The Office of Acquisition and Logistics
Management Newsletter November/December 2014

USING THE PURCHASE CARD TO PAY FOR TRAINING & CONFERENCE REGISTRATIONS

The Purchase Card Program Office receives a number of questions from NIH Purchase Cardholders as to whether the purchase card can be used to pay for training or conference registrations. Per the NIH Purchase Card Supplement (page 30), the purchase card can generally be used to pay for these types of acquisitions for NIH employees, however, certain policies must be kept in mind.

- All training taken by NIH employees **must be entered into NIH's Learning Management System (LMS)** and adhere to the pertinent laws and procedures governed by the Government Employee Training Act or Title 5 USC §4109(b).

- For internal NIH training classes (those that are held thru the NIH Training Center), the purchase card cannot be used. Payment for these classes are handled thru fund transfers directly in LMS.

- Training that is external (i.e. not offered by the NIH Training Center) which includes attendance at conferences held at locations outside of NIH, may be purchased provided certain procedures are followed. This includes ensuring a signed SF-182 form (Authorization, Agreement, and Certification of Training) or other substitute form is included and documented with the purchase of external training. This form is available at How to Pay for Training. Among the approvals required on the SF-182 form are those of the employee's supervisor, training officer, and an Authorizing Official who gives final approval.

  Once approval for the external training has been obtained, either iProcurement or the purchase card can be used to pay for the training or conference registration fee. Be aware that any transportation, lodging and restaurant meals required for external training that is outside of the local duty station, such as an airline ticket, hotel room or daily meals cannot be acquired using the Purchase Card. Travel or travel-related expenses (e.g. airline tickets, lodging, and restaurant meals for employee) are unauthorized on the purchase card (see page 18 of the NIH Purchase Card Supplement). However, if certain food costs cannot be separated (i.e. are non-severable) from the conference registration fee, the registration fee can be paid as long as this is documented appropriately. How to Pay for Training offers additional information on paying for external training.

- For conference registrations that involve travel, NIH Manual Chapter 1500 governs the payment of registration fees and the approvals that are required. Conference registrations are closely scrutinized and require specific approvals. When attending or hosting conferences, staff must comply with the most current Efficient Spending Policy. Once approved, the purchase card can be used to pay the registration fee provided there are no additional fees that are included as noted above. Additional attendance reports will need to be submitted as part of the HHS reporting requirements.

The following is an example of misuse of a purchase card to pay a conference registration fee:

A cardholder traveled to a conference and met a coworker who was not registered to attend the event. The cardholder paid his co-worker's conference registration fee using his purchase card. The cardholder did not follow the specialized procedures described above, including receipt of a completed SF-182 with required approvals.

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In summary, the purchase card can be used to pay for training or conference registrations, as long as proper procedures are followed and pre-approval is obtained.

NEWS FROM THE NIH SUPPLY CENTER

The NIH Supply Center (NIHSC) is located in Gaithersburg, Maryland which provides medical, laboratory and general supplies to the NIH community. The NIHSC also controls the two Self Service Supply stores (SSS) on the main NIH campus located in buildings 10 and 31 and distributes supplies from the Gaithersburg Distribution Complex (GDC) to the SSSs and to off-campus customers. We have been serving the NIH and its 27 Institutes and Centers since 1943. In recent months great things have happened at the NIHSC. In addition to working on our new image for the NIHSC we are working to update the look of our Self Service Stores. Some of the improvements we've made to-date include:

- New web site NIH Supply Center
- Off-Campus deliveries from SSS Bldg. 31 will begin in November 2014
- Added over 100 new products to better meet customer needs
- Brought in new vendors and their products
- Developed plans to better support our customers
- Improved our facilities
- Continually improving our processes
- Customer boards
- Established SSS Yammer and Twitter accounts

All of these ideas came from our team taking into consideration all the wonderful feedback that we received from you our customers. As we move into our next year in supporting you, we have some great initiatives to provide even better support to you. We will continue to improve on the ideas which you share with us. Our focus for the upcoming year includes:

- Implementing Supply Transformation to enable us to support you better
- Exceeding projected sales by $2.1 million
- Improved customer service
- Increasing sales
- Reducing our surcharge
- Reducing customer backlogs
- Increasing our portfolio by 5%

Our purpose has and will remain the same: "To provide the NIH Community with supplies needed to continue their amazing research efforts in a timely and effective manner".

New personnel on board

One of our greatest achievements has been the ability to hire new personnel to support the NIHSC. Please join me in welcoming Mr. Carlos Figueras as our newest team member. Carlos took over as our Marketing Specialist as of October 14, 2014. He will be a key player in interactions with you as

our customer in order to improve our upcoming marketing development and plans. He has some exciting ideas regarding a commercial involving some of you that can raise the NIHSC standards. Carlos comes to us from KOL BIO Medical, where he was their Sales Operations and Marketing Manager. In this position, he identified opportunities for improvement, made constructive suggestions for change and helped brainstorm solutions. He has a Bachelor's Degree in languages and minored in business as well.

New web page look

To help make it easier for our customers to find information on our products, the NIHSC has released a new version of our website. Customers can locate products through the search engine by clicking on the links for both the regular catalog and the green catalog. We will continue to update our catalogs to provide continuous information regarding availability. New items and vendor promotions will also be posted on this site as well.

We look forward to working with you to make ordering your supplies faster, easier and more efficient than ever before. Help us help you by providing your feedback: log onto our website, fill out Comment Cards in the Self-Service Stores or contact us today:

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Self Service Store

There have been several changes to the two Self Service Stores on the main NIH campus and the most significant is that the shelves are restocked and full of products. We have also begun the task of removing the slow sellers and replacing them with new items. Tell us what you would like to see in either store and we will ensure that we will start stocking it.

Off-Campus Deliveries

Our Distribution team has been hard at work developing an off-campus delivery policy. On November 1, 2014 we initiated a plan to provide supplies to you at your location. The Self Service Supply Store will start accepting off-campus customer requests by fax. Once orders are received, the store staff will pull the request from the shelves, input order into AS400, and prepare the shipment. After the initial morning deliveries are made, items from the store will be signed for by the driver when picking up from the store, and from the driver to contact management team at GDC. All items will be delivered on the next scheduled delivery run. The exceptions are bulk purchases, and emergencies; they will be delivered as soon as possible.

IDIQ Contract

The NIH Supply Center established a Proof of Principle (PoP) acquisition plan recently by awarding an Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract to one of our supply chain partners. The IDIQ contract ensures that the NIHSC will receive a months' worth of quantity for 25 products (examples below) at a stabilized price (good for one year) and routine delivery (first week

of the month). Here is a sampling of some of the products on that award which are available on line through the NBS system and in Self Service Store 10:

664000L016182	STRAINER, CELL, 70 MICRON
664000L016181	STRAINER, CELL, 40 MICRON
664000L015172	STRIPETTE, 25 ML CORNING COSTAR # 4489
664000L015171	STRIPETTE, 10 ML #4488
664000L017546	PIPET, ASPIRATING 2ML (FB) #357558
664000L017444	TIP, PIPET, 200 UL # BT200
664000L017339	TUBE, TEST, CRYOTUBE NUNC#375418
664000L017441	TIP, PIPET, 0.5 - 10 UL # BT10XL
664000L017442	TIP, PIPET, 20 UL #BT20
664000L015149	PIPET, 50ML, COSTAR#4501
664000L015173	STRIPETTE, 50 ML #4490
664000L011111	FLASK, CORNING #431145
664000L013004	FLASK, T75 #156499
664000L011107	FLASK, CORNING#431143
664000L017338	TUBE, TEST, CRYOTUBE NUNC#377267
664000L017079	TIP, PIPET, ART REACH #2140

The NIHSC will monitor and measure the effectiveness of this PoP in order to determine if it is feasible to pursue large contracts and broaden the approach to medical and administrative products as well as laboratory ones.

NITAAC - Save time, money and earn 2 Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) with a complimentary training session

Compete and manage your IT requirements quickly and easily when you choose a NITAAC Government-Wide Acquisition Contract (GWAC).

A NITAAC training session can show you how to award IT requirements in as little as 3 days, and complex IT awards in 30 days or less using our secure, online competition/ ordering system. Simply upload your requirements in 10 minutes or less, and let automation make it easier to accomplish due diligence, competition and award with FAR Guidance built-in every step of the way. You'll be amazed at how easy using NITAAC GWACs can be, and how much time you can save on IT orders. You can even meet your small business goals by choosing from the different socioeconomic categories available on each of our GWACs. A team of Contract and Program specialists can help you at any point in the process, from pre-award to closeout. You will never be charged extra for help.

Gain valuable insights while you earn 2 CLPs.

Learn about our GWACs, value-added services and more during your free training session:

- How our GWACs deliver quality, ease, value and speed to Federal IT customers

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- The benefits of using NITAAC GWACs for IT products, services and solutions
- A live demonstration of NITAAC's easy-to-use online competition/ordering system
- How to set-aside requirements to meet Small Business goals
- NITAAC's value-added services, including free SOW/PWS/SOO assessments
- Open discussion of agency specific IT requirements

Who should attend?

NITAAC trainings are designed for anyone involved in IT procurement and acquisition, including but not limited to:

- Chief Information Officers (CIOs)
- IT Specialists
- Small Business Specialists
- Contracting Officers (CO/KOs)
- Contracting Specialists (CS)
- Contracting Officers Representatives (CORs)
- Project/Program Managers (P/PMs)
- Purchasing Agents (PA)
- Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)

Schedule a free training at your location

Complete the online request and NITAAC will schedule a training session at your location.

Attend one of NITAACs monthly trainings

Each month NITAAC provides a monthly training session. You can attend a training session in Bethesda/Rockville Maryland.

No time to leave the office? No problem, register for our Monthly Webinar session.

Contact NITAAC Customer Support Center if you need help

Should you have any questions about training, contracts, procurement regulations or anything else related to IT acquisitions, contact the NITAAC Customer Support Center at 1.888.773.6542 or email.

Acquisition Training Schedule

Acquisition Training Classes can be accessed at the following link: Acquisition Management Training

CON 100 Shaping Small Business Arrangements

CON110 Mission Support Planning

CON 237 Simplified Acquisition Procedures 32

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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.

Please visit the [Green Purchasing webpage](#) for further information including an application form and searchable database.

Questions? Please send to: [GreenPurchasing@mail.nih.gov.](#)

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](#).

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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 2015. 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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If you have any questions or comments regarding the information, policy and/or procedures published in this issue, you may contact Milton Nicholas at the e-mail address above. For future issues please contact the Simplified Acquisitions Helpline on 301-496-0400 or via e-mail at SimplifiedAcquisitionHelp@od.nih.gov and you will be referred to the appropriate editor.