



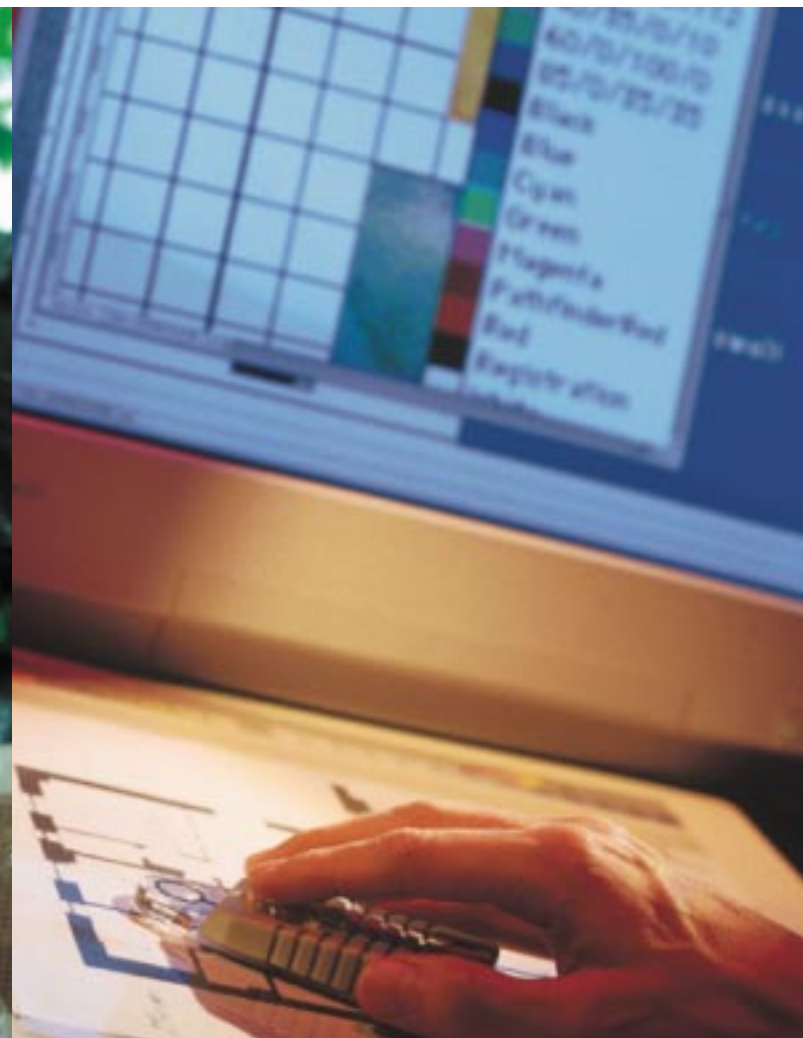
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GSA Federal Supply Service



ultimate flexibility

blanket purchase
agreements and the
federal supply schedule

*by Ronald Jenkins
Department of Veteran's Affairs*

In recent years, one of the most popular vehicles for contracting across the federal government has become the Blanket Purchase Agreement. Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) are used when agencies have a need to fill repetitive requirements for supplies or services.



the FSS vendors submit samples of the listed products to the VA Centralized Acquisition and Analysis Division (CAAD) for evaluation by the clinical user groups.

Upon completion of the product evaluations, the user groups inform the NAC which vendor's products have passed the clinical evaluation for inclusion in the BPA procurement. The NAC then issues a Request for Quote (RFQ) to these vendors. In the RFQ, the NAC informs vendors that the objective of the RFQ is to obtain discounted pricing from

The use of these types of agreements is rooted in the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) for items on the Federal Supply Schedule (FSS). Part 8 of the FAR, which governs FSS, allows for the establishment of single award BPAs against the terms and conditions of FSS contracts. The National Acquisition Center (NAC) uses BPAs as one method to award national agreements under the VA's standardization programs.

The VA standardization programs include the Medical/Surgical Standardization Program, the Prosthetics Standardization Program, and the recently established Generic Pharmaceutical Program. All three programs have used the BPA as an effective tool for national standardization awards, but the Medical/Surgical Program has used this tool almost exclusively for awarding national agreements. Under the Medical/Surgical Program, BPAs are awarded as single source, mandatory use agreements with vendors having the items on FSS contracts.

The process for establishing a single award, mandatory BPA for medical/surgical products begins with the selection of an item identified as having the potential to improve the quality of patient care and/or having the potential for the VA to realize savings through consolidated or leveraged purchasing. After the items are selected, they are assigned to various clinical "User Groups." The user groups are composed of VA clinicians with expert knowledge of the items being standardized.

These groups establish criteria to clinically evaluate the FSS vendor's product and the NAC issues a "sources sought" notice in FedBizOpps with the criteria listed. This notice requests that

the FSS prices, which are used as a benchmark in determining if offered prices are fair and reasonable.

In addition to negotiating lower pricing than FSS, the NAC may also negotiate shorter delivery times, increased geographic delivery coverage, and lower order minimums than those contained in the vendor's FSS contract.

After award, the BPAs are reviewed on an annual basis by the NAC and user groups to make sure pricing is still fair and reasonable and to identify any technological advancement in the items procured. Depending on the results of the review, the BPAs may be canceled.

Overall, the use by the NAC of the BPA contracting vehicle streamlines the contracting process. It provides the government with flexibility in terminating agreements and ensures that VA facilities have an alternative to open market buying. Because of the advantages and flexibility that BPAs provide, it remains a very popular contracting vehicle among federal agencies.

For more information, please contact:

Ron Jenkins
VA-NAC National Contracts Division
(708) 786-4929
ronald.jenkins2@med.va.gov

working for you

by Todd Posey

gsa multiple award schedules and government wide acquisition contracts

The GSA Federal Supply Service manages over 50 Multiple Award Schedules (MAS) and a host of Governmentwide Acquisition Contracts (GWACS) covering a wide variety of products and services. GSA contracts feature nearly 11,000 leading suppliers and professional service providers offering nearly 6 million items covering everything from office supplies and furniture solutions to cutting-edge professional services. These contracts, along with a variety of online acquisition e-Tools such as *GSA Advantage*.[®], e-Buy, e-Library and the FSS Center for Acquisition Excellence (formerly U-MAS) virtual training campus, provide you with the tools to get your job done efficiently and on your terms!





GSA Contracts...Always in Compliance

GSA Multiple Award Schedules offer worldwide contracts with commercial firms to provide millions of state-of-the-art, high quality products and services at volume discount pricing. GSA awards contracts with common terms and conditions in accordance with FAR Part 9 to ensure you receive fair and reasonable pricing from quality service providers. With MAS, you control the acquisition by managing the procurement from start to finish. You can use MAS contracts to meet your needs by placing a task order customized for your specific requirements. The result will be reduced procurement lead-

times, cost savings, qualified contractors, credit toward your agency's socio-economic goals, and easy ordering while ensuring your agency complies with the Competition in Contracting Act (CICA.) The MAS Program offers these benefits, but leaves you in the driver seat to satisfy your requirement.

GSA Governmentwide Acquisition Contracts (GWACs) offer full-service, total package solutions for all your IT needs. Customers benefit by having access to long-term, pre-competed multiple award contracts that can stand up to the most challenging requirements, yet remain easy to use. Having trouble meeting your agency procurement preference goals? Let GSA assist you by recording the small business credit for each task order placed with a Small, Small Disadvantaged, 8(a), Woman-owned, or HUBZone firm.

Where to Learn More About GSA Contracts

Visit www.gsa.gov/schedules to learn more about GSA Multiple Award Schedules. Learn more about GWACs by visiting www.gsa.gov/gwacs. Online training is available at www.gsa.gov/centerforacquisitionexcellence.

GSA has several acquisition e-Tools you can access to help place your order through MAS, just logon to www.gsaadvantage.gov. Don't forget to check www.gsa.gov/ebuy to powerup your next RFQ or RFI. Additionally, GSA will come to you to provide free training on a variety of topics relative to GSA product and service offerings. Call 800-488-3111 or e-mail MASHelpdesk@gsa.gov for training inquiries or for any other questions about GSA contracts.

You may also contact a solution expert at one of GSA's ten Centers. Point your browser to one of the links below to learn more about each MAS or GWAC program.

Services Acquisition Center	www.gsa.gov/servicesacquisitioncenter	
Advertising and Integrated Marketing Solutions (AIMS)	www.gsa.gov/marketingservices	Schedule 541
Financial and Business Solutions (FABS)	www.gsa.gov/fabs	Schedule 520
Professional Engineering Services (PES)	www.gsa.gov/engineeringservices	Schedule 871
GSA SmartPay** Charge Card Services	www.gsa.gov/gsmartpay	*Multiple Award Contract

National Furniture Center	www.gsa.gov/furniture	
For web sites, visit www.gsa.gov/furniture , click on Furniture Schedules.		
Comprehensive Furniture Management Services		Schedule 71 II K
Office Furniture		Schedule 71 I
Household and Quarters Furniture		Schedule 71 II
Packaged Furniture		Schedule 71 II H
Special Use Furniture		Schedule 71 III
Miscellaneous Furniture – Security Filing Cabinets, Safes, Vault Doors, Map, and Plan Files and Accessories, COMSEC Containers, and Special Access Control Containers		Schedule 71 III E
Floor Coverings – Carpets, Rugs, Carpet Tiles, and Carpet Cushions; Vinyl and Rubber Tiles and Rolls; Mats and Matting (with and without logos)		Schedule 72 I A
Furnishings		Schedule 72 II
The Office, Imaging, and Document Solution		Schedule 36
Professional Audio/Visual, Telecommunications, and Security Solutions		Schedule 58 I

Office Supplies and Administrative Services

Acquisition Center	www.gsa.gov/osas	
Office Products/Supplies and Services and New Products/Technology		Schedule 75
Human Resources Management and Equal Opportunity Services	www.gsa.gov/hreeo	Schedule 738 X
Training Aids and Devices, Instructor Led Training, Course Development, and Test Administration	www.gsa.gov/schedule69	Schedule 69
Shipping, Packaging, and Packing Supplies		Schedule 81 I B
Cameras, Photographic Printers, and Related Supplies and Services (Digital and Fill-based), Professional Film Development, Videotape Processing Services, and Web Photo Storage Services		Schedule 67
Publications Media		Schedule 76
JWOD Schedule		00JWOD

Center for Facilities Maintenance and Hardware	www.gsa.gov/superstore	
Facilities Maintenance Plus		Schedule 03FAC
<i>Please note that this Schedule includes:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent elevator inspection services • Elevator and escalator preventive maintenance • Fire alarm/suppression systems, preventive maintenance, and repair services • Complete facilities maintenance and management • Electrical and all utility services limited to facility maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refrigeration and HVAC • Grounds maintenance • Tree Planting/Trimming/Removal • Pest Control • Industrial, Aerospace and marine painting 	
Hardware SuperStore		Schedule 51 V

General Products Center	www.gsa.gov/generalproducts	
Total Solutions for Law Enforcement, Security, Facilities Management, Fire, Rescue, Clothing, Marine Craft, and Emergency/Disaster Response	www.gsa.gov/firesecurity	Schedule 84
Temporary Administrative and Professional Staffing	www.gsa.gov/tempservices	Schedule 736
Test and Measurement Equipment, Avionics Equipment, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, and Related Services	www.gsa.gov/scientific	Schedule 66 II J

General Products Center (continued)

Chemistry, Biochemistry, Clinical Instruments, General Purpose Laboratory Instruments, and Services	www.gsa.gov/scientific	Schedule 66 II N
Geophysical, Environmental Analysis Equipment, and Services	www.gsa.gov/scientific	Schedule 66 II Q
Laboratory Testing and Analysis Services	www.gsa.gov/scientific	Schedule 873
Sports, Promotional, Outdoor, Recreational, Trophies and Signs (Sports)	www.gsa.gov/recreation	Schedule 78
Building and Building Materials/Industrial Services and Supplies	www.gsa.gov/bulindustrial	Schedule 56
Food Service, Hospitality, Cleaning Equipment and Supplies, Chemicals and Services	www.gsa.gov/food service	Schedule 73

Management Services Center

Management, Organizational, and Business Improvement Services (MOBIS)	www.gsa.gov/mgmtservices	
Language Services	www.gsa.gov/mobis	Schedule 874
Energy Services	www.gsa.gov/language	Schedule 738 II
Logistics Worldwide (LOGWORLD)	www.gsa.gov/energyservices	Schedule 871 II
Environmental Services	www.gsa.gov/logworld	Schedule 874 V
Consolidated Services Schedule	www.gsa.gov/environmentalservices	Schedule 899
	www.gsa.gov/corporate	00CORP

Information Technology Center

Information Technology Solutions	www.gsa.gov/itcenter	Schedule 70
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GSA Automotive

Trucks, Trailers, Construction Equipment, Cleaning Equipment and Spare Parts		Schedule 23V
Passenger and Light Trucks New Tires and Retread Tires		Schedule 26I
Leasing of Automobiles and Light Trucks		Schedule 75I

IT GWACS GSA Automotive

www.gsa.gov/mgmtservices

Small Business GWAC Center

8(a) FAST set-aside contracts for technology	www.gsa.gov/gwacs
HUBZone set-aside contracts for technology	www.gsa.gov/8afast
8(a) STARS set-aside contracts for technology	www.gsa.gov/hubzone
	www.gsa.gov/8astars

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Millennia Lite	www.gsa.gov/itgwaccenter
Smart Card	www.gsa.gov/millennialite
	www.gsa.gov/smartcard

Enterprise GWAC Center

Alliant	www.gsa.gov/egc
ANSWER (Applications 'n Support for Widely-diverse End-user Requirements)	www.gsa.gov/alliant
Millennia	www.gsa.gov/answer
ITOP II	www.gsa.gov/millennia
Virtual Data Center	www.gsa.gov/itop2
ACES – Access Certificate for Electronic Services	www.gsa.gov/virtualdata
Disaster Recovery	www.gsa.gov/aces
	www.gsa.gov/disasterrecovery