

The Office of Acquisition and Logistics

Management Newsletter – September/October 2014

Using a Purchase Card as a Payment Mechanism above the Micro-Purchase Threshold

In accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) [13.301](#) and agency policy, the purchase card may be used to 1) make micro-purchases; 2) place a task or delivery order (if authorized in the basic contract, basic ordering agreement, or blanket purchase agreement); or 3) make payments, when the contractor agrees to accept payment by the card.

Micro-purchases are generally \$3,000 or less for supplies and services. The micro-purchase threshold for construction however, is \$2,000 and for service contracts it is \$2,500.

FAR Subpart 32.1108 does also allow the purchase card to be used as a **payment mechanism** above the micro-purchase threshold. This requires a contract or purchase order to be established with the vendor that will allow use of the purchase card as a payment mechanism. Purchases made above the micro-purchase threshold are required to follow the policies and procedures applicable to the requirement. This includes adherence to the requirements for competition, public notice, reporting data to DCIS/FPDS, small business set-aside, and use of appropriate provisions and clauses. If payment is to be made by purchase card, the terms and conditions of the contract must include, in addition to other required clauses, FAR Clause [52.232-36 Payment by a Third Party Vendor](#).

System for Award Management (SAM) must be reviewed to determine if a vendor is debarred, suspended or is found to have delinquent debt. Award cannot be made to a vendor and who is debarred or suspended; payment cannot be issued if the vendor is found to have delinquent debt subject to collection under the Treasury Offset Program.

At NIH Today

Currently at NIH, for contract awards, obligations are initially created in iProcurement but then transferred to PRISM. PRISM then allows DCIS entry for the awards. Due to current NBS system limitations, the award function in PRISM is not currently enabled so that the purchase card can be selected as a payment mechanism against a contract/order. Consequently, any purchase card transactions over \$3,000 at NIH are not reported into DCIS/FPDS as required by the FAR. In addition, purchases made over the micro-purchase threshold do require terms and conditions which cannot currently be generated from iProcurement.

NIH has been working on this issue and has a solution that will be implemented in phases. The first phase will ensure that payments over the micro-purchase threshold that are paid with the purchase card will be reported to DCIS. This phase will be implemented in NBS

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in mid-October 2014. Training will be provided either face to face or by webinar for all cardholders who currently have warrants to place and pay for contracts over the micro-purchase threshold. This training will not be required for cardholders without a warrant.

Phase II will focus on Simplified Acquisition procedures and will include Simplified Acquisition Refresher training. This training will provide cardholders with the resources to understand how to properly solicit competition, construct a file, review quotes and offers, and when to authorize payments against the purchase card. This phase will also address what information should be sent to vendors will placing orders and the proper terms and conditions to include in the contract to protect the Federal Government. More information will be forthcoming to those cardholders and CAOs with warrants who will be impacted by this. Should you have any questions, please contact CreditCard@od.nih.gov .

Other Resources

Tools and resources for contract administration can be found at:

- [Federal Acquisition Regulations](#)
- [HHS Office of Grants and Acquisition Policy and Accountability](#) website
- [NIH Manual Chapters/Delegations of Authority](#)
- [NIH Office of Acquisition Management and Policy](#)
- [Federal Acquisition Institute](#)

The NIH Policy Manual Chapter 6307-3 – Special Clearance and Other Acquisition Procedures is now available

The long awaited revision of the NIH Policy Manual Chapter 6307-3 is here.

This NIH Policy Manual Chapter 6307-3 – Special Clearance and Other Acquisition Procedures provides NIH policy for acquisitions that require (1) clearance, (2) technical coordination, or (3) the use of a required source. It covers contract actions, including simplified acquisitions. This revision amends those areas requiring technical input by updating existing requirements and/or organizational components, incorporating new requirements, and deleting obsolete ones.

The revised Manual Chapter 6307-3 Special Clearance and Other Acquisition Procedures can be accessed at the [Office of Management Assessment](#) website.

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Learn how you can save time, money and earn CLPs all with a 90 minute training session.

You've just finished a mad rush to get your IT requirements in by year-end. So why are we asking you to take a 90 minutes training session? Learning how to use NITAAC's government-wide acquisition contracts (GWACs) can help you for the 2015 fiscal year.

A [NITAAC training session](#) can show you how to award commodity IT requirements in as little as 3 days, and complex IT awards in 30 days or less using our secure, online automated systems. You are in the driver's seat with NITAAC's three procurement vehicles: [ECS III](#), [CIO-SP3](#) and [CIO-SP3 Small Business](#).

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 every order. Plus, you can even meet your small business goals depending upon which GWAC you choose.

Let us tell you all about it in a complimentary 90-minute training session that covers:

- How our GWACs are faster, easier and cost-competitive
- The benefits of using NITAAC GWACs for IT products, services and solutions
- A live demonstration of NITAACs easy-to-use online competition/ordering systems
- How to set-aside requirements for 8(a), HUBZone, WOSB, SDVOSB and Small Business
- NITAAC's value-added services, including free comprehensive SOW/PWS/SOO assessments
- Discuss your agency specific IT requirement

We invite you to register for one of the training opportunities listed below. If these dates do not work, please contact us and we will gladly schedule a personalized training session in your office with your IT procurement team. Visit the [NITAAC Free Training](#) webpage to register, and click on the links for "[Webinar](#)", "[At NIH](#)" or "[At Your Location](#)" located in the right-hand sidebar.

It's never too early to start planning next year's IT investments. We certainly hope you'll look to NITAAC GWACs for *everything IT* in 2015!

WEBINAR

DATES:

Thursday, October 30, 2014

TIME:

1:00PM – 3:00PM

LOCATION:

On your computer

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Wednesday, November 19, 2014 1:00PM – 3:00PM On your computer

Tuesday, November 16, 2014 1:00PM – 3:00PM On your computer

AT NIH

DATES:

TIME:

LOCATION:

Thursday, October 2, 2014 1:00PM – 3:00PM Natcher Conference Center, Room A

Thursday, December 4, 2014 1:00PM – 3:00PM 6001 Executive Blvd., Room C

Thursday, February 5, 2015 1:00PM – 3:00PM Natcher Conference Center, Room G1/G2

Need CLPs? No problem! Earn Two (2) CLPs by participating in a NITAAC training session

Interested in learning more? Call the NITAAC Customer Support Desk at 1-888-773-6542 or visit our [website](#).

News From the NIH Supply Center

The NIH Supply Center (NIH-SC) is located in Gaithersburg, Maryland which provides medical, laboratory and general supplies to the NIH community. The NIH-SC also manages 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. As we enter a new Fiscal Year the NIH-SC will begin changing the look of its' marketing campaign; we will start displaying posters, flyers, and tri-fold handouts, similar to what you see below, throughout the campus. It is a new look, a new approach, but a firm focus on convenience, customer service and delivery to this dynamic agency.

The screenshot shows the NIH Supply Center website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the NIH logo and the text 'NIH Supply Center' and 'Customers First'. Below the navigation bar, there is a main content area with a 'CLEARANCE!' banner. The banner features several product categories with images and descriptions:

- Chemicals and other Laboratory Supplies:** Includes items like AMMONIUM PERSULFATE, 500 GR, and SODIUM ACETOACRYLATE, 500 GR.
- Medical Supplies:** Includes items like POLYMER LATEX GLOVES, 100 PAIR, and GLOVES, NITRILE, 100 PAIR.
- Laboratory Supplies:** Includes items like GLASS, LAB WARE, 100 PAIR, and GLASS, LAB WARE, 100 PAIR.
- Medical Supplies:** Includes items like GLOVES, NITRILE, 100 PAIR, and GLOVES, NITRILE, 100 PAIR.
- Office Supplies:** Includes items like COPY PAPER, 100 SHEETS, and COPY PAPER, 100 SHEETS.

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Supply Chain Advisory Council (SCAC) – NIH-SC hosted a Supply Chain Advisory Council (SCAC) meeting on August 20, 2014 and had a good showing of participants, during which the members of the council provided valuable input. Some recommendations to improve support to the NIH community were:

- Change in policy to allow customers to have up to 7 days to notify NIH-SC to obtain credit for shorted, broken, or damaged items discovered on supply pallets that were delivered and accepted
- Provide a current catalog of what's available by sending an e-mail and a link to catalog to all customers
- Include more information about the Supply Center in the NIH Newcomer's packet
- Allow for Special Orders for items that are not currently on the NIH-SC catalog
- Create a ListServ for NIH-SC to inform the customers of new policies and products
- Create a Yammer SCAC group account

Business Operations – We are happy to announce we have a new Business Operations Chief, Mr. Jim Irvin. His goal is simple – it is to provide you with the very best products and customer service support. The Supply Center is planning upcoming events as well as reviewing some of our past events. Our objective with these showcases is to identify what you, the customer, are really concerned with and your requirements. The NIH Supply Center Business Operations and Marketing team hosted several vendor table-top displays and promotions at the Self Service Store (SSS) in Building 10. We will continue to promote new products in the SSS in the future in order to bring awareness to the NIH community and bring additional savings to our customers. We continue to streamline our processes, lean out procedures and strive to make the supply ordering for our customers a convenience. The NIH-SC offers free next day delivery and can assist with bulk purchases upon request. The next showcase and vendor town hall is scheduled in November. Please contact the [NIH SC Marketing Team](#) for questions and/or comments.

Self Service Store – The NIH Supply Center (NIH SC) in Building 10 continues to value your input and finding ways to better support you our customer. If there is anything that you wish to see stocked in the SSS stores please let the Store Manager know, Mr. Eric Jones, (301) 451-2072, the Chief of Inventory Management, Ms. Gwen Carr, (301) 402-0677, or Mr. Gary Marquez, (301) 496-5744.

Thanks for your support.

Make the NIH Supply Center your first choice for supplies.

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Are you ready for IT innovation in the coming year? Let NITAAC help!

Did you know that NITAAC has a number of research tools that can help you complete your due diligence on IT investments for the coming year? Just as we've made GWAC competition and ordering faster and easier, we also offer a number of market research tools to assist program managers, contracting officers and acquisition professionals in their search for the latest innovations in IT.

1. Search for companies “in the know.”

If you already know what technology you're looking for, you can begin your search on [NITAAC's website](#). There, you can get a good idea of which companies have the products or services you are looking for. Simply click on CIO-SP3, CIO-SP3 Small Business, or ECS III in the navigation bar at the top of the homepage, and select “Contract Holders” in the dropdown. That will take you to our easily searchable database where you can further search by task area or lot, and socio-economic categories.

2. Use RFI's to learn about products, services and solutions.

A Request for Information (RFI) may be submitted to NITAAC's ordering systems to collect information about the capabilities of potential offerors. This is an excellent market research tool for service-based commodities, e.g. Email as a Service, as well as other requirements involving customized, complex or enterprise-wide IT. This function is also helpful in gathering technical feedback on Statements of Objectives (SOO), Statements of Work (SOW) and Performance-Based Work statements (PWS). Available in both the RFQ System and e-GOS, RFI's enable informed communications between customers and offerors prior to the release of an RFQ or RFP. To register for the RFQ system for ECS III, or the e-GOS system for CIO-SP3 and CIO-SP3 Small Business simply click on the “Log In” button to the right of the banner on our [homepage](#).

3. Search for prices and/or ceiling rates.

Once you've registered for the e-GOS or RFQ System, you can search the database for contract holder rates and prices. The RFQ System also has a Market Research tool that enables customers to meet the FAR requirement to perform research prior to purchase. It contains thousands of IT products and related services, and can be used to identify the types of commodities available on the GWAC. Keep in mind that items are continuously added, so if a specific product or service is not listed, it does not mean it is not available. In fact, any IT commodity within scope can be added to the vehicle within hours. If information is needed on a specific item that is not in this database, NITAAC suggests using the RFI function, instead.

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Every customer can take advantage of free, value-added services from NITAAC's Customer Support Center.

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](#). 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 within 24 hours
- Every SOW/SOO/PWS evaluated for scope, clarity and other factors to assure quality responses and returned with recommendations
- 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](#).)

Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting (FAC-C)

Refresh

The U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has recently issued new FAC-C training and certification requirements which begin October 1st, 2014. The May 7th, 2014 OMB memo issued the FAC-C Refresh Program. This program will bring the training requirements more in line with the Department of Defense DAWIA certification program.

The current program which is now referred to as the FAC-C Legacy Program will run concurrently with the new FAC-C Refresh Program until 9/30/15. The FAC-C Legacy will no longer be accepted after 9/30/15. This means that any employee in the middle of earning a FAC-C certification at any level can still use the legacy program to get certified until 9/30/15.

Those employees that were certified under the FAC-C Legacy requirements will be automatically grandfathered into the new FAC-C Refresh at the same level they currently hold. Re-certification requirements under both Legacy and Refresh will remain at 80 CLPs required every two years to maintain the certification.

The new FAC-C Refresh Program has added a more robust training curriculum for all three tiers but the educational and experience requirements will remain unchanged. The list below is how the new program will look. As with all FAC certification programs under HHS, the HHS Appropriations Law training is still required to be included in every application regardless of the completion date.

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FAC-C Refresh Training, Education, & Experience Requirements:

| Requirements for: | FAC-C Level I | FAC-C Level II | FAC-C Level III |
|-------------------|---|---|--|
| Experience | 1 year of contract work experience based on the Contract Specialist (GS-1102) Qualification Standards | 2 years of contract work experience based on the Contract Specialist (GS-1102) Qualification Standards | 4 years of contract work experience based on the Contract Specialist (GS-1102) Qualification Standards |
| Education | Baccalaureate degree in any field OR 24 semester hours of business-related college courses from an accredited institution | Baccalaureate degree in any field OR 24 semester hours of business-related college courses from an accredited institution | Baccalaureate degree in any field AND 24 semester hours of business-related college courses from an accredited institution |
| Training | CON 100 Shaping Smart Business Arrangements CON 121 Contract Planning CON 124 Contract Extension CON 127 Contract Management FAC 023 Basic Contracting for GSA Schedules FAC 031 Small Business Programs CLC 057 Performance-Based Payment & Planning for Cash Flow CLC 058 Intro to Contract Pricing CON 170 Fundamentals of Cost and Price Analysis | CON 200 Business Decisions for Contracting CON 216 Legal Considerations in Contracting CLC056 Analyzing Contract Costs CON 270 Intermediate Cost and Price Analysis CLC 051 Industrial Property in the Possession of Contractors HBS 428 Negotiating CON 280 Source Selection and Administration of Service Contracts CON 290 Contract Administration Negotiation Techniques in a | CON 360 Contracting for Decision Makers Select an HBS module other than HBS 428 32 hours of elective training* Total = 110 hours Plus all Level I & II training *The 32 hours of electives may be one course or a series of courses. Each course should be at least eight hours in length and can be classroom, online, or combo of the two. Agencies have the |

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| Requirements for: | FAC-C Level I | FAC-C Level II | FAC-C Level III |
|-------------------|---|--|--|
| | FCN 190 FAR Fundamentals Total = 219 hours | Supply Environment Total = 309 Plus all Level I training | option of specifying the courses their workforce members must take to meet the 32 hours of electives |

These standards, along with all the other FAC program requirements can be found through the [Federal Acquisition Institute](#) website. The Acquisition Career Program Office within the Office of Acquisition and Logistics Management (OALM) is your point of contact on all FAC programs for NIH. If the Acquisition community has any questions please direct them via [email](#).

Acquisition Training Schedule

Acquisition Training Classes can be accessed at the [Acquisition Management training](#) webpage.

[CON 100 Shaping Small Business Arrangements](#)

[CON110 Mission Support Planning](#)

[CON 237 Simplified Acquisition Procedures](#)

[Advanced Simplified Acquisition](#)

[Basic Simplified Acquisition](#)

[Federal Appropriations Law](#)

[HHS Appropriations Law](#)

[Internal & External Requisitioner \(NBS\)](#)

[Price Reasonableness in Simplified Acquisitions](#)

[Professional Services](#)

[Purchase Card Training \(NBS\)](#)

[NBS PCard Logs & Reconciliation \(Refresher\)](#)

[Simplified Acquisition & Delegated Procurement \(NBS\)](#)

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

AT171 – Acquisition Process – Making Sure You Are in Compliance with Section 508

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[AT180](#) - Introduction to Making MS Office 2010 Documents 508 Compliant

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 BPA webpage](#).

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.

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 2014. 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 Barry Solomon at the email address above. For future issues please contact the Simplified Acquisitions Helpline on (301) 496-0400 or via email at SimplifiedAcquisitionHelp@od.nih.gov and you will be referred to the appropriate editor.