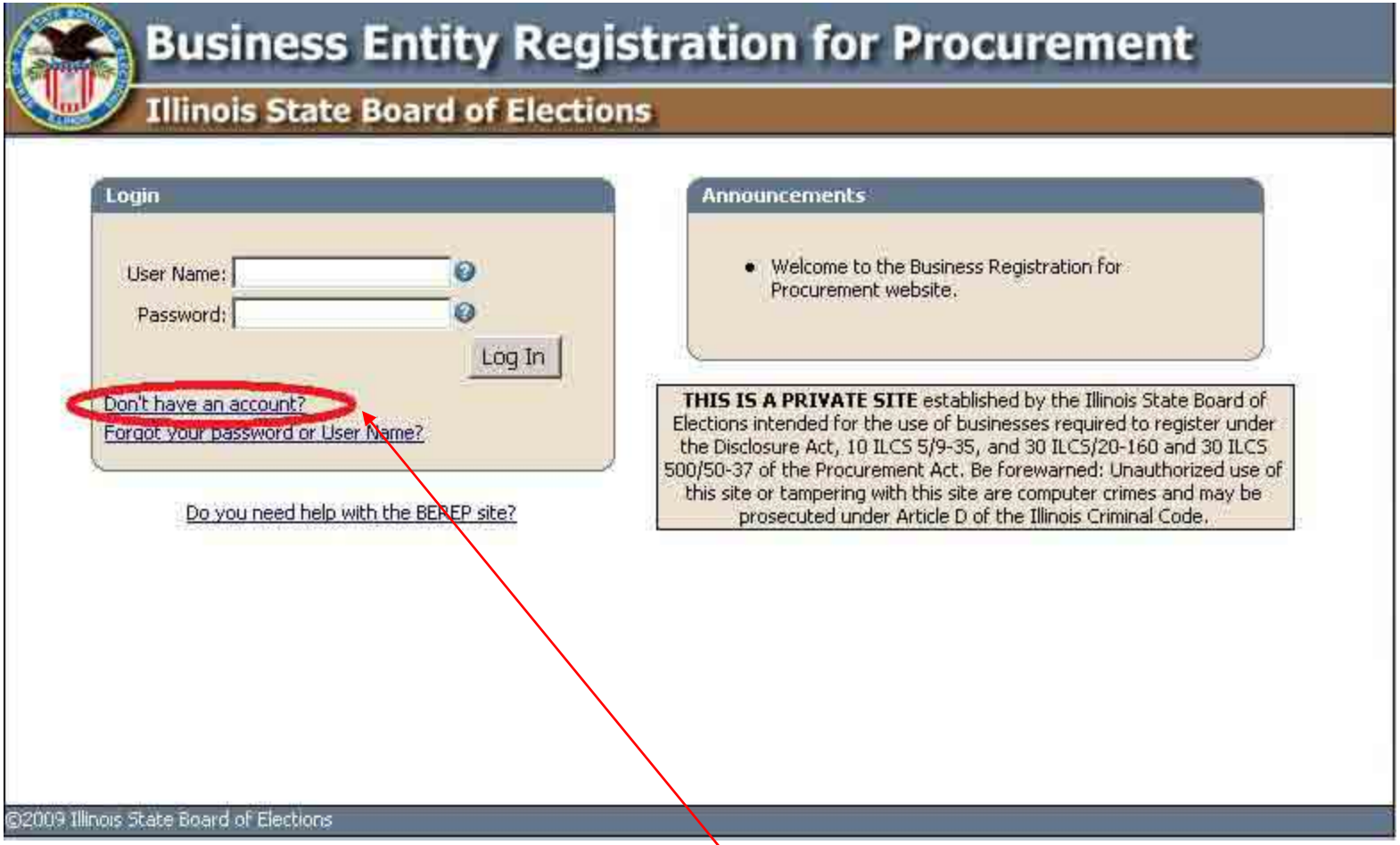


This is the home page of the Illinois State Board of Elections (www.elections.il.gov), the starting point for a Business Entity registration. The BEREP page is accessed by clicking on "Businesses Registration" at the top of the screen.

1. This is where businesses go for first time registration or to access an existing account.
2. Information regarding the BEREP law, including why resistration is required.
3. A downloadable PDF with instructions on how to register a business and additional useful information on the system.
4. Existing state contracts which are found on the Illinois Comptroller's web page.
5. Illinois Procurement Bulletin where active bids may be found (also known as BidBuy).
6. Search for previously registered businesses. A company which is unsure if they have already registered may use this tool.
7. Search for listed affiliates of businesses which are registered.



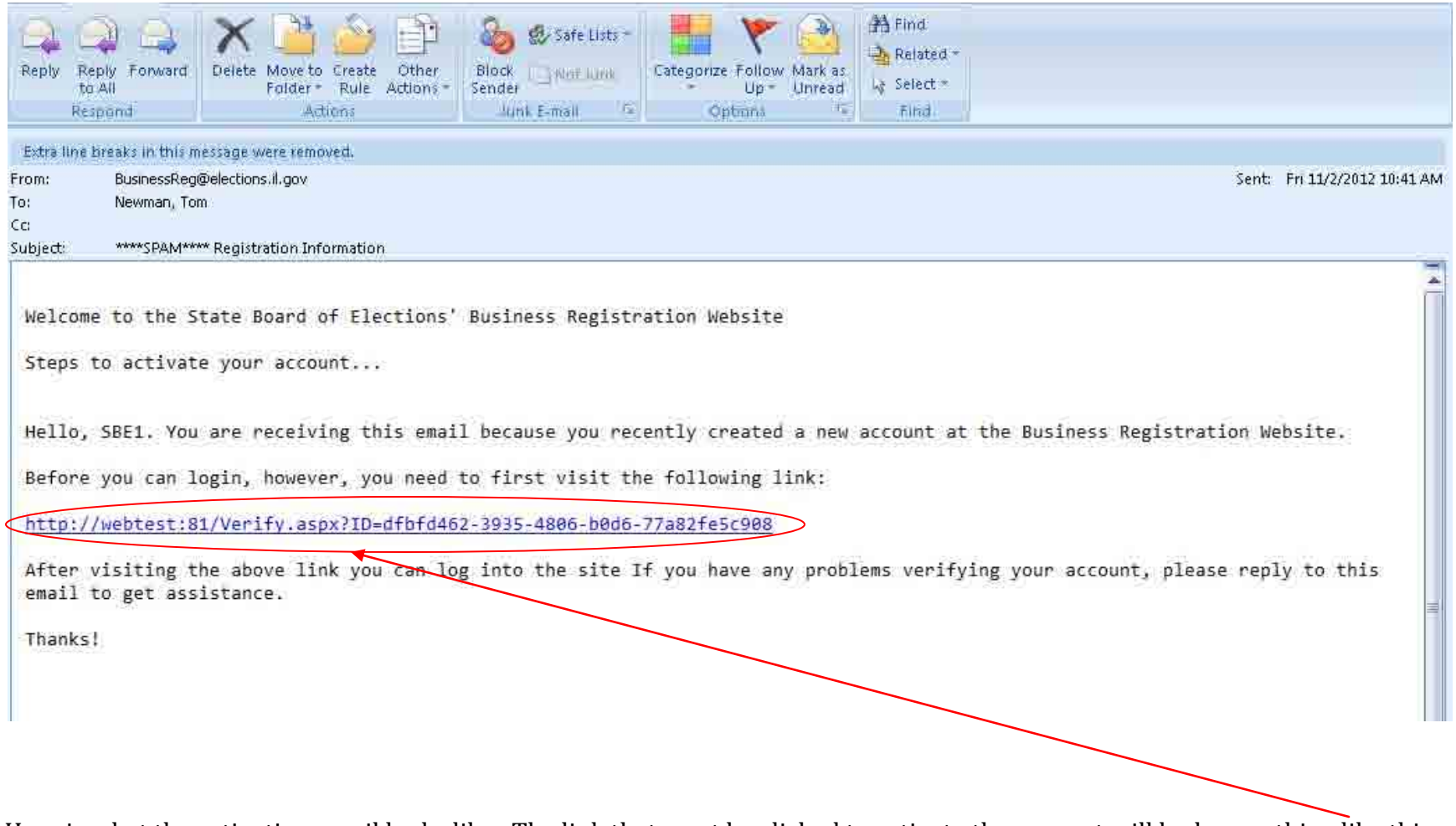
This is the login screen, accessed by clicking on "Create Business Account/Access Existing Account" on the previous screen. Businesses who have already registered may access their account by entering their User Name and Password, and clicking "Log In".

Businesses registering for the first time should click on "Don't have an account?"

The first step in the registration process is selecting a user name for the account. The user name can be any combination of numbers and letters, but once selected there is no way to change the user name. Each user name can only be used once.

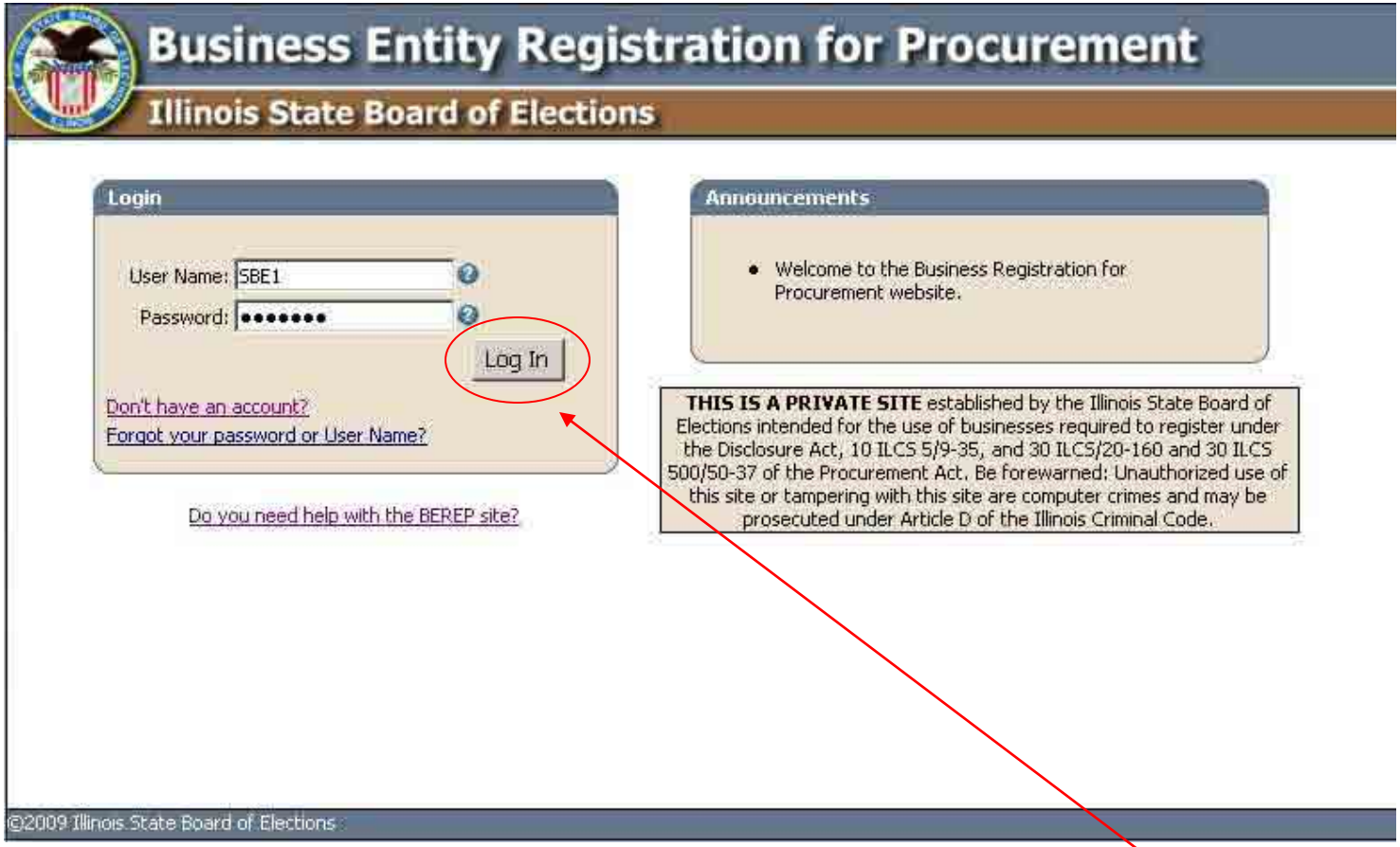
After selecting a user name, a password must be selected and entered twice for confirmation. A unique email address must also be entered, and must be available to the user because it will be needed to activate the account in the next step. You should also create a security question and answer (this will be used if you forget your password or user name). Finally, you must enter the name of a contact person and a phone number where that person can be reached. Once all fields have been completed, click "Create User".

Once the account has been created, an email will automatically be sent to the email address entered during the previous step. This email contains an activation link which must be clicked in order to activate the account and allow the user to continue with the registration process. Clicking "Continue" on this page will take you back to the login screen, but you will not be able to log in to the account until it has been activated.

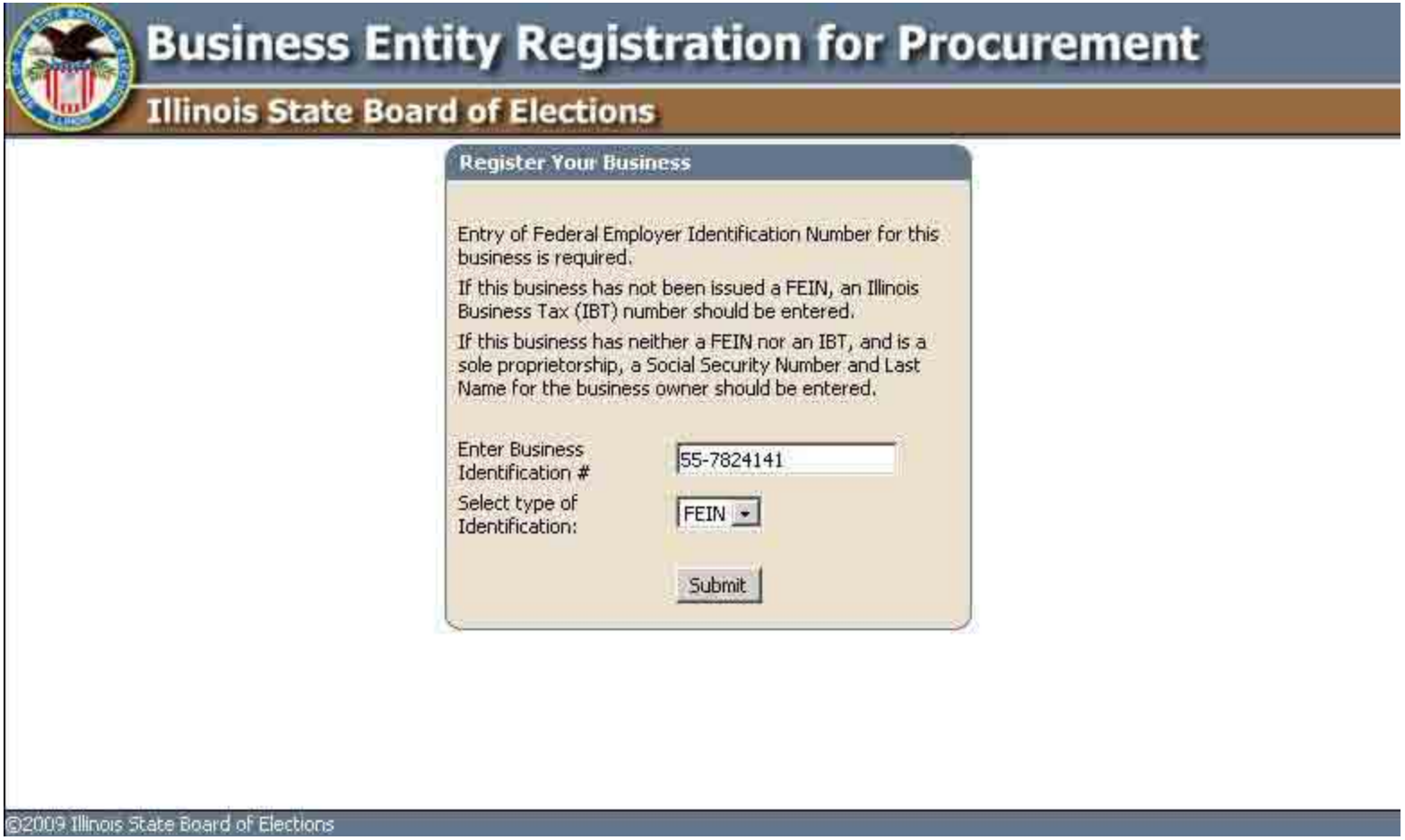


Here is what the activation email looks like. The link that must be clicked to activate the account will look something like this. If you do not receive the email (it should arrive very quickly), check any spam filters on your email system. If this does not solve the problem, it may be necessary to contact the State Board of Elections. The most common error is an incorrectly entered email address. If necessary, the activation email can also be sent from a different email address at the Board (this has typically been successful when email problems have arisen in the past.)

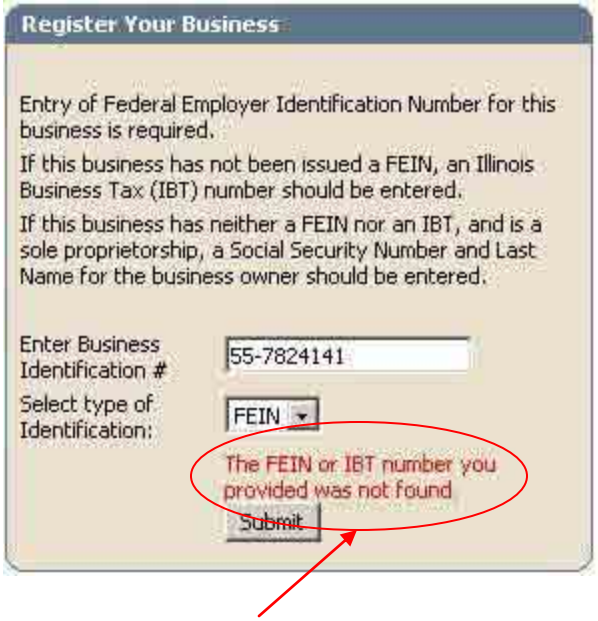
Once the account has been activated, you will see this screen. You can now log in to the account and continue the registration process.



The login should be very straightforward. Just enter the user name, password and click "Log In".



The next step is the one most likely to cause problem a problem requiring assistance. You must enter the FEIN number for your business, or possibly an IBT number or Social Security Number in some cases. (It does not matter if a dash is used in the number.) However, if the information entered does not match the information on file with the Illinois Department of Revenue, an error message will pop up:



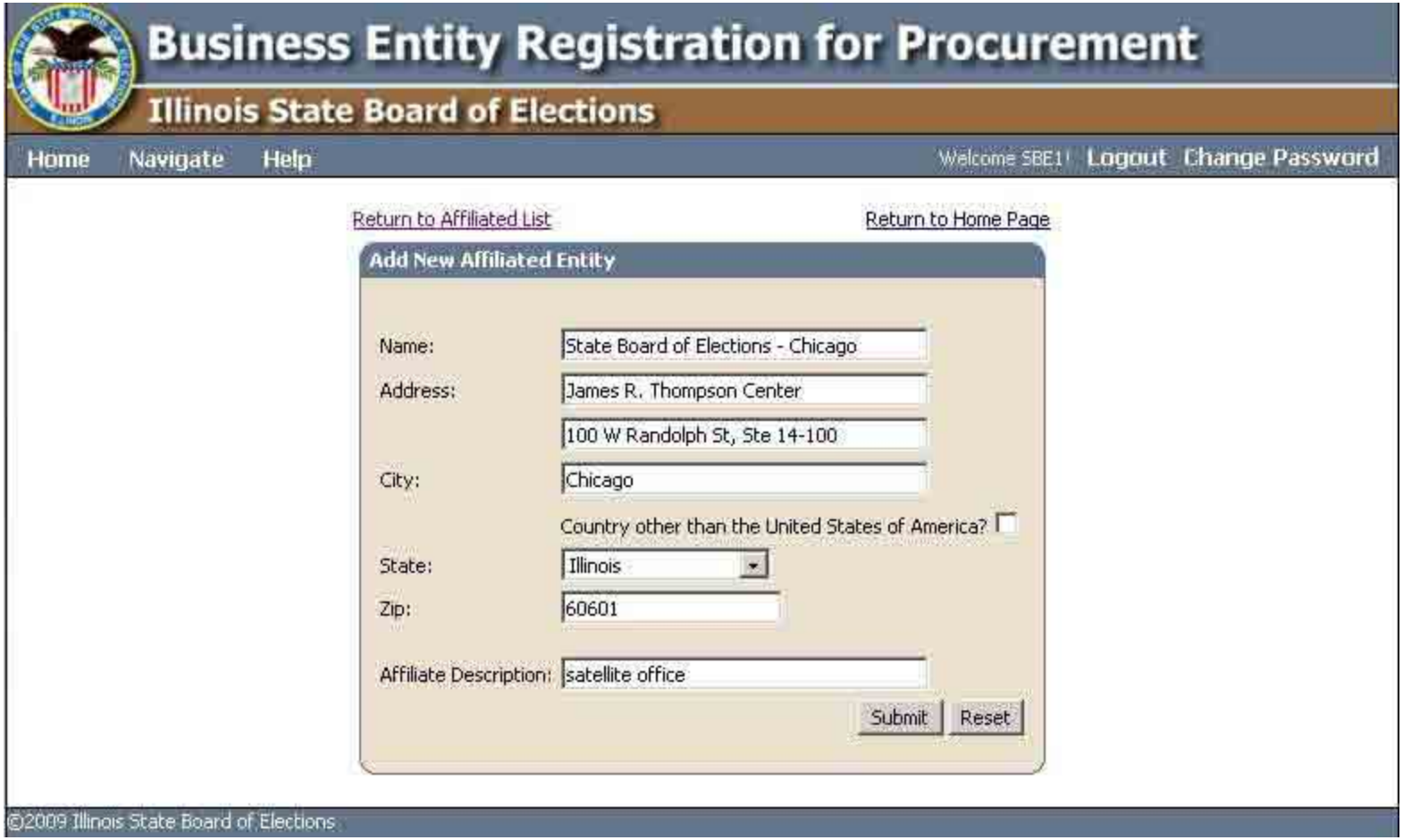
If you see this message, you will have to contact the Campaign Disclosure Division of the Illinois State Board of Elections, at 217-782-4141. You will only need to provide the user name you created for their account. Fixing the problem takes just a few seconds – really.

If the business trying to register is from outside the USA and does not have an FEIN, IBT or SSN number, the process becomes a little more complicated. The business will again need to contact Board staff for assistance. The registration can be completed by having the business provide an alternate form of tax id number, accompanied by a letter explaining that this number will be used in place of the usual FEIN number. Board staff will then have to create the account for the user, including the information contained in the next step. Once the account has been completed, the user can complete the rest of the registration process on their own.

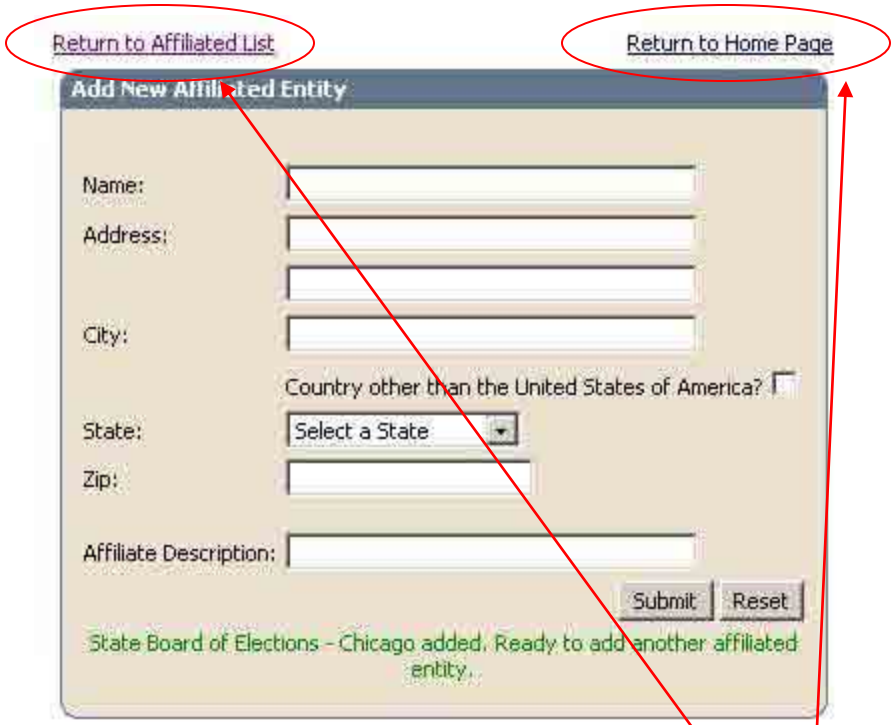
Once the account is created and the FEIN number entered, you will enter basic information about your business, including name, address, phone number and email address (this does not have to be the same email address as the one entered for the contact person, but it can be).

Once the business information has been submitted, this screen will appear. You must now enter additional information about affiliated entities and affiliated persons. The registration is not complete until this is done, but there will be no warning beyond this screen to tell you that the registration is not finished. If you have questions about the definitions for affiliated persons or affiliated entities, you can click on the button next to each listing for more information. When you are ready to proceed, click the link at the bottom of the page.

To begin adding affiliate information, you must click either "Add New Entity" or "Add New Person". It is important to remember that affiliated persons must be added as persons, not entities. If you attempt to obtain a copy of the certificate of registration (in an upcoming step), the system will not produce the certificate unless at least one affiliated person has been entered. Entry of persons as entities is probably the most common user error in the registration process. Incorrect entries must be deleted and re-entered under the correct category.



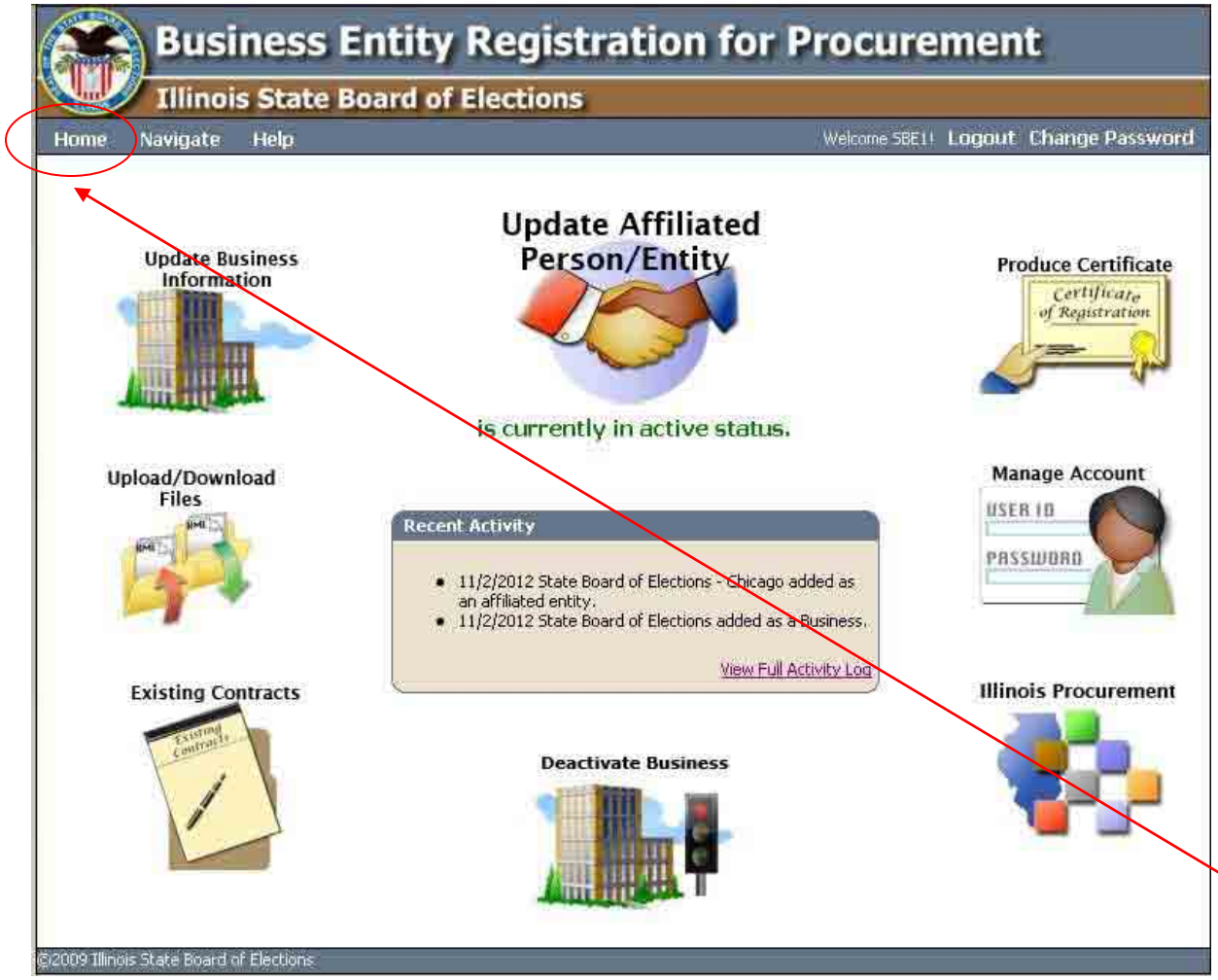
Here is a sample entry for an affiliated entity. The required information is very basic – the only field likely to cause any confusion is the Affiliate Description at the bottom. This is just a simple explanation of the relationship of the affiliate to the registering business, such as a parent company or subsidiary company.



Once an affiliated entity is submitted, this screen will pop up. You can add another affiliated entity, or return to the list of affiliates already entered by clicking Return to Affiliated List. If you are finished entering affiliated entities, you can return to the registration home page by clicking Return to Home Page.

This is the Affiliates List. All affiliated entities and affiliated persons will be shown. Entries on the list can be changed or removed by clicking either "Edit Affiliate" or "Delete Affiliate". There are also links provided to add a new affiliated entity or affiliated person.

Here is a sample entry for an affiliated person. Note that each person must be selected as an Executive Employee or Owner, and the person's title should be entered. The "Spouse" box should only be clicked if the person being entered is the spouse of an executive employee or owner. The field titled "Description" is provided to allow the user to enter an additional explanation about the affiliated person, beyond that contained in the Executive Title.



This is the user's BEREP home page. Any recent activity is listed in the center of the screen, and the full activity log can be accessed from this location as well. This page can be accessed at any time during the registration by clicking on Home in the upper left.

This link, in the top center of the Home page, allows you to add, delete, or make changes to the list of affiliated persons or affiliated entities.

The Produce Certificate link, in the upper right, allows you to create a .pdf copy of your certificate of registration, once you have completed the registration process. Selecting this link will take you to the verification screen shown on the next page. You must click the "I Agree" button to be able to produce the certificate. Clicking "I Do Not Agree" allows you to continue entering required information prior to producing the certificate.

It should be noted that the registration process does not have to be completed in one sitting – you can log in and out of the account whenever needed. However, if an account is created but the business FEIN number is not entered within 72 hours, the account will automatically be deleted from the system.

Business Entity Registration for Procurement

Illinois State Board of Elections

Home Navigate Help Welcome SBE1! Logout Change Password

Certification Agreement

On behalf of State Board of Elections , I hereby affirm that the registration submitted is up-to-date, complete, and correct, and is in compliance with 5/9-35 of the Campaign Disclosure Act [10 ILCS 5/9-1 et seq].

I understand that failure to comply with the provisions of this section may result in the rejection of any bids for State of Illinois contracts, voidance of any existing contracts with the State of Illinois, and/or the assessment of civil penalties: $1000 per day for failure to timely update a registration, up to $1001 per day for failure to provide the Certificate of Registration to all the business entity's affiliated persons and affiliated entities, and up to $5000 for willful failure to disclose material information on this registration.

I agree | I do not agree

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Certificate of Registration

STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Registration No. 12546

State Board of Elections

2329 S. MacArthur Blvd.

Springfield IL 62563

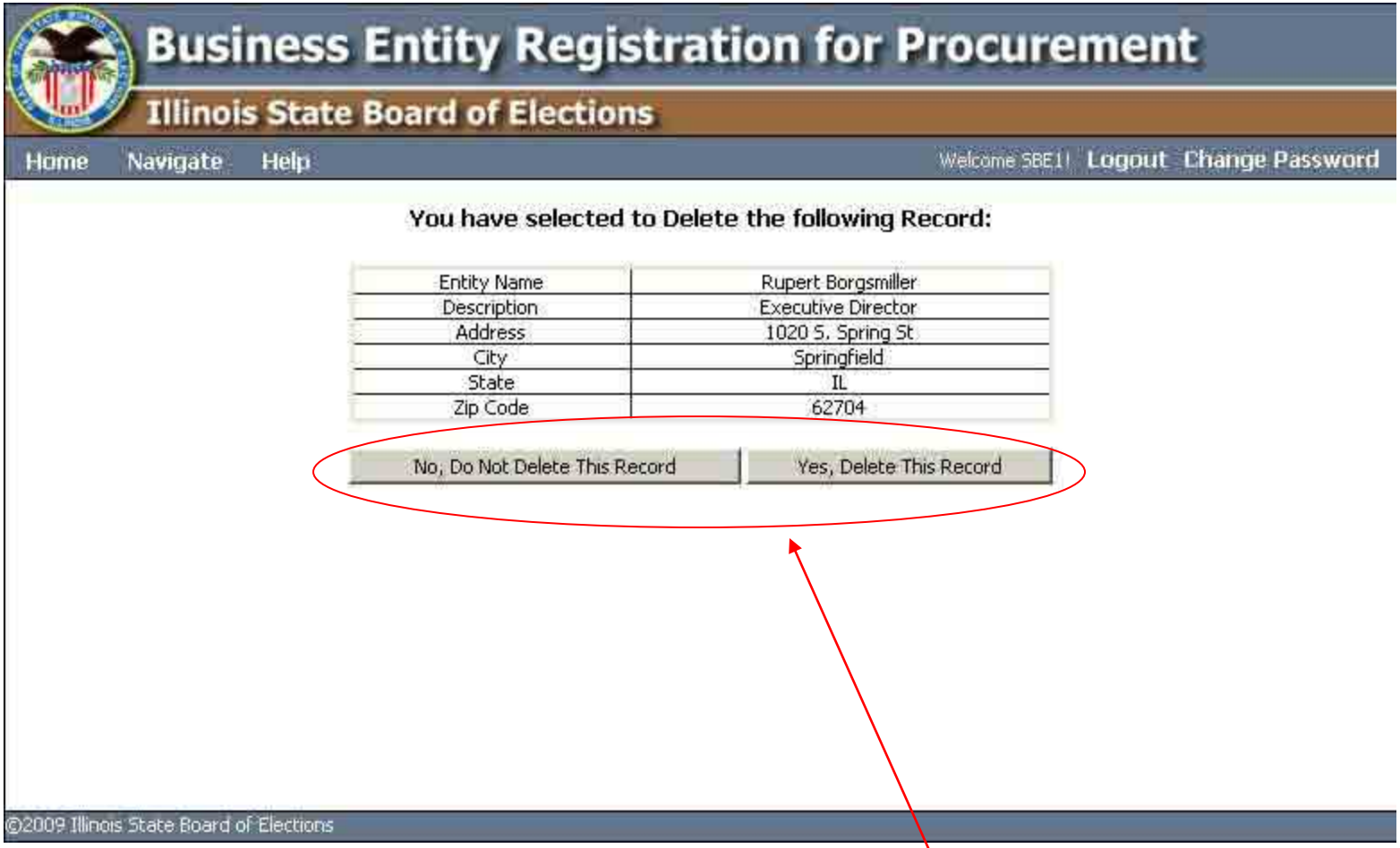
Information for this business last updated on:

Friday, November 02, 2012

The certificate of registration will be produced as a .pdf document, which can be viewed, printed or saved by the user. It should be noted that the date at the bottom of the document only reflects the most recent date on which registration information has been updated – not the date the document itself was produced.

As mentioned earlier, if your business does not have at least one affiliated person entered, you will be unable to produce the certificate of registration and will see the above message if you attempt to produce the certificate.

Affiliated persons incorrectly entered as affiliates can be removed by accessing the affiliates list and clicking the red "X" for the incorrect entry.

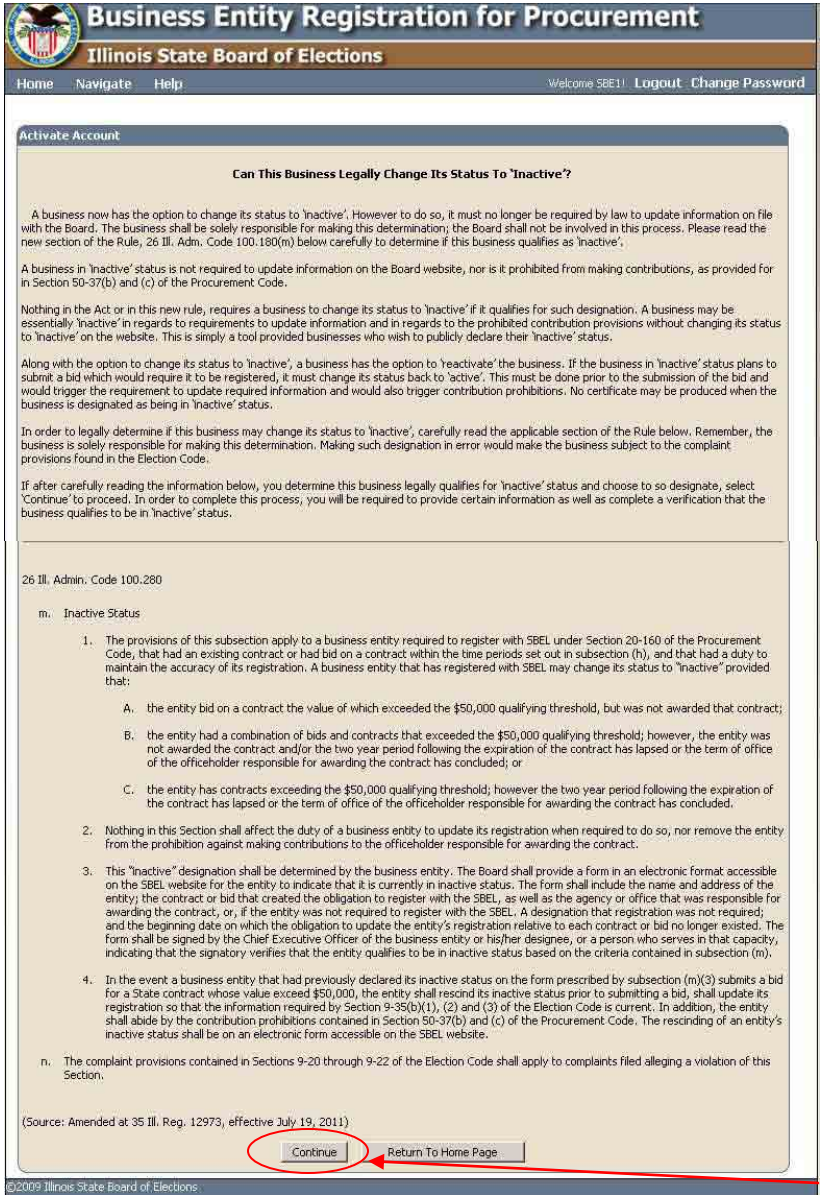


After clicking the red "X" for the entry, you are given the option to keep or delete the entry.

This link, located on the middle right of the Home page, takes you to a screen where you can change information for the contact person, as well as change the security question and answer for the account:

The Illinois Procurement link, on the bottom right of the Home page, takes you to the website of the Illinois Procurement bulletin. You will first be warned that continuing on this link will cause you to leave the BEREP site:

This link, located on the bottom of the Home page, allows a business to change their status from "active" to "inactive". Once a business is registered in the BEREP database, there is currently no way to remove them from the database. However, they can change to "inactive" status, provided they are legally no longer required to be registered. Clicking this link will provide you with information about the deactivation process, and a link that must be clicked to continue the process. The process itself will take you through several more screens with links that must be clicked to continue:



Business Entity Registration for Procurement

Illinois State Board of Elections

Home Navigate Help Welcome SBE1! Logout Change Password

Activate Account

Can This Business Legally Change Its Status To 'Inactive'?

A business now has the option to change its status to 'inactive'. However to do so, it must no longer be required by law to update information on file with the Board. The business shall be solely responsible for making this determination; the Board shall not be involved in this process. Please read the new section of the Rule, 26 Ill. Adm. Code 100.180(m) below carefully to determine if this business qualifies as 'inactive'.

A business in 'inactive' status is not required to update information on the Board website, nor is it prohibited from making contributions, as provided for in Section 50-37(b) and (c) of the Procurement Code.

Nothing in the Act or in this new rule, requires a business to change its status to 'inactive' if it qualifies for such designation. A business may be essentially 'inactive' in regards to requirements to update information and in regards to the prohibited contribution provisions without changing its status to 'inactive' on the website. This is simply a tool provided businesses who wish to publicly declare their 'inactive' status.

Along with the option to change its status to 'inactive', a business has the option to 'reactivate' the business. If the business in 'inactive' status plans to submit a bid which would require it to be registered, it must change its status back to 'active'. This must be done prior to the submission of the bid and would trigger the requirement to update required information and would also trigger contribution prohibitions. No certificate may be produced when the business is designated as being in 'inactive' status.

In order to legally determine if this business may change its status to 'inactive', carefully read the applicable section of the Rule below. Remember, the business is solely responsible for making this determination. Making such designation in error would make the business subject to the complaint provisions found in the Election Code.

If after carefully reading the information below, you determine this business legally qualifies for 'inactive' status and choose to so designate, select 'Continue' to proceed. In order to complete this process, you will be required to provide certain information as well as complete a verification that the business qualifies to be in 'inactive' status.

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26 Ill. Admin. Code 100.280

m. Inactive Status

1. The provisions of this subsection apply to a business entity required to register with SBEL under Section 20-160 of the Procurement Code, that had an existing contract or had bid on a contract within the time periods set out in subsection (h), and that had a duty to maintain the accuracy of its registration. A business entity that has registered with SBEL may change its status to "inactive" provided that:

   A. the entity bid on a contract the value of which exceeded the $50,000 qualifying threshold, but was not awarded that contract;

   B. the entity had a combination of bids and contracts that exceeded the $50,000 qualifying threshold; however, the entity was not awarded the contract and/or the two year period following the expiration of the contract has lapsed or the term of office of the officeholder responsible for awarding the contract has concluded; or

   C. the entity has contracts exceeding the $50,000 qualifying threshold; however the two year period following the expiration of the contract has lapsed or the term of office of the officeholder responsible for awarding the contract has concluded.

2. Nothing in this Section shall affect the duty of a business entity to update its registration when required to do so, nor remove the entity from the prohibition against making contributions to the officeholder responsible for awarding the contract.

3. This "inactive" designation shall be determined by the business entity. The Board shall provide a form in an electronic format accessible on the SBEL website for the entity to indicate that it is currently in inactive status. The form shall include the name and address of the entity; the contract or bid that created the obligation to register with the SBEL, as well as the agency or office that was responsible for awarding the contract, or, if the entity was not required to register with the SBEL. A designation that registration was not required; and the beginning date on which the obligation to update the entity's registration relative to each contract or bid no longer existed. The form shall be signed by the Chief Executive Officer of the business entity or his/her designee, or a person who serves in that capacity, indicating that the signatory verifies that the entity qualifies to be in inactive status based on the criteria contained in subsection (m).

4. In the event a business entity that had previously declared its inactive status on the form prescribed by subsection (m)(3) submits a bid for a State contract whose value exceed $50,000, the entity shall rescind its inactive status prior to submitting a bid, shall update its registration so that the information required by Section 9-35(b)(1), (2) and (3) of the Election Code is current. In addition, the entity shall abide by the contribution prohibitions contained in Section 50-37(b) and (c) of the Procurement Code. The rescinding of an entity's inactive status shall be on an electronic form accessible on the SBEL website.

n. The complaint provisions contained in Sections 9-20 through 9-22 of the Election Code shall apply to complaints filed alleging a violation of this Section.

(Source: Amended at 35 Ill. Reg. 12973, effective July 19, 2011)

Continue Return To Home Page

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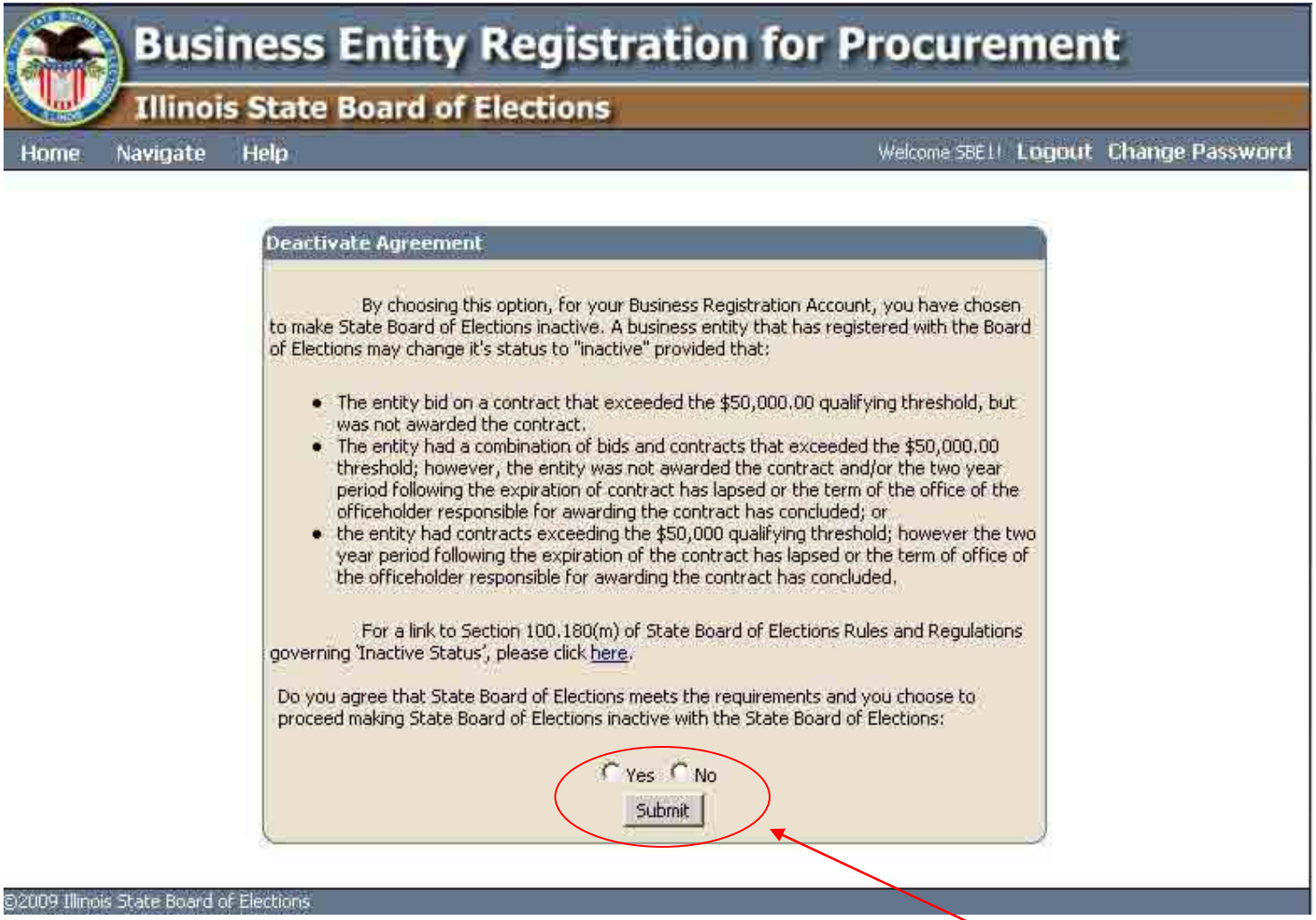
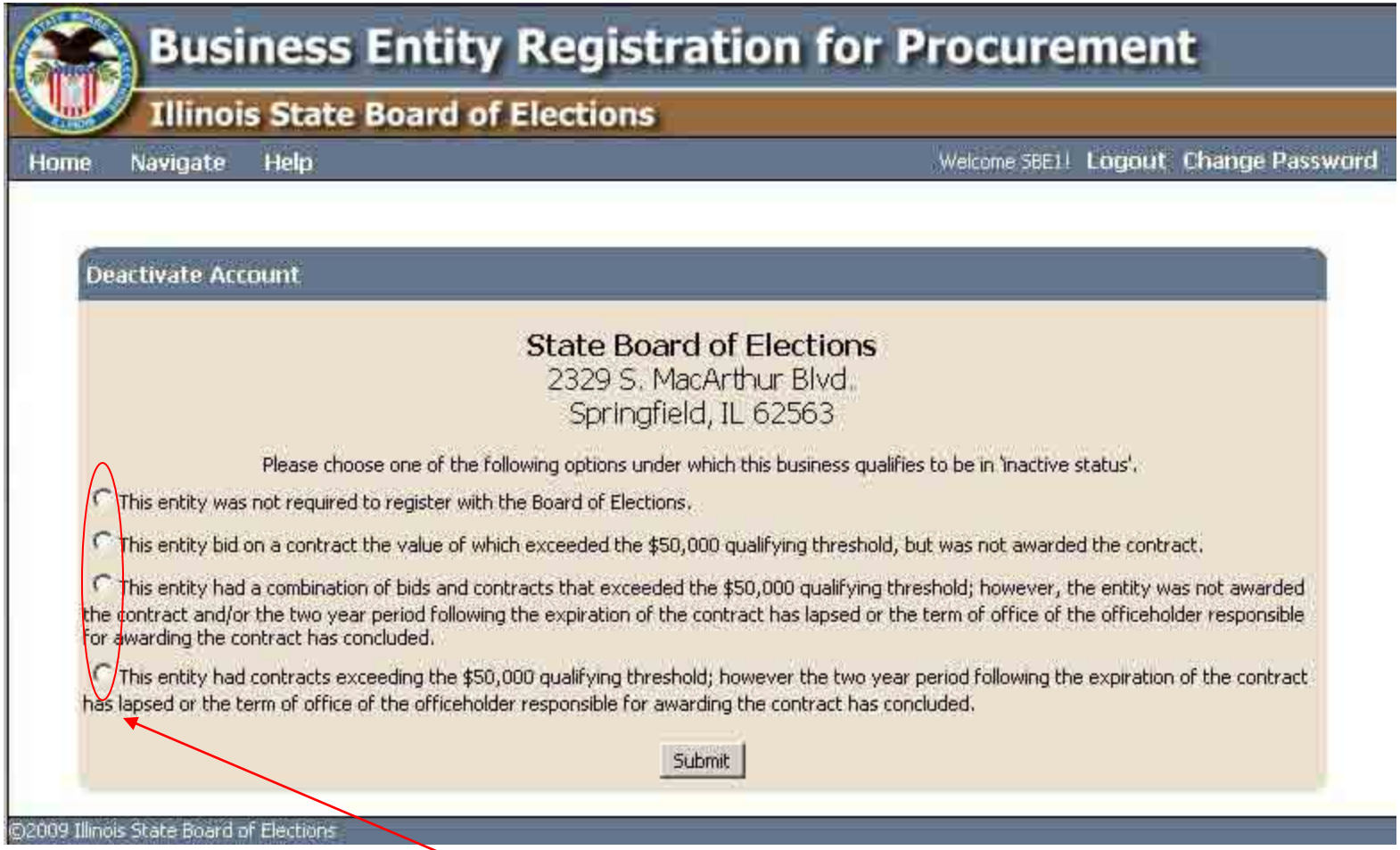
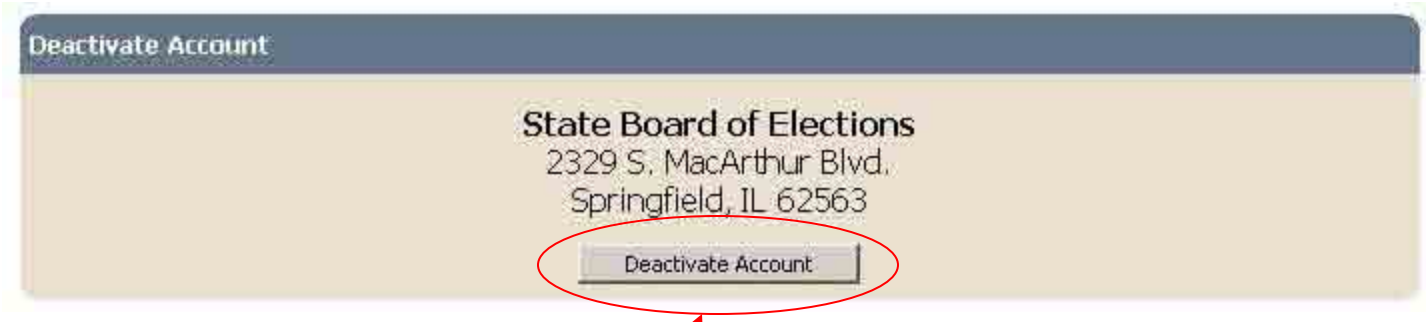
You must click this link to continue.



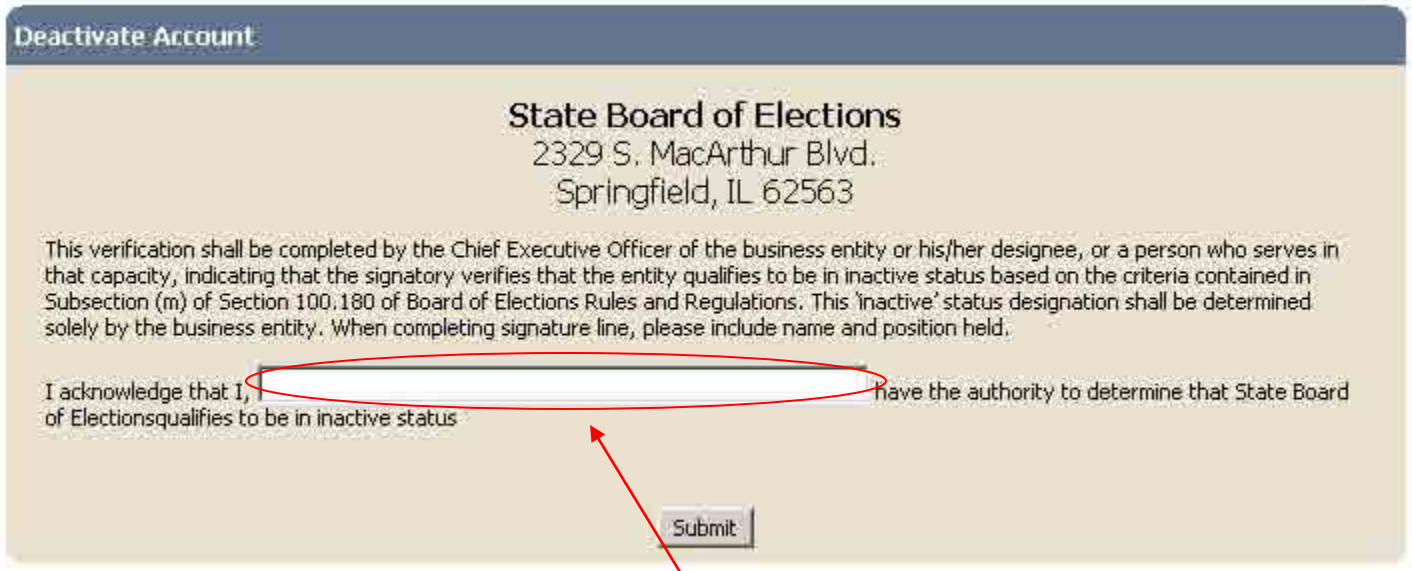
You must verify that your business meets the deactivation requirements and wishes to continue.



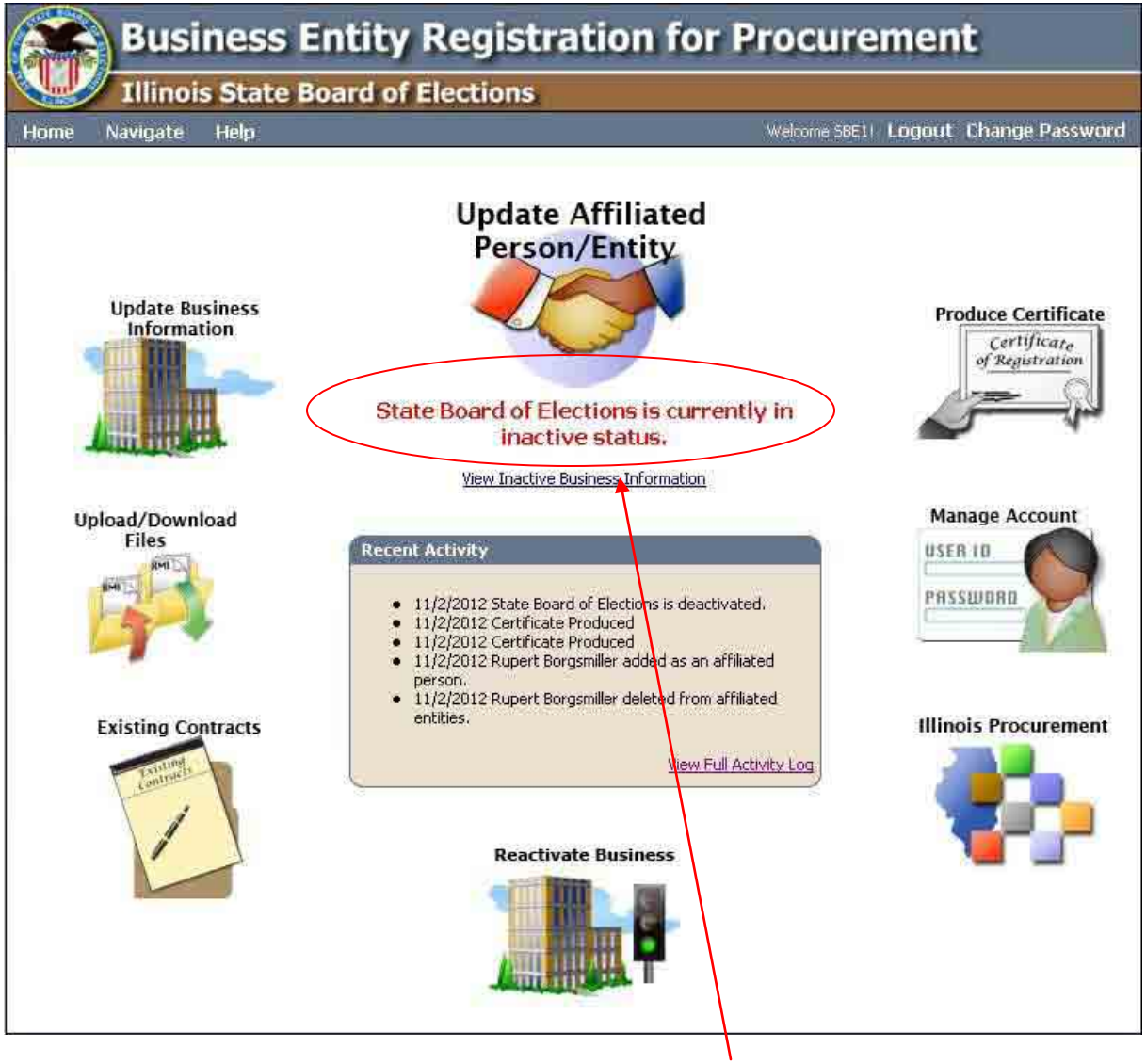
You must additionally declare the reason you are no longer required to have an active BEREP registration.



You must then click on "Deactivate Account".

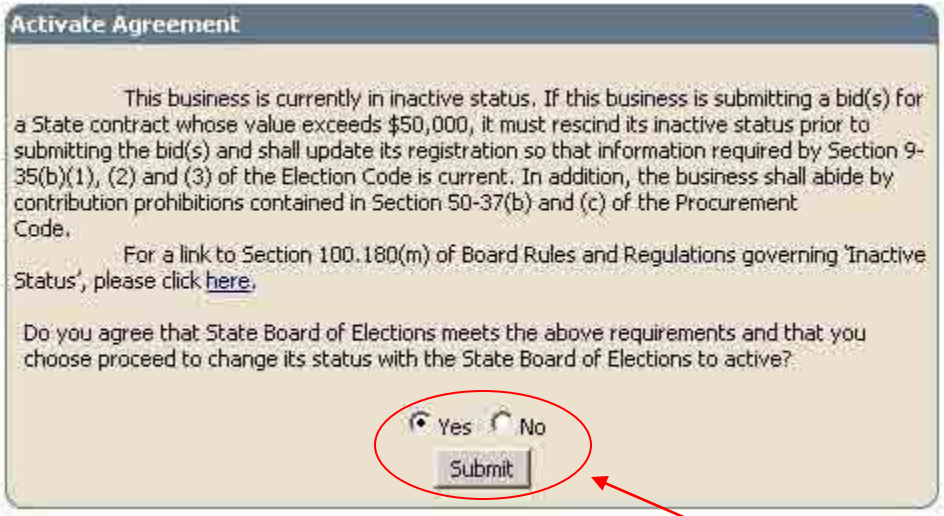


And finally, you must give the name and title of the person authorizing the business to change its status to "inactive".

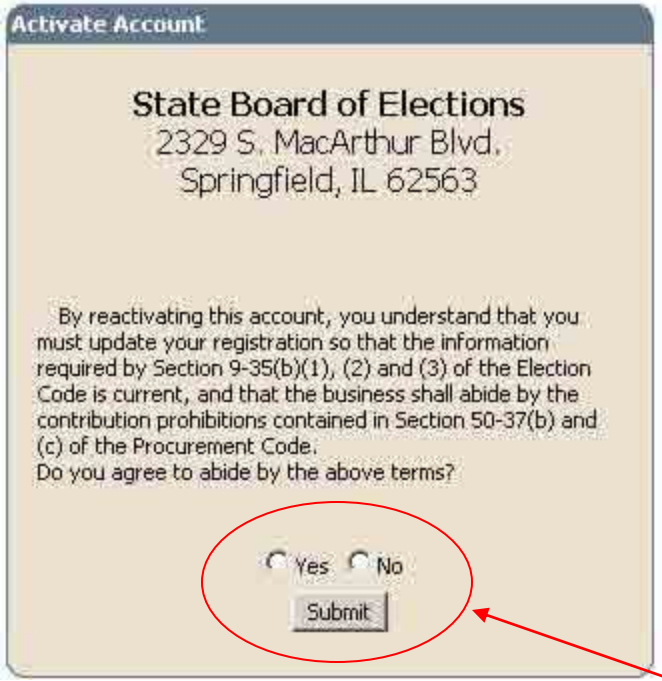


Once the business has been deactivated, this will be reflected on your BEREP Home page. (Note that the link on the bottom of the screen now reads “Reactivate Business”.)

If an inactive business wishes to reactivate, it must go through a reverse of the deactivation process, which is started by clicking on the "Reactive Business" link.



First, you must verify that you wish to reactive the business. Then the "Activate Account" button must be clicked.



Finally, you must verify that you understand the BEREP requirements for an active, registered business. Submitting this answer returns the business to active status.

This link, located on the bottom left of the Home page, takes you to the website for the Illinois Comptroller. You will be warned that continuing on this link will cause you to leave the BEREP site:

This link, located on the middle left side of the Home page, is intended for use by businesses that may have a large amount of data to enter as part of their BEREP registration. It is possible for such businesses to input their affiliate lists from an XML file.

Utilizing this method does require the user to have their business data in a very specific format. Users with problems during this process may contact Board staff for assistance, but should understand that such assistance is likely to be very limited, because the most common issues are related to the user's data file and are therefore the user's responsibility.

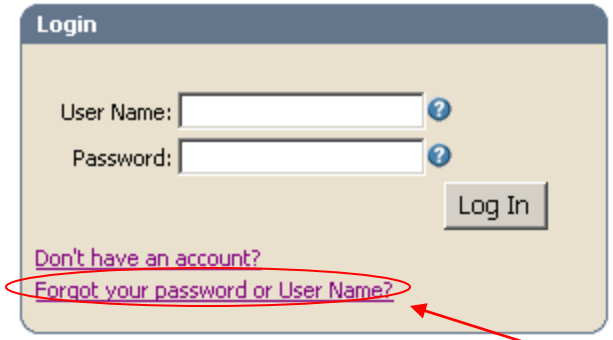
This link, located in the upper left corner of the Home page, allows you to change information about the registered business:

Note that the business tax id number may not be changed – this can only be done by contacting Board staff.

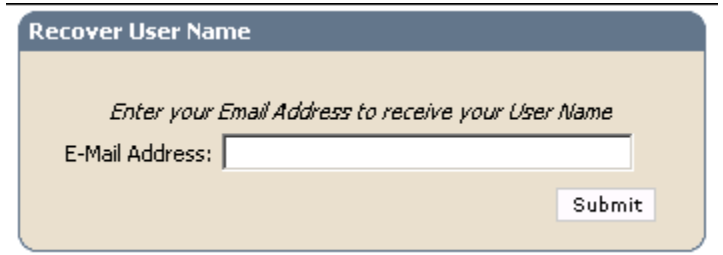
Finally, there are additional links across the top of all the BEREP account pages on the State Board of Elections website:

1. Takes the user to the BEREP home page.
2. Allows the user to access the links found on the Home page, without going to the Home page.
3. Provides links to help related to the BEREP process, including a frequently asked questions page and links to the BEREP law itself.
4. Shows the Filer Account name currently logged in. Be aware that if the user is logged in but does not perform any actions on the BEREP site for a few minutes, they may be required to log in again (in this case, the login screen will pop up when the user attempts to perform any other actions on the site.)
5. Allows the user to logout of the BEREP site and end their session.
6. Allows the user to change their account password. The process is fairly straightforward:

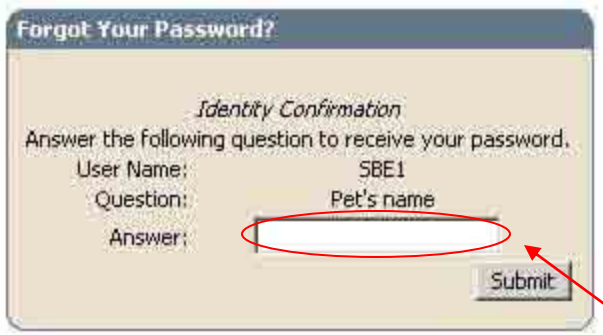
You must enter the current account password and the newly-chosen password (which must be entered twice for verification.) Once the "Change Password" button is clicked, you should see the confirmation message.



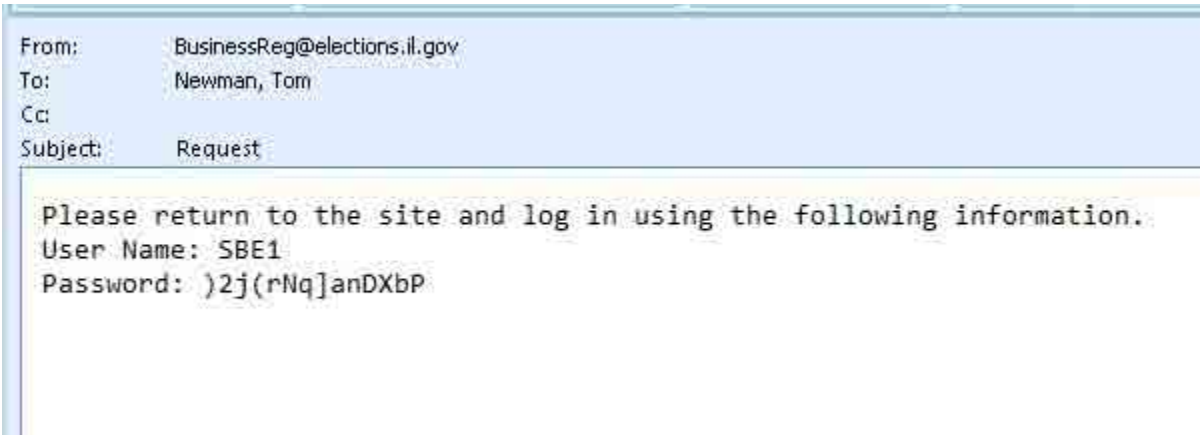
If you have lost or forgotten your account password or user name, you can have a new, randomly-generated password sent to the email address on file by clicking "Forgot your password or User Name?" Similarly, this link may be clicked if you do not recall your user name.



You will need to enter your User Name to receive a new password. If you do not remember the User Name, clicking the "Forgot your User Name" link will allow you to enter your e-mail address to be sent an email with that information.



In order to receive a new password, you must correctly answer the security question created at the start of the registration process.



The email containing a new, temporary password will look something like this. The password itself is randomly generated. Experience shows that the best way to input the new password is by copying and pasting it from the email (attempting to type in the password manually often fails.)

In cases where a business does not remember either its User Name or password, they should contact the Campaign Disclosure Division of the Illinois State Board of Elections, at 217-782-4141.