

# The Office of Acquisition and Logistics

## Management Newsletter – January/February 2016

### LTASC II NOW OPERATIONAL!

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Logistics and Acquisition Operations (OLAO) is proud to announce that the [Long-Term Administrative Support Contract \(LTASC II\)](#) protest has been resolved and the contract is now available for use. LTASC II continues the strong tradition established by the original LTASC contract and provides NIH Institutes and Centers with the means to acquire long-term administrative support over the next 5 years with a potential ceiling totaling \$250 million.

The 17 small businesses that have been awarded an LTASC II contract offer the NIH the most technically capable and competitively priced solutions. The awardees selected for this highly sought-after contract can be found on the LTASC II website (<http://ltasc.od.nih.gov/>).

The OLAO LTASC Support Team is happy to support new and returning customers across NIH as they transition to LTASC II. Customers can anticipate task orders to be awarded in 30 days or less! Please email the team at [LTASCI@mail.nih.gov](mailto:LTASCI@mail.nih.gov) if you have any questions or if you are interested in setting up training for you or your office as the task order process has changed.

### HHS ACQUISITION REGULATIONS UPDATED

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a final rule to amend its Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Supplement, the [HHS Acquisition Regulation \(HHSAR\)](#), to update its regulation to current FAR requirements; to remove information from the HHSAR that consists of material that is internal, administrative, and procedural in nature; to add or revise definitions; to correct certain terminology; and to delete outdated material or material duplicative of the FAR.

The changes were published in the Federal Register on November 18, 2015, and became effective December 18, 2015.

Below is a summary of the significant changes to the HHSAR:

HHSAR 311.71, Public Accommodations and Commercial Facilities, and the relevant clause at 352.211-1, Public Accommodations and Commercial Facilities, are renamed and revised to clarify public accommodation and the use of commercial facilities.

HHSAR 302.101, Definitions, is revised to clarify the definition of “agency head or head of the agency” as the Secretary of HHS or specified designee. This allows for the delegation to the appropriate acquisition official within HHS.

HHSAR 303.704, Policy, is clarified to specify the HCA as the designee for voiding and rescinding contracts; however, coordination is required with the SPE.

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HHSAR 306.202, Establishing or maintaining alternative sources, is revised to clarify that the “agency head” as specified in [FAR 6.202\(a\)](#) is the SPE rather than the Competition Advocate.

HHSAR 306.302-7, Public interest, is deleted. The information is considered duplicative of the FAR.

HHSAR 309.403, Definitions, is revised to delete the definition of “acquiring agency's head or designee.”

HHSAR 317.108, Congressional notification, is revised to clarify that the SPE shall give the approval of the notification required by [FAR 17.108\(a\)](#) and that the HCA shall finalize and sign the congressional notification letter and provide it to the appropriate House and Senate committees.

HHSAR 317.204, Contracts, is revised to clarify that a request to exceed the 5-year limitation specified in [FAR 17.204\(e\)](#) must follow the guidance in [FAR 1.7](#).

HHSAR 324.70, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, is revised to clarify the references to controlling law.

In addition, several editorial changes were made to the rule.

## NITAAC LOWERS FEES ACROSS BOARD – BIG SAVINGS ON YOUR NEXT IT ACQUISITIONS

If you’ve ever thought about using NITAAC Government-Wide Acquisition Contracts (GWACs) to purchase IT for the office, now’s the time to dive in. On January 5, 2016, NITAAC announced savings of up to 35% on its already low contract access fees.

In a bold move, NITAAC reduced fees across the board on all of its GWACs:

GWAC	From	To
CIO-SP3	1%	<b>.65%</b>
CIO-SP3 SB	.75%	<b>.55%</b>
CIO-CS	.5%	<b>.35%</b>

NITAAC fees are now lower than other comparable IT contracts. That means customers will save more on orders – important to know when you consider the recent mandate by OMB to buy common desktops and laptops through NITAAC’s CIO-CS, GSA’s FSS Schedule 70, or SEWP’s Strategic Solutions. Now, not only are our prices lower, but our contract access fees are as well.

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The success of CIO-SP3, CIO-SP3 Small Business, CIO-CS, and value-added services like Assisted Acquisitions, Customer Support, and Government-Wide Strategic Solutions is what enabled NITAAC to lower its fees while continuously improving the program.

“I’m so glad to be able to offer further savings to our government-wide customers,” said Robert Coen, Program Director at NITAAC. “We can help our clients stretch their dollars much further when they choose NITAAC for their IT acquisitions.”

In the past year, NITAAC expanded services to offer Assisted Acquisition Services to all Department of Defense agencies, and Government-Wide Strategic Solutions under CIO-CS to all federal agencies.

According to Mr. Coen, “We’re doing all we can to improve efficiencies in our own program so we can pass those savings along to our government-wide customers. We don’t believe in cutting corners on customer service and everything we’ve done in the last year proves it. When you can combine better services with lower fees as we have, you are truly delivering value to your customers.”

To learn more about this or any other NITAAC programs, visit us at <https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/>, or call 1-888-773-6542.

### CHANGES TO PURCHASE CARD NBS RECONCILIATION NOTIFICATIONS & RECONCILIATION SUSPENSIONS

In effort to ensure that purchase card reconciliation is completed in a timely manner by the 18<sup>th</sup> of every month, NBS system generated emails are sent to cardholders and Card Approving Officials (CAOs) on specific days during each month. These notifications assist with identifying any unreconciled transactions. An unreconciled transaction is a transaction that was not approved by the CAO. A transaction under the unmatched, matched, or verified tabs is not fully reconciled until it is approved by the CAO. **The current schedule of NBS system notifications is as follows:**

Cardholders receive a notification on the 13<sup>th</sup> of every month

Card Approving Officials receive a notification on the 14<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup> of every month

Beginning January 2016, the schedule of NBS system notifications will be changing. Both purchase cardholders and CAOs will receive 2 system notifications each month. **The new schedule of NBS system notifications will be as follows:**

Cardholders will receive a notification on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of every month

CAOs will receive a notification on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of every month

**NOTE:** The notification dates may shift slightly when they fall on a weekend or holiday. In those cases, the notification will be sent to cardholders and CAOs on the next business day.

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### Reconciliation, reports and payment process:

All purchase card charges are scheduled to pay out each month by OFM. Transactions that are not matched to corresponding logs by the 18<sup>th</sup> of the month, will pay out of the cardholder's default CAN. If the cardholder's CAN is not listed correctly in NBS and/or the charge should have been funded out of a different CAN, once the reconciliation period ends – the only way to change the CAN is thru a manual CAN change request process through OFM. **This is a manual process and should be avoided if at all possible.** IC Coordinators may run the nVision ACQ-44 report at any time to view these transactions and should work with their respective cardholders to resolve. The Purchase Card Program also receives courtesy reconciliation updates from NBS when there is a high volume of unmatched transactions – charges that have not yet been matched to corresponding purchase card logs. That report is then forwarded to the IC Purchase Card Coordinators and the cardholder community to assist with decreasing the number of the unmatched transactions.

### Updated suspension process:

Purchase card accounts with transactions that are not fully reconciled (e.g. unmatched, matched, or verified) after the 18<sup>th</sup> of the month, will be suspended until the CAO approves these charges unless an extension request was received by the Purchase Card Program prior to the reconciliation deadline. The report currently used by the Purchase Card Program Office to determine which cardholders are subject to suspension traditionally was not available until several days after the reconciliation deadline; however, beginning in January 2016, the report will be available on the next business day following the reconciliation deadline. As a result, the suspension of cardholders who fail to comply with the deadlines and do not have extension requests will occur immediately after the 18<sup>th</sup> of the month. **There will no longer be a grace period between the CAO reconciliation deadline and the date that non-compliant cardholders are suspended.**

If there are any questions regarding this information, please contact the NIH Purchase Card Program at 301-435-6606 or via email at [CreditCard@od.nih.gov](mailto:CreditCard@od.nih.gov).

## NITAAC ACHIEVES PRESTIGIOUS CMMI LEVEL 2 RATING

NITAAC is proud to announce we have achieved a successful appraisal rating of CMMI Level 2 for our entire contracting organization. What does this mean to you?

CMMI is a process improvement model built on the premise that the quality of a system is highly influenced by the quality of the process used to acquire, develop, and maintain it. Organizations with a CMMI rating have to demonstrate their commitment to quality to an independent appraiser, who reviews the organization and submits a final report on Pass or Fail. NITAAC is proud to say we passed, and can now display the CMMI logo to prove it!



**CMMISVC / 2** <sup>SM</sup>  
Exp. 2018-12-11 / Appraisal #25586

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NITAAC started the CMMI appraisal process in 2013 and it has involved staff at all levels, ensuring full organizational understanding and commitment towards achieving this goal. CMMI was developed by Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA.

According to Robert Coen, NITAAC program director, “We are proud to be successfully appraised at Level 2 because it sends a clear signal to our customers that we are a quality-driven organization capable of supporting complex IT acquisitions with service excellence.”

As you are probably aware, NITAAC has been helping federal agencies achieve better mission outcomes through information technology for over 20 years. As the manager of one of only three government-wide acquisition contract programs in the entire government, we wanted to distinguish our program from the rest in a way that would be meaningful to our customers.

Mr. Coen commented, “We felt it was important to demonstrate leadership in providing our customers with service that is first class on a measurable scale. CMMI Level 2 is just the beginning of our commitment to delivering the highest levels of customer satisfaction in the acquisition community,”

If you haven't yet experienced NITAAC's brand of customer service for yourself, make a resolution to try them in the New Year. You'll discover a portfolio of contracts that can be used for buying IT of any kind – simple to complex – along with a customer service team who knows you're #1. To learn more about NITAAC, call 1-888-773-6542 or visit our website at <https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/>.

### NEWS FROM THE NIH-SUPPLY CENTER (SC)

**From the Chief** – As 2015 came to a close, I wanted to extend a sincere thank you to our loyal customers and our community for helping to make our progress and prosperity possible this year.

The NIH-Supply Center's dedicated staff is our greatest asset and this year the team continued to provide the exceptional quality service that you, our customers, have come to expect from us. I am proud to announce that the staff received an overall 4.6 out of 5 customer service satisfaction rating in our 2015 survey. The SC was also recognized with several awards this year for our Go Green initiative, savings and making the SC profitable. We are proud of these distinctions and are honored that our customers and community members selected us.

We would like to thank our customers for helping us reach these significant milestones as well as the community for their continued patronage, feedback and trust. The SC has experienced tremendous growth, but we remain committed to the values we were built on. We look forward to celebrating many more milestones with our community in the future.

As always, we remain dedicated to our mission of helping and supporting the NIH community, continuous development of our processes and supporting the people who make a difference in not only our community but the world. It is our pleasure to serve you and thank you for allowing us to continue to support the SC.

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**POTS** – In April 2015 The NIH-SC began coordinating with Purchasing Online Tracking System (POTS) leads, Drs. Fann and Wang towards automating our business process that enables streamline ordering by implementing POTS as one of its operating systems.

Our valued customers now have the option to search for supplies, see on-hand quantity, and to submit orders electronically to the Self-Service Stores through POTS. We are proud to announce that we have completed the internal test phase and went live on December 14, 2015.

This initiative will cut the ordering process in half while expediting orders and improving customer service.

**Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity Contracts (IDIQ)** - Indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contracts provide for an indefinite quantity of services for a fixed time. They are used when GSA can't determine, above a specified minimum, the precise quantities of supplies or services that the government will require during the contract period. IDIQs help streamline the contract process and speed service delivery.

The SC has and is continuing to use IDIQs to establish contracts that will provide the NIH community required supplies. The SC places delivery orders for supplies against basic requirements. We base our minimum and maximum quantity limits on historical demands.

**Surcharge Reduction** – Here at the NIH-SC we value our customer's feedback regarding our operations. Many of you have provided valuable information regarding the NIH-SC surcharge. Starting now, for Fiscal Year 2016, we have reduced the surcharge from 22% to 20%. This is an excellent improvement, considering that just 2 years ago the surcharge was 32%.

Our goal at the NIH-SC is to provide you with the necessary supplies/equipment to work towards the overall mission of NIH. Furthermore, we have made it our plan to lower the surcharge by 2% until 2019. This means that in 2017 the surcharge will be 18%, 2018 the surcharge will be 16% and 2019 the surcharge will be reduced to 14%!

## FREE IT PROCUREMENT TRAINING WITH NITAAC

Compete and manage your IT requirements quickly and easily when you choose a NITAAC Government-Wide Acquisition Contract (GWAC). Our training specialists will demonstrate how GWACs enable you to leverage buying power, and how NITAAC's online ordering systems can increase productivity. By attending NITAAC's training, you'll earn two Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) towards maintaining your federal certifications.

A [NITAAC training session](#) can show you how to compete, manage and award simple or complex requirements using our secure Electronic Government Ordering System, e-GOS. By using e-GOS, you will have access to NITAAC's three GWACs (CIO-SP3, CIO-SP3, and CIO-CS) and our new Strategic Solutions program. NITAAC Strategic Solutions will help you remain in compliance with [OMB memo M-16-02](#) for purchasing laptops, desktops and related products and upgrades.



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NITAAC offers several different trainings: [training at your location](#), a [webinar session](#) or you can come to one of our [on-site trainings at NIH Campus](#). We invite you to register for a free training session of your choice. If you have questions about specific requirements, or would like us to come in and train your acquisition team, please call the NITAAC Customer Support Center at 1.888.773.6542 or email [NITAACsupport@nih.gov](mailto:NITAACsupport@nih.gov). You can always count on:

- ❖ 1-hour response to any contractual, technical or procedural question
- ❖ Customized support from Contract and IT Specialists
- ❖ Fast Technical Assessments of SOW/PWS/SOOs, reviewed and returned within 24 hours to assure quality responses.
- ❖ Document library of tools and templates based on 20+ years of government wide IT contracting (click on Tools/Templates in the blue navigation bar at the top of our homepage at <https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/>.)

**We look forward to meeting you and your acquisition team!**

### Acquisition Training Schedule

Acquisition Training Classes can be accessed at the following link: [Acquisition Management Training](#).

#### **Acquisition Training at NIH**

Acquisition Training Classes that are offered by the NIH Training Center can be accessed at the following link: [Acquisition Management Training](#).

#### **Federal Acquisition Certification Coursework**

CON courses and other Federal Acquisition Certification required courses can be found at the [NIH Training Center](#), [Federal Acquisition Institute](#), and [Defense Acquisition University](#).

#### **Section 508 Accessibility Training**

Section 508 Accessibility Training courses can be accessed at: [CIT Section 508 Accessibility training website](#).

#### **Green Purchasing Training**

Green Purchasing Training and other Green Training courses can be found at: [OALM Green Purchasing Website](#).

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.

Questions regarding Green Purchasing Training should be sent to: [GreenPurchasing@mail.nih.gov](mailto:GreenPurchasing@mail.nih.gov).

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### NIH Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) Lists Available Online

Lists of all NIH Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) can be found at the NIH Blanket Purchase Agreement [webpage](#).

This location contains Two BPA Lists:

1. Complete vendor alphabetical list;
2. Vendor list sorted by commodity; and

If you have any questions or need further clarification, please contact the BPA helpline at 301-496-5212 or [email](#).

## THANKS!

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

The OALM Newsletter will be published six (6) times in calendar year 2016. 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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