

The Office of Acquisition and Logistics Management Newsletter



Happy Fiscal New Year!

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HHS SENIOR PROCUREMENT EXECUTIVE APPROVAL OF NIH PLAN: TRANSITIONING FROM SIMPLIFIED ACQUISITION CERTIFICATION (SAC) TO THE FEDERAL CERTIFICATION IN CONTRACTING (FAC-C)

After a year of tremendous work by OALM staff, IC representatives, and the NIH Training Center, NIH has received relief from HHS on the process of converting from SAC to FAC-C. HHS has agreed to the NIH's proposal to extend the deadline requiring all Contracting Officers (warrant holders) in the Delegated Offices of Acquisition (DOA) to be FAC-C certified. The new deadline will be August 31, 2018. In addition, NIH may now temporarily reissue warrants that were rescinded due to Contracting Officers transferring from one IC to another.

FAC-C acquisition certifications are earned and maintained by the employee, and are transferable across civilian agencies in the Federal Government. FAC-C acquisition certification requirements are available on the Acquisition Career Manager website. In order to be eligible for FAC-C Level I acquisition certification, an applicant must have one year of acquisition experience, meet the educational requirements of a bachelor's degree in any field or have completed 24 semester hours in business related courses (from an accredited institution), and complete all mandatory training requirements.

Contracting Officer warrants are issued on the SF-1402 Certificate of Appointment and may only be issued against a valid acquisition certification. Demonstration of organizational need is required and the warrant is only valid while the individual works in the same office and in the same capacity. Warrants are issued to the individual and are not transferable across Federal Agencies, OPDIVs, NIH ICs or Offices.

Over the next two years, all Contracting Officers will be required to obtain a FAC-C Level I (minimum) acquisition certification in order to retain their Contracting Officer warrants. Those who do not obtain a FAC-C Level I acquisition certification will no longer be eligible for a warrant after August 31, 2018 and warrants based on the old SAC acquisition certification will be rescinded.

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OALM is currently developing a new webpage that will provide more guidance and information on the process of converting from SAC to FAC-C which should be launched in the coming weeks.

The following information provides guidance for current warrant holders, and those wishing to have warrants reinstated because of moving from one IC to another. It includes the new thresholds that will be implemented for all warrant holders in the DOAs.

New Dollar Thresholds for Contracting Officers in the Delegated Offices of Acquisition (DOAs)

Warrants held by Contracting Officers in the DOAs will generally specify the Micro-Purchase Threshold (see below) for Open Market Purchase Orders, \$25,000 for Open Market BPA Calls/Orders and \$150,000 for acquisitions issued against pre-negotiated contract instruments.

Micro-Purchase Threshold:

In accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), Subpart 2.1 Definitions, as of October 1, 2015, Micro-purchase means “an acquisition of supplies or services the aggregate amount of which does not exceed the micro-purchase threshold”. The MPT means **\$3,500**, except it means-

\$2,000 for acquisitions of construction, alteration, or repair, including but not limited to painting and decorating of public buildings and public works. (See FAR 2.1 and FAR 22.4). This includes structures, or other real property which are subject to Wage Rate Requirements (formerly Davis Bacon),

Note: Acquisition of construction, alteration or repair for any dollar amount, may only be conducted by authority of the NIH Office of Research Facilities;

\$2,500 for acquisitions of services subject to Service Contract Labor Standards (formerly Service Contract Act) (See FAR 2.1 and FAR 22.10).

Pre-Negotiated Instruments:

Pre-Negotiated Instruments are contracts or agreements that have been negotiated and issued by the Government which include, but are not limited to: General Service Administration (GSA) Federal Supply Schedules (FSS), NIH Open Market Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) and BPAs written against GSA Federal Supply Schedules, and other Task and Delivery Order mechanisms, e.g. Government-Wide Acquisition Contracts (GWACs) and Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity (ID/IQ) Contracts.

Contracting Officers must be familiar with the terms of their warrants and the definitions of what constitutes an Open Market award versus an order placed against a Pre-Negotiated Instrument. If you have questions about the MPT or Pre-Negotiated Instruments, please contact the helpline at SimplifiedAcquisitionHelp@od.nih.gov.

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Because of the changes in dollar thresholds for staff in the DOAs, the Acquisition Career Program Office will begin re-issuing all Contracting Officer Warrants to staff in the DOAs who currently hold a warrant. The thresholds will be as stated above. In order for staff in the Delegated Offices of Acquisition to retain a warrant after August 31, 2018, FAC-C Level I certification will be required.

As these new Warrants are issued, provisioning in NBS Prism will be adjusted by OALM and NBS to reflect the new reduced warrant thresholds.

Warrants rescinded as a result of the Contracting Officer moving from one IC to another:

Contracting Officers who have moved from one IC to another may now be eligible to have their warrants restored upon demonstration of their new organization's need. In order to have a warrant restored, the following documents must be submitted to the Acquisition Career Manager (ACM) by PDF to Warrants@mail.nih.gov:

- Contracting Officer Warrant Application Form Appendix P-1.
- Employee's current resume or Optional Form 612 describing the employee's experience, education and training relevant to the position including the information required by FAR 1.603-2
- Most recent Performance Appraisal – first page only with rating
- Certificate from the Simplified Acquisition Certification (SAC) program
- Evidence of 40 hours Continuous Learning Points required every two years for SAC holders
- Completion of the HHS Appropriations Law training since 2011.
- Previous warrant (original signed document—this must be returned to ACM at Mailstop 7540)
- Review and approval of the warrant package by the first and second tier supervisor. This approval can be done via separate memo or email and must be submitted as part of the warrant application package.

These warrants will expire on August 31, 2018 (the end of NIH's transition plan). In order for delegated acquisition staff to retain a warrant after August 31, 2018, they will be required to have FAC-C Level I acquisition certification. These re-issued warrants will supersede all previous warrant authority.

Staff whose warrants are restored will need to request provisioning into NBS Prism in order to properly fulfill their procurement duties.

If you have any questions concerning the warrant application process, please contact the Acquisition Career Manager, Aaron Weimer at (301) 496-7110.

DOING WORK IN THE NIH CLINICAL CENTER (CC) NIH BETHESDA CAMPUS

The NIH Clinical Center (CC) includes the Warren Grant Magnuson Clinical Center (original Building 10), Ambulatory Care Research Facility (ACRF), INVIVO (NMR) Addition, and the Mark O. Hatfield Clinical Research Center (CRC) on the NIH Bethesda Campus.

When construction, renovations or alterations are being considered by an IC in the CC, a Construction Request must be submitted to the Office of Research Facilities Development and Operations (ORFDO) for the necessary planning, design, and construction services to ensure compliance with the applicable building codes and standards, and The Joint Commission (TJC) hospital accreditation guidelines.

For small acquisitions \$2,000.00 or less, an IC is permitted to use ORFDO's Self Performance Program/Handyman Services program to perform the work identified below upon submission and approval of an IC-Self Performance/Handyman Services Form.

1. Installation of coat hook(s);
2. Installation/Hanging White Board(s);
3. Installation/Hanging of Pictures for Paintings;
4. Installation of Blinds or Draperies;
5. Installation of Brackets for Oxygen and similar Tanks;
6. Installation of Wall hung Shelving;
7. Removal/Installation of Carpet;
8. Carpet Cleaning;
9. Installation of Local Pure Water Systems;
10. Drilling Holes/Installation of Grommets in Benchtops/Countertops;
11. Painting (Walls & Drywall Ceilings)
12. Ceiling Tile Replacement
13. Replacing Door(s)
14. Removal/Installation of Vinyl Composite Tile (VCT)
15. Unattached Systems Furniture (with existing power connections)
16. Keyboard Trays

Although the work identified above is not complex, it could impact the Environment of Care (EOC), and jeopardize patient care and treatment, or ultimately, accreditation of the CC. As a result, all work to be performed in the CC must be evaluated for its potential impact to the EOC by submitting a Project Notification Form to ORFDO for guidance on how to mitigate potential risks that could be faced.

Contact Clarence Dukes, Program Manager, ORFDO Division of Technical Resources (DTR) @ dukesc@nih.gov or 301-496-5078 if you have any questions.

NIH REQUIREMENT FOR PURCHASE OF DESKTOPS AND LAPTOPS

Desktop and laptop computers that provide basic end user computing needs, such as word processing, email, spreadsheets, etc. must be purchased through one of three government wide acquisition vehicles: NITAAC CIO-CS, NASA SEWP and GSA. NITAAC should be considered as the first choice for acquisition of desktop and laptop computers, but if NITAAC cannot meet your organization's needs, then desktop and laptop computers may be acquired from NASA SEWP or GSA.

Most of the NIH requirements for desktop and laptop computers have been included in the

current set of government wide specifications, known as the Government-wide Strategic Solution (GSS) 2.0. NITAAC's GSS approach provides the ability to easily purchase these computers that meet these government wide configurations.

NITAAC also provides the ability to easily purchase NIH specific configurations for Mac computers and tablets. Details on how to order computers through NITAAC can be found at <https://nitaac.nih.gov/resources/tools-and-templates#block-views-tools-and-templates-block-11>.

THE YEAR END CLOSE AND EXPIRING LINES SHAREPOINT SITES

For those who want to keep track of the various deadlines across NIH regarding Year End Close, there is a [Year End Communications SharePoint site](#) where all messages and communications are posted. This site was established by the NIH Combined Business Owners to serve as a central storage point and one-stop shop for general NIH-wide communications regarding Year End.

If you are wondering which contract lines from previous fiscal years still contain funds that could potentially be repurposed or which simply need to be closed out, check [OALM's Expiring Lines SharePoint site](#). This site was established by OALM's Program Planning and Management Branch to serve as a central location for all updates and policy regarding Expiring Lines in support of NIH's efforts to effectively manage contracts throughout their entire life cycle. Here may be found important dates, communiques, NBS Line Item Final Close Reports, Useful Tools and FAQs, and both IC and OALM points of contact.

Be sure to visit the sites often, as they will be regularly updated with important dates and communiques released to the NIH Community.

TREASURY ACCOUNT SYMBOL (TAS) NO LONGER REQUIRED— DCIS ITEMS 6SC AND 6SG

The Treasury Account Symbol (TAS) is no longer required in the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS) as of June 24, 2016. This change affects the Departmental Contract Information System (DCIS) Items 6SC Treasury Account Symbol Agency Identifier and 6SG Main Account Code for any actions where Item 2A Date

Signed is June 24, 2016 and beyond. Previously, the TAS was required when the initiative was "American Recovery and Investment Act" or when the Action Obligation was greater than \$0. The TAS is still required when the Date Signed is prior to June 24, 2016.

DIRECT VS. INDIRECT COSTS FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS

A simplified definition of direct cost is any cost that can be easily identified with a specific project (grant/contract). These would include the wages of people working on a specific project, materials used on the project, etc. In contrast the indirect costs would include the costs associated with two or more cost objectives, for example, rent of an office building, office supplies, and wages for overall

management of a company. Sometimes it is not clear when a cost should be treated as direct or indirect. If you have questions about direct vs. indirect costs on a contract or grant you are administering, contact the Division of Financial Advisory Services (DFAS).

By phone: (301) 496-2444

By email: dfas-idc@nih.gov

NITAAC'S COMPLIMENTARY GWAC TRAINING SESSIONS CAN HELP THE ACQUISITION PROFESSIONAL MAINTAIN THEIR ACQUISITION CERTIFICATION-PARTICIPANTS EARN TWO CONTINUOUS LEARNING POINTS (CLPS)

Increasing scrutiny into government contracts coupled with an aging workforce make it imperative that government agencies have personnel with solid training. At the same time, today's competitive, dynamic work environment makes sound leadership and management more crucial than ever. To address these needs, government leaders are calling for more targeted training to drive a higher benchmark of knowledge and competence from their employees.

NITAAC, the designated federal Executive Agent authorized by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), offers several easy ways for federal employees to receive the required training to maintain their acquisition certifications and continue to advance.

With NITAAC, learning has never been more rewarding. Participants learn about Government Wide Acquisition Contracts and the value they can provide, while also obtaining **2 CLPs** for their professional growth and development.

With three convenient training options, maintaining your acquisition certifications is as easy as a click of a button.

Onsite Training at your location: Designed for training large groups of employees, NITAAC's complimentary onsite trainings are an ideal way to get your entire team up-to-speed on the acquisition process. These sessions generally last for 2 hours.

Webinar-based training: Designed for the busy professional, NITAAC's complimentary webinar training offers a convenient way for busy staff to get insight on how utilizing NITAAC's three contracting vehicles, with built in FAR clauses, can help streamline their acquisition process. These sessions generally last for 2 hours and are held monthly.

Onsite Training at NIH: Designed for outside agencies desiring to train large groups but, prefer not to host the training, NITAAC's complimentary onsite trainings are an ideal way to get your entire team up-to-speed on the acquisition process. These sessions generally last for 2 hours and are held monthly.

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**NITAAC'S COMPLIMENTARY GWAC TRAINING SESSIONS CAN HELP
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LEARNING POINTS (CLPS)**

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Upon completion of either of NITAAC's modes of training, participants will receive a certificate good for 2 CLPs.

To schedule a training, visit <https://nitaac.nih.gov/resources/events/training-events/submit-request> or contact the NITAAC Customer Support Center at 1.888.773.6542 or via email at NITAACsupport@nih.gov.

ACQUISITION TRAINING INFORMATION

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.

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](#).



“Thank You” in Persian

SPECIAL THANKS

**We’d 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. OALM invites your comments and suggestions for future articles. 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 Annette Romanesk at the email address above. For future issues please contact the Simplified Acquisitions Helpline on (301) 496-0400 or via email at OALMNewsletter@mail.nih.gov and you will be referred to the appropriate editor.