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Public Posting Requirements for Awards Between $15,000 and $25,000

When using Simplified Acquisition Procedures to issue awards with an estimated value between $15,000 and $25,000 public posting is required in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation Subpart 13.105, FAR 5.101 and 5.203.

The requirement states that any proposed contract action using Simplified Acquisition Procedures (Open Market) expected to exceed $15,000, but not exceed $25,000, must be displayed in a public place generally at the site of the contracting or acquisition office, or by appropriate electronic means, an unclassified notice of the solicitation or a copy of the solicitation. The solicitation should include a clear description of what supplies or services are to be purchased.

This public posting requirement is required regardless of whether the anticipated award vehicle is a purchase order or the whether the Government Purchase Card will be used as a payment mechanism. The following is also required as a part of this regulation:

- The notice must include a statement that all responsible sources may submit a response, which if timely received, must be considered by NIH.
- The information must be posted no later than the date the solicitation is issued, and must remain posted for at least 10 days or until after quotations have been opened, whichever is later

As part of the purchasing file, contracting officers (or purchase cardholders) must show evidence that the requirement was publically posted. A copy of solicitation with the date annotated on the solicitation when it was posted is sufficient.

For additional information please reference the Federal Acquisition Regulations at:

https://www.acquisition.gov/far/html/Subpart%2013_1.html FAR Part 13

https://www.acquisition.gov/far/html/Subpart%205_1.html#wp1097193 FAR Part 5

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Office Furniture and Related Service HHS Strategic Sourcing Blanket Purchase Agreements

HHS has awarded fourteen Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) for Office Furniture and Related Services. These new BPAs will enable HHS and its OpDivs to quickly respond to furniture needs more expeditiously as the need arises.

All HHS OpDivs are authorized to place orders against the new BPAs. However, it is the responsibility of the Contracting Officer to ensure that all applicable statutes, FAR and HHSAR regulations and policies are followed.

For the complete list of the 14 new HHS Strategic Sourcing furniture BPAs and ordering information, please click the following link at http://intranet.hhs.gov/abouthhs/administrative/ssc/index.html

Priority Sources of Supplies and Services

There are many federal regulations and policies that must be followed by the cardholder or contracting officer when fulfilling the governments' needs for supplies and services.

One of these is the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 8, "Required Sources of Supplies and Services." This FAR Subpart requires agencies to purchase supplies and services from required sources if the source is capable of providing the required supplies or services. Required sources must be checked in descending order of priority before soliciting commercial sources. The supplies and services offered by the respective sources are negotiated by the government to support various training, employment and socioeconomic programs. Only if the supplies or services cannot be obtained from one of the required sources, in descending order of priority, can supplies or services be obtained from a lower priority source.

Agencies should also make use of the Federal Strategic Sourcing Initiative (FSSI), HHS Strategic Sourcing Initiative (HHSSSI) and NIH BPAs. GSA has leveraged its purchasing power to obtain additional government discounts over current pricing from many vendors. Both GSA and HHS have established Strategic Sourcing BPAs that offer substantial savings in the area of Wireless Services, Office Supplies, Print

Management, Domestic Delivery Services, Office Furniture, Temporary Administrative Professional Services (TAPS), and Conference Administrative & Travel Services (NIHCATS II).

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The NIH Purchase Card Program routinely monitors purchase card transactions to assess compliance with laws and regulations and the adequacy of internal controls to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse. Based on periodic reviews conducted, the Program has observed a rising number of open market micro-purchases. In many of these cases, similar or identical products were found to be available from required sources, FSSI, HHS Strategic Sourcing and NIH BPA vendors that were available at a lower cost yet the purchase was made from a commercial source.   If an item is available from a required source, FSSI, HHS Strategic Sourcing or NIH BPA vendor and those sources are not used - proper documentation must be provided in the purchase card file to support the purchase of the item or service from the commercial source.   Failure to comply with this requirement violates FAR Part 8 and precludes NIH from the benefits of using required sources, FSSI, HHS Strategic Sourcing, and NIH BPAs.

Benefits of required sources, FSSI, HHS Strategic Sourcing, and NIH BPAs include simplified ordering procedures; reduced prices through volume discounts; and reduced administrative costs. The most commonly purchased commodities at the NIH are: office supplies, lab supplies, computer hardware/software/accessories, office furniture, and hardware tools.

Both the requestor and the cardholder play a large role in selecting vendors. Required sources, FSSI, HHS Strategic Sourcing and NIH BPA vendors need to be considered. In some cases, although an exact item may not be available from one of these sources, a similar item may be available that also meets the stated purchase requirements or needs of the government. It is the requestor's responsibility to clearly document the programmatic need for the product or service. In many cases, a requester has cited a specific brand name item that retails at a higher price and is only available from a commercial source, when a similar item that would meet the requirement is available from a required source, FSSI, HHS Strategic Sourcing or NIH BPA at a lower price As a consumer, you can significantly help the purchase cardholder or contracting officer in your office by looking at required sources first and then FSSI, HHS Strategic Sourcing and NIH BPA vendors before going to a commercial source. The list of required sources for supplies and services as well as the FSSI website is provided below. These must be checked in the listed order before a purchase is made:

Required sources for **supplies** that must be satisfied in descending order before purchasing from a commercial source:

- Agency Inventories:
    - NIH Surplus

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- NIH Stock Catalog http://nihsc.od.nih.gov/
- Self Service Stores (Self Service Store card is required in lieu of purchase card)
- Service Supply Center (Perry Point) http://sscweb.psc.gov/
- Excess from other agencies: http://gsaxcess.gov/
- Federal Prison Industries (UNICOR): http://www.unicor.gov/ (Not required for micro-purchases)
- AbilityOne Programs: http://abilityone.org/
- Government Wholesale Supply Source: https://www.gsaglobalsupply.gsa.gov/
- Federal Strategic Sourcing Initiative (FSSI): (Recommended) http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/112561

   Currently offering:
   - Wireless Services
   - Office Supplies
   - Print Management
   - Domestic Delivery

HHS Strategic Sourcing Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPAs): (Recommended) http://intranet.hhs.gov/abouthhs/administrative/ssc/index.html

- NIH FSS BPAs (Recommended) http://oamp.od.nih.gov/Division/SAPS/Acq/PCard/BPAProgram.asp
- Federal Supply Schedules http://www.gsaadvantage.gov
- NIH Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity contracts (IDIQs)
- NIH Open Market BPAs http://oamp.od.nih.gov/Division/SAPS/Acq/PCard/BPAProgram.asp
- Commercial Sources (open market)

Required sources for **services** that must be satisfied in descending order before purchasing from a commercial source:

   HHS Strategic Sourcing Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPAs): http://intranet.hhs.gov/abouthhs/administrative/ssc/index.html

   - Federal Strategic Sourcing Initiative (FSSI): http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/112561
   - AbilityOne Programs: http://abilityone.org/
   - NIH Federal Supply Schedule BPAs: http://oamp.od.nih.gov/Division/SAPS/Acq/PCard/BPAProgram.asp
   - Federal Supply Schedules http://www.gsaadvantage.gov

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- Federal Prison Industries (UNICOR): http://www.unicor.gov/
- NIH Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity contracts (IDIQs)
- NIH Open Market
  BPAs http://oamp.od.nih.gov/Division/SAPS/Acq/PCard/BPAProgram.asp
- Commercial Sources (open market)

If you have questions, please contact the Purchase Card Help Desk at 301-435-6606 or Creditcard@od.nih.gov.

NIH Information Systems Distribution and Procurement Program (ISDP)

In the market to purchase software? NIH has a program that saves you time and money.

The Center for Information Technology (CIT) offers a service that helps NIH purchase software products from major vendors at discounted prices - up to 60% off already low General Services Administration (GSA) negotiated prices.

This acquisition program, commonly referred to as ISDP (formal name: the Information Systems Distribution & Procurement Program), negotiates volume purchasing agreements to obtain discounted prices for a variety of software products used daily at the NIH. Between FY09 and FY11, ISDP saved NIH customers approximately $27.7 million. In order to achieve these cost savings, ISDP sends customers quarterly data calls to collect Institute and Center (IC) specific software needs and determine appropriate purchase quantities.

ISDP offers many products and benefits—a few highlights include:

- productivity tools such as Microsoft and Adobe (up to 57% off GSA pricing)
- statistical tools such as SAS and Mathematica (up to 60% off GSA pricing)
- PC/Mac tools such as FileMaker and Thursby
- anti-virus products such as Symantec and McAfee
- customized AppleCare Agreements that offers onsite hardware warranty and OS support services; and
- administrative management of all software licensing and contracts.

To get started, first visit the ISDP Web site http://isdp.nih.gov/ to browse through products and pricing. Then, refer to the IC/Agency Contacts page

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(http://isdp.nih.gov/isdp/agencycontact.action) and reach out to your designated contact to request a quote.

Also, designated users can access the new My ISDP module, which provides updated details about purchases, billing statements and other related licensing information. For information about the ISDP program, including products, pricing and access to the My ISDP module, contact NIHISDP@mail.nih.gov.

How to reconcile partial charges on your purchase card

Partial invoicing may occur when there is a delivery of one order in two or more shipments. Sometimes a vendor will bill for each shipment resulting in multiple billings that total the entire order that was originally placed. These charges may even show up in different billing statements.

For example: A cardholder places an order for $2,000 of antibiotics and then creates a purchase log for this amount. The vendor ships the order but instead of shipping the entire order, the vendor sends two partial shipments because the antibiotics cannot all be manufactured at the same time. The vendor bills for each batch of antibiotics separately, $1,000 for the first shipment and $1,000 for the second shipment. Using the same example, the manufacturer may have shipped the antibiotics on the same day and they arrive at the same time; however, because they were shipped from different warehouses, the charges may come in separately. The issue now becomes how should the cardholder match the $2000 log to the two individual transactions of $1000 each and how should this be documented?

The purchase card log should have been created with the total amount of the order (or an estimate). Once the first shipment or partial charge appears on the cardholder statement, the cardholder should partially match the charges to the one log. A separate log for each charge is not necessary since there was one purchase request for the vendor.

IMPORTANT: Cardholders shall not create one large log solely for the purpose of holding funds. **This is a violation of appropriation law.** The log created should represent the total requirement. Furthermore, a log cannot exceed the cardholder's single purchase limit.

As part of the cardholder's file, the cardholder should ensure that the partial shipments are documented and if the final invoice shows the entire amount paid, simply annotate that separate shipments were received, the date each was received, and the amount.

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The total of the separate shipments, however, should equal the total amount on the invoice. If not, an explanation must be annotated. All of the invoices should match exactly what the merchant has charged. If the merchant is unable to provide invoices showing the partial charges, annotate the file.

In NBS, the cardholder should do the following:

1. Identify the log entry and the partial invoice to be matched.

2. Check the Invoice lines and log lines at the left end of each line to match the respective log and invoice entries.

3. Select the Partial on the right end of the invoice line. Do not alter the log's remaining amount to match that charge until you match the final charge to that log.

4. Select Process button. The transactions will be moved to the Matched tab. Additional information on how to match partial charges can be found on the NBS Acquisition portal page under Job Aides.

Note: Do not dispute partial charges unless the merchant billed incorrectly. Also be sure to check your files to ensure that you do not have any outstanding orders that have not been billed prior to filing a dispute.

For additional information or the NBS Navigational Aid on Matching a Partial Invoice to a P-Card Log Entry, please click the following link at: https://nbrssprod.cit.nih.gov:8050/NBRSSDocs/AcquisitionNAVs/Pcard_doc/Match%20a%20Partial%20Invoice%20to%20a%20P-Card%20Log%20Entry.doc

If you have additional questions, please contact NBS at (301) 496-4357 or the Purchase Card Help Desk at (301) 435-6606.

All Systems Go for NITAAC's CIO

NITAAC is pleased to announce the final category of awards for CIO-SP3 Small Business, with HUBZone contracts going to Computer World Services and The St. John Group. That brings the total number of small business awards to:

89 Small Businesses

38 8(a)

10 Service Disabled Veteran Owned (SDVOSB)

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24 Women Owned

2 HUBZone

The complete listing of contract holders can be found on the NITAAC website at http://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/contracts/cio-sp3-small-business/contract-holders.

"We are extremely pleased that Customers can now choose between all of the socioeconomic categories on CIO-SP3 with confidence," said Robert Coen, Acting Program Director, "and start using this GWAC to meet their small business goals as originally intended."

The $20 Billion CIO-SP3 Small Business GWAC is the first contract of its kind ever awarded and was developed to provide more meaningful opportunities for Small Businesses to compete in the Federal Acquisition arena. Nine task orders have been competed and awarded by Other Agencies including the DOD and State Department.

"There is significant interest in this vehicle throughout government, media and industry, and we have been approached by numerous organizations to detail its benefits including (HIMMS) Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society, National Contract Management Agency (NCMA), (ACT-IAC) American Council for Technology – Industry Advisory Council, Government Executive, FedScoop, Federal Computer Week, Fed News Radio, On The Frontlines and the Coalition for Government Procurement among others," said Coen. "Our training team is ready to go on-site at any Federal agency to help them get up to speed."

NITAAC offers free training on its GWAC program, which covers everything from the basics about GWAC vehicles to specifics on how to use NITAAC's secure, web-based ordering systems to save time, money and resources. All attendees who complete the 2 hour course earn 2 continuous learning points (CLPs). Currently, federal employees can access NITAAC training in three ways: 1) On-Site at their location; 2) Via monthly webinar; and 3) At regularly scheduled monthly sessions at NIH. To submit a request for training or sign up, visit NITAAC at the following link http://www.nitaac.nih.gov and click on Training in the navigation bar.

Coen continued, "This year, we have set a goal of training every acquisition professional at NIH on how to use NITAAC GWACs to meet their business objectives and mission goals. Together, we can use these GWACs to leverage the benefits of strategic sourcing; delivering best value to the taxpayer and superior information technology capability to each and every operating division within HHS."

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For more information on CIOSP, please email the Customer Support Center at NITAACsupport@nih.gov or on 1-888-773-6542.

NIH Supply Center News

The NIH Supply Center is working to improve its online catalog; They have created a link to a PDF formatted catalog on the home page at http://nihsc.od.nih.gov/. The PDF formatted catalog is updated on a weekly basis. They are also updating prices in their on-line catalog on a daily basis to ensure the most accurate data is available to the community and continue to update the catalog with pictures, categories and other data changes as they occur. NIH SC is really excited about acquiring and incorporating an upgraded search engine for the NIH SC On-line catalog and expects to have it incorporated as soon as possible. For more information, please email William.byrd@nih.gov.

The NIH Supply Center will be sponsoring its third Product Showcase on December 13, 2012 in Building 10 South Lobby from 9:30-2:00. This Product Showcase will be unlike any other held on the NIH campus. Bring your CAN cards so your order can be processed the same day. For more information, please email Gwendolyn.carr@nih.gov or Alicia.boglin@nih.gov.

Visit the Self Service Stores: Building 10 (B2B41) and Building 31 (B1A47), open Monday through Friday from 8:00AM until 4:15PM. Email us at nihsupplycenter@od.nih.gov or call the Customer Service Representative at (301) 496-3517. The NIH Supply Center is an ISO-9001: 2008 Certified Organization.

NITAAC Receives 2012 Excellence in Partnership Award from the Coalition for Government Procurement

On October 24, 2012, NITAAC was honored by the Coalition for Government Procurement with a Myth-Busters Award at the 2012 Excellence in Partnership Awards luncheon held during their Annual Fall Training Conference at the Crystal City Marriot in Arlington, VA.

The Coalition selected NITAAC for facilitating open communication between government and industry during the acquisition process, and effectively breaking down communication barriers to create a collaborative procurement environment. NITAAC Acting Program Director Robert Coen accepted the award on behalf of the NIH saying, "I am very proud of the initiatives NITAAC has undertaken to enhance communications between our customers and industry and I am honored that the Program has been

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recognized in this fashion. We are gratified to be able to support the Office of Management and Budget in their efforts to break down barriers in communications between these groups and look forward to continuing to achieve such positive outcomes." The Coalition for Government Procurement is a national trade association representing commercial contractors in the Federal market. For more than 30 years, they have advocated for common sense policies that improve the acquisition environment for government, industry and ultimately, the American taxpayer.

"The NITAAC Team has tirelessly revolutionized the Program in the past two years, developing and implementing a comprehensive marketing campaign to raise awareness in the government community of the value of NITAAC GWACs," said Mike Pullen of Deloitte Consulting, the Coalition member who submitted the winning nomination. "With budget constraints on one hand and IT reform on the other, NITAAC GWACs have never been more relevant… enabling requirements to be processed with a speed, ease and flexibility not found in other types of contracting vehicles."

Coen was also a panelist at the Fall Training Conference, this year titled "Continuing the Dialogue – Understanding Acquisition Policy; Understanding the Federal Market; Recognizing Excellence in Partnership," where he addressed the latest purchasing trends for GWAC vehicles and key features driving usage. To learn more about NITAAC GWACs, visit http://www.nitaac.nih.gov.

Acquisition Training Schedule

Acquisition Training Classes can be accessed at the following link: http://trainingcenter.nih.gov/list.aspx?catId=1

CON 100 Shaping Small Business Arrangements

http://trainingcenter.nih.gov/show_details.aspx?cId=NIHTC9566

CON110 Mission Support Planning

http://trainingcenter.nih.gov/show_details.aspx?cId=NIHTC9568

CON 237 Simplified Acquisition Procedures

http://icatalog.dau.mil/onlinecatalog/courses.aspx?crs_id=32

Advanced Simplified Acquisition

http://trainingcenter.nih.gov/show_details.aspx?cId=NIHTC9532

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Basic Simplified Acquisition

http://trainingcenter.nih.gov/show_details.aspx?cId=NIHTC9530

Federal Appropriations Law

http://trainingcenter.nih.gov/show_details.aspx?cId=NIHTC5521

HHS Appropriations Law

http://hhsu.learning.hhs.gov/learning/faq.asp#after04182011

Internal & External Requisitioner (NBS)

http://trainingcenter.nih.gov/show_details.aspx?cId=NIHTC9516

Price Reasonableness in Simplified Acquisitions

http://trainingcenter.nih.gov/show_details.aspx?cId=NIHTC2617

Professional Services

http://trainingcenter.nih.gov/show_details.aspx?cId=NIHTC5512

Purchase Card Training (NBS)

http://trainingcenter.nih.gov/show_details.aspx?cId=NIHTC9512

Negotiation Strategies for Simplified Acquisitions

http://trainingcenter.nih.gov/show_details.aspx?cId=NIHTC5513

NBS PCard Logs & Reconciliation (Refresher)

http://trainingcenter.nih.gov/show_details.aspx?cId=NIHTC2635

Simplified Acquisition & Delegated Procurement (NBS)

http://trainingcenter.nih.gov/show_details.aspx?cId=NIHTC9513

AT100 - Section 508 Electronic & IT Training - Phase II

http://training.cit.nih.gov/coursedescription.aspx?courseID=CS0000000000852

AT110 - Creating 508 Compliant Word 2007 Documents

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http://training.cit.nih.gov/coursedescription.aspx?courseID=CS0000000000766

AT120 - Creating 508 Compliant PowerPoint 2007 Presentations

http://training.cit.nih.gov/coursedescription.aspx?courseID=CS0000000000632

AT180 - Introduction to Making MS Office 2010 Documents 508 Compliant

http://training.cit.nih.gov/coursedescription.aspx?courseID=CS0000000002327

AT170 - Section 508 Training for Purchasing Agents: Purchases, VPATS & POTS

http://training.cit.nih.gov/coursedescription.aspx?courseId=CS0000000002004

Green Purchasing Training

As a reminder, per HHS policy, all contracting officers, contract specialists, purchase cardholders, card approving officials, CORs and acquisition staff in job series 1102, 1105, and 1106 are required to take the Green Purchasing training every two calendar years. The training includes online training modules for your convenience.

NIH Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) Lists Available Online

Lists of all NIH Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) can be found at the following URL: http://oamp.od.nih.gov/Division/SAPS/Acq/PCard/BPAProgram.asp

This location contains Three BPA Lists:

1. Complete vendor alphabetical list;
2. Vendor list sorted by commodity; and
3. A listing of the preferred HHS Strategic Sourcing Vendors

If you have any questions or need further clarification, please contact the BPA helpline at 301-496-5212 or e-mail at BPAProgramBranch@od.nih.gov

We would like to thank all those who contributed to this issue and to future editions of the OALM Newsletter.

The OALM Newsletter has been published six (6) times in calendar year 2012. We encourage staff to submit articles that would be of interest to our readers. We will do our best to include such articles in future editions of the OALM Newsletter.

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