

News You Can Use

New VA Core Values

On June 20, 2011, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Eric K. Shinseki) approved the Core Values and Characteristics that apply universally across all of VA. The Core Values are the basic elements that form the underlying principles VA personnel will use every day in their service to Veterans.



Please review the new VA Core Values below.

Because **I CARE**, I will have...

I ntegrity	Act with high moral principle. Adhere to the highest professional standards. Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.
C ommitment	Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries. Be driven by an earnest belief in VA's mission. Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.
A dvocacy	Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.
R espect	Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. Show respect to earn it.
E xcellence	Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement. Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

- View VA's [Core Characteristics](#)

Training Topic

VA National Contract Service (NCS)

1) What is the VA NCS?

VA NCS is one of four services within the NAC, which is a centralized contracting unit in the [Office of Acquisition & Logistics](#). The other three services within the NAC are the FSS Service, Denver Acquisition & Logistics Center and the Business Resource Service.

2) What types of contracts does NCS establish/maintain?

Each Service within the NAC oversees specific programs. The programs managed by NCS are:

- [High Tech Medical Equipment](#) (e.g., CT, MRI, Ultrasound, Nuclear, X-ray systems, etc.)
- [National Standardization Program](#) (e.g., Pharmaceuticals, medical/surgical, dental supplies and prosthetic items)
- [Prime Vendor Distribution](#) Programs for [Pharmaceuticals](#), [Medical/Surgical Supplies](#) and [Subsistence](#)
- [Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacy](#) (CMOP)

NCS is responsible for awarding National Contracts and Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) – in support of National Standardization – for the products/services referenced above, which are available to VA medical centers, related facilities, specific other Government agencies (OGA) and some State Veterans Homes. Majority of the solicitations issued by NCS for National Contracts and BPAs are typically competitive and best value procurements. Generally, the performance period for NCS contracts is one year with up to four one year option periods.

3) Where can contract opportunities with NCS be found?

An inquiring party can find contract opportunities with NCS by reviewing [FedBizOpps.gov](#), which is the single source to find federal procurement opportunities that exceed \$25,000.

4) How does NCS procure products?

- Within the High Tech Medical Equipment Branch, NCS issues delivery orders off the joint VA and Department of Defense Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity contracts, which they administer as well. The primary customers for High Tech Medical Equipment are VA and OGAs.
- Within the CMOP Branch, NCS procures most requirements from established NAC contracts (e.g. FSS contracts). NCS also purchases open market pharmaceuticals and medical surgical supplies via open solicitations that are announced on [FedBizOpps.gov](#).
- Within the [Pharmaceutical Repackaging](#) section in the Pharmaceutical Branch, NCS purchases off of their established BPAs with shipment to their contracted repackager.

5) How does NCS relate to FSS?

Standardization initiatives within the Medical/Surgical Branch and all agreements for the Pharmaceutical Repackaging section within the Pharmaceutical Branch are established as BPAs off FSS contracts. In addition, several products on FSS contracts are distributed to ordering activities through the prime vendor contracts established by NCS.

- View [NCS website](#)
- View FedBizOpps [User Guides](#)
- View the [NAC Purchasing Programs](#)

VA FSS Working for You

VA FSS in Action

As we have been discussing for a few months now, the FSS Service is moving towards implementing cradle-to-closeout assignments for all active contracts. Some of you already have these assignments, while others are still waiting. Our next big step is to finalize the assignment for all the remaining contracts. We are looking at complexity of the contract, volume of post-award actions, years remaining on the contract period, expiration dates, etc. We are targeting early September to have this completed. The timeline has been pushed a bit because we want to ensure that we have an excellent plan in place to coordinate all training efforts with the Contract Specialists and to allow an adequate amount of time to announce the assignments to the vendors.

As we move to finalize these assignments, it becomes even more important that our vendors use the proper procedures for submitting any modification requests. We have established a formal tracking system that allows us to be accountable to you for timely action. **When submitting a modification request, you must send it through our FSS Helpdesk at helpdesk.amhinfss@va.gov.** This allows us to track the progress and timeliness of the request.

DO NOT SEND REQUESTS FOR MODIFICATIONS DIRECTLY TO YOUR ASSIGNED CONTRACT SPECIALIST. For more specific instructions on submitting modification requests or to download the forms, please visit our [website](#).

As always, if you are experiencing any issues, please do not hesitate to contact Carole O'Brien, Director of the FSS Service, at 708-786-4957 and carole.obrien@va.gov or myself, Craig Robinson, Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary (ADAS) for National Healthcare Acquisitions, at 708-786-5157 and craig.robinson@va.gov.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and collaboration, as we move through this next step. Have a great month!

3rd Quarter FY 2011 Sales Due

At this time, FSS contractors have twenty-eight days left to report their 3rd quarter FY 2011 (i.e. April 1, 2011 – June 30, 2011) sales figures in accordance with contract [clause 552.238-74](#), Industrial Funding Fee (IFF) and Sales Reporting. Pursuant to this clause, a FSS contractor is required to submit its quarterly Report of Sales and IFF payment within 60 days of the completion of each quarter. Please note all FSS contractors are required to submit their sales data for the 3rd quarter (even if no sales occurred under the contract) through the [VA sales portal](#). In order to avoid confusion and having an IFF payment returned, all sales figures should be reported **BEFORE** an IFF payment is submitted to our office (regardless of how the IFF is remitted).

- [View portal user guides](#)

GSA Advantage FSS Pricelist

Is your firm's VA FSS pricelist updated in GSA Advantage? Regardless the type of products or services a firm may offer, all VA FSS contractors (except contractors under the 651B Pharmaceutical schedule whose products require a prescription) are required to upload their product/pricing information to [GSA Advantage!](#) and update the information anytime a modification is approved under the contract. Besides being a contractual requirement under clause [I-FSS-597, Electronic Commerce](#), GSA Advantage provides market exposure. According to GSA, over one million customers a week visit the GSA Advantage website and place over 30,000 orders per week.

National News

Recent Emergency & Disaster Declarations

Under the [Disaster Recovery Program](#), state and local Governments may purchase products/services off of FSS contracts in order to facilitate the recovery from a major disaster. In addition, state and local Government entities may use FSS contracts to purchase products and services in advance of a major disaster declared by the president. State and local Governments are responsible for ensuring that the products/services purchased are to be used to facilitate recovery. As such, there were [seventeen declarations](#) by President Obama in July 2011.

MAJOR DISASTER DECLARATIONS

Number	Date	State	Disaster Type	Designated Counties
1999	7/01	TX	Wildfires	
4000	7/08	AR	Tornadoes & Flooding	
4001	7/08	VT	Severe Storms & Flooding	
4002	7/13	OH	Severe Storms	
4003	7/13	PA	Severe Storms & Flooding	
4004	7/14	PR	Severe Storms, Flooding, Mudslides & Landslides	
4005	7/20	TN	Tornadoes & Flooding	
4006	7/22	NH	Severe Storms & Flooding	
4007	7/22	WY	Severe Storms, Flooding	
4008	7/25	KY	Severe Storms, Tornadoes & Flooding	
4009	7/28	MN	Severe Storms & Flooding	
4010	7/29	KS	Tornadoes & Flooding	

FIRE MANAGEMENT DECLARATIONS

Number	Date	State	Incident
2936	7/04	NC	Simmons Road Fire
2937	7/11	TX	Nolan County Fire Complex
2938	7/15	OK	Edmond Fire
2939	7/15	OK	Falls Creek Fire
2940	7/26	OK	Frankhoma-81 Fire

- [Disaster Recovery Program FAQs](#)

Did You Know...

In 1929, President Herbert Hoover proposed consolidating the agencies administering veteran's benefits in his 1929 State of the Union Address. The following year, Congress authorized President Hoover to "consolidate and coordinate Government activities affecting war veterans" by uniting the three previously independent bureaus (i.e. the Veterans' Bureau, the Bureau of Pensions and the National Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers) and creating the Veterans Administration. Subsequently, President Hoover signed Executive Order Number [5398](#) – Establishing the Veterans' Administration on July 21, 1930. The Department of Veterans Affairs was established as a Cabinet-level position on March 15, 1989.

Recently Awarded FSS Contracts (July 2011)

Medical/Surgical Equipment & Supplies Contracts (Schedule 65IIA)

Company Name	Contract Number	Business Size	Socioeconomic Status
Direct Medical, Inc.	V797P-4466B	Small	Small Disadvantaged Business
Suburban Surgical Co.	V797P-4469B	Small	
Tyco Healthcare Group LP DBA Covidien	V797P-4465B	Large	
Hawkeye Distributing, LLC.	V797P-4468B	Small	Woman Owned Business
Aspen Surgical	V797P-4472B	Small	
Primis Healthcare Systems, Inc.	V797P-4471B	Small	Woman Owned Business
Propper Manufacturing Company, Inc.	V797P-4457B	Small	

Professional & Allied Healthcare Staffing Services Contracts (Schedule 621I)

Company Name	Contract Number	Business Size	Socioeconomic Status
mKmResources	V797P-7356A	Small	Woman Owned Business
Team Placement Service, Inc.	V797P-7357A	Small	Woman Owned Business
Mid America Health, Inc.	V797P-7351A	Large	
Sensa Products, Inc	V797P-5262B	Small	
Med-Staff, Inc. DBA MedStaff Healthcare Solutions	V797P-7358A	Large	
Astrix Software Technology, Inc. DBA Astrix Technology Group	V797P-7359A	Small	

Invitro Diagnostics, Reagents, Test Kits, & Test Sets (Schedule 65VII)

Company Name	Contract Number	Business Size	Socioeconomic Status
Cen-Med Enterprises, Inc.	V797P-5264B	Small	8(A), Woman Owned Business

Drugs, Pharmaceuticals & Hematology Related Products Contracts (Schedule 65IB)

Company Name	Contract Number	Business Size	Socioeconomic Status
Caraco Pharmaceutical Laboratories, Inc.	V797P-5258B	Large	
Scrip, Inc.	V797P-5257B	Small	
Auxilium Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	V797P-5263B	Small	
Akrimax Pharmaceutical, LLC.	V797P-5268B	Small	

Please visit the [VA Schedule Programs](#) page for a complete listing of all Schedules

In order to obtain pricing information for all of the companies referenced above or any other FSS contractor, please review the [NAC Contract Catalog Search Tool \(CCST\)](#) or [GSA E-Library](#). If you have any questions/concerns or would like to learn more about a specific topic and/or issue, please feel free to contact the FSS Help Desk by phone at (708)786-7737 and/or by e-mail at helpdesk.ammhinfss@va.gov.