

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

CAREER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Acquisition Workforce Training and
Certification Program Handbook



Issued by
Office of the Secretary
Office of Acquisition Management and Policy

OCTOBER 2004

**Department of Health and Human Services
Acquisition Workforce Training and Certification Handbook**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Policies and legislation were developed during the 1990's that focused on the development of an acquisition workforce with the skills and attributes to effectively manage the acquisition process. These laws and policies require education, training, and experience designed to create a highly skilled acquisition workforce. In FY 2001, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) changed its acquisition training course curricula to one that parallels many of the acquisition courses offered by other civilian agencies, and many of these courses are equivalent to Defense Acquisition University (DAU) courses. The Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) is currently working with DAU to develop a common curricula with core competencies.

The purpose of the HHS Acquisition Workforce Training and Certification Handbook is to provide the policy, procedures, and guidance to support the implementation of the Clinger-Cohen Act, Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) Policy Letter 97-01, OFPP Policy Letter 97-03, the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), the Health and Human Services Acquisition Regulation (HHSAR), and other Government-wide guidelines and policies used to foster and promote a professional acquisition workforce. This handbook describes the educational, experience and training requirements for the employment and advancement in contracting positions within HHS by providing information about the HHS Acquisition and Project Management Training and Certification Programs.

Chapter 1 of this handbook provides an overview of the HHS Acquisition Workforce Program. Chapter 2 provides the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) GS-1102 Qualification Standard, the HHS process for waiver to the GS-1102 Qualification Standard, and lists questions and answers concerning the GS-1102 Qualification Standard. Chapter 3 of the handbook, "Procurement Authority (Warrants)," provides details about the warrant levels and describes the selection, appointment, and termination of Contracting Officers. Chapter 4, "Training and Certification Requirements for the HHS Acquisition Workforce," provides details about the HHS Acquisition Certification Program and certification process and lists the eligibility requirements for certification in the HHS Acquisition Certification Program. Chapter 5 of this handbook provides details about the Project Management Certification Program at HHS. Chapter 6, "Fulfillment Program for Acquisition Certification," describes the fulfillment program for acquisition certification. Chapter 7, "Career Planning," discusses career planning and provides information about the Individual Development Plan (IDP) process. The handbook concludes with Chapter 8, "Administrative Information," which provides information about the course attendance policy, inclement weather policy, etc.

Listed below are some of HHS' goals for the Acquisition Workforce Training and Certification Program:

- Establish an HHS Project Management Certification Program. The Office of Information Resources Management and the Office of Acquisition Management and Policy (OAMP) at HHS will establish a Project Management Training Working Group whose duties will be to determine OPDIV/Agency solutions to project management training needs, to identify course curricula for the Project Management Certification Program, and to ensure standardization of project management skills and project management requirements across the Department. The establishment of a Project Management Certification Program will be a "one HHS" effort in achieving the Department's goal to build a project management culture that includes highly skilled project managers. The

structure of the Project Management Certification Program will be determined by the working group.

- Possibly revise the mandatory HHS acquisition training curricula so that the curricula aligns with the revised DAU acquisition curricula. (DAU is in the process of revising its acquisition training curricula. In the summer of 2004, DAU revised its Level I acquisition training curricula and is in the process of redesigning its Level II acquisition curricula.) As of October 1, 2003, CON 301 and CON 353 are no longer offered in the DAU curricula. These two courses have been replaced with CON 353, Advanced Business Solutions for Mission Support. HHS will eventually replace the current CON 301 requirement for Level IV acquisition certification with CON 353, or an equivalent course, once a training provider is identified.
- Develop policy and procedures on the use and negotiation of "Other Transactions" at HHS. Recent reforms in federal acquisition have extended the use of Other Transactional Authority to HHS. Other Transactional Authority allows the use of transactions other than FAR-type contracts, grants and cooperative agreements for carrying out research and development projects when the use of a standard contract, grant, or cooperative agreement is not feasible or appropriate. Chapter 3 of this handbook provides guidance on the certification and warrant requirements for an HHS Agreement Officer.
- Transition to the Acquisition Management Information System (ACMIS). ACMIS is a government-wide, web-based system that manages training, education, certification and contracting officer/contract specialist certification levels, as well as other information on an agency's acquisition workforce. Each OPDIV/Agency will designate a training manager and a substitute training manager, who will be trained to use the system. Training of GS-1102's, GS-1105's and GS-1106's will occur first, while training of other acquisition workforce personnel will occur at a later time.
- Standardize purchase card policies and training across the Department. While purchase card policies within HHS are currently decentralized, there is an effort to standardize purchase card policies and training within the Department. However, each OPDIV/Agency may wish to issue OPDIV/Agency-specific policies and training in this area.

The HHS Acquisition Workforce Training and Certification Program provides the acquisition workforce with standardized training that will require them to meet the challenges and career changes ahead and become the Government's business leaders. The goal of the program is to facilitate the career development of the HHS acquisition workforce through a comprehensive program built on assessment of employee skills, implementation of individual development plans covering competency based training supplemented by on-the-job training, and adherence to minimum standards of education, training, and experience. HHS views acquisition as critical to mission success. HHS has made progress in ensuring that its acquisition workforce have the skills and competencies necessary to accomplish the agency's mission. Continued efforts in implementing initiatives, such as the Project Management Certification Program, are needed to ensure that the acquisition workforce have the skills and competencies needed currently and in the future.

CHAPTER 1

ACQUISITION WORKFORCE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A. Background

During the 1990's, the field of federal acquisition changed dramatically and continues to evolve. Business process reengineering with emphasis on customer service and accelerated automation have drastically changed acquisition during this decade. Policies and legislation were drafted during the 1990's that focused on the development of a workforce with the skills and attributes required to effectively manage the acquisition process. These laws and policies require education, training, and experience designed to create a highly skilled acquisition workforce. There is more emphasis on allowing contracting officers to use sound business judgement, which is why contracting personnel must be well trained to meet their responsibilities.

In 1990, Congress passed the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) (P.L. 101-510 codified in 41 U.S.C. Section 1701 et seq.) which required that education, training and experience requirements be established for entry and advancement in the acquisition field within the Department of Defense (DoD). DAWIA required the establishment of career development programs that require education, training, and experience standards for DoD acquisition positions and prompted DoD to develop a plan to provide a foundation of knowledge necessary to ensure that the acquisition workforce is fully proficient.

Soon after the DoD requirements were in place, the civilian agencies established their own requirements. The Office of Federal Procurement Policy Letter 92-3, dated June 24, 1992, requires that everyone in the GS-1102 job series, uniformed personnel in comparable positions, and all personnel who have been appointed as Contracting Officers in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulations Subpart 1-6, are required to attain an appropriate level of skill in contract management duties. This requirement extends to those engaged in simplified acquisition activities, as well as those designated to serve as project managers on Government contracts. The Policy Letter also established a Government-wide standard and associated policies for competency-based training and related on-the-job training necessary to attain an appropriate level of skill in each task in the Federal Acquisition Institute's Contract Specialist's Training Blueprints (formerly called the Contract Specialist's Workbook). The Contract Specialist's Training Blueprints can be accessed at the following website: <http://www.fai.gov/prodev/contract.htm>. These requirements remain in place and have been supplemented by the new GS-1102 qualification standard set forth under the Clinger-Cohen Act.

President Clinton signed Executive Order 12931, Federal Procurement Reform, the same day he signed the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act of 1994. Executive Order 12931 presented the Administration's approach to managing procurement by requiring civilian agencies to establish career education programs for procurement professionals.

Title V, Subtitle B, of the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act of 1994 requires the Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), in consultation with officials in departments and agencies of the

Federal Government, to establish policies and procedures for designating acquisition positions and managing employees in acquisition positions, to include the accession, education, training, and career development of employees.

In 1996, as part of the Federal Acquisition Reform Act (FARA, or Clinger-Cohen Act, P.L. 104-106), Congress amended the OFPP Act (P.L. 93-400 codified in 41 U.S.C. Section 401 et seq) to establish comparable education, training, and experience requirements for civilian agencies. Section 4307 of the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 states that the head of each executive agency, after consultation with the Administrator of the OFPP, is responsible for establishing policies and procedures for the effective management of that agency's acquisition workforce. The OFPP Administrator is required to issue policies to promote uniform implementation of acquisition workforce programs and shall establish qualification requirements, including education requirements, that are comparable to those established under DAWIA.

OFPP Policy Letter 97-01, "Procurement System Education, Training, and Experience Requirements for Acquisition Personnel," dated September 12, 1997, implements Section 37 of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act for all executive agencies except those subject to DAWIA. Policy Letter 97-01 states that agency heads, after consultation with the OFPP Administrator, shall establish department or agency-wide policies and procedures pursuant to the provisions of the Act. Policy Letter 97-01 also requires that certain components be included in the definition of the acquisition workforce of an agency. Policy Letter 97-01 establishes career paths identified in terms of education, training, experience, and assignments necessary for career progression; establishes requirements for the completion of course work and related on-the-job training in critical acquisition-related duties; identifies critical acquisition-related duties and tasks necessary to competently perform at full performance grade levels; establishes and maintains an acquisition workforce data collection system; and maintains skills currency (agencies shall establish policies that require an equivalent of at least 40 hours of continuing education/training every two years for contract specialists and contracting officers in the GS-1102 series who have satisfied the mandatory and agency/assignment-specific training for the purpose of maintaining currency of acquisition knowledge and skills).

The Department of Health and Human Services has had a successful training program since the early 1970s. In 1977, the HHS Certification Program was established and linked to the HHS Training Program. Executive Order 12352 on Federal Procurement Reforms, dated March 17, 1982, required each executive department and agency to "establish career management programs, covering the full range of personnel management functions that will result in a highly qualified, well managed professional procurement workforce." OFPP issued recommendations for establishing agency programs, one of which included establishing a "Procurement Career Development Program." In 1990, the HHS Acquisition Career Development Program was launched.

There is a difference between the requirements of Policy Letter 92-3 and those under the HHS Certification Program. The Policy Letter requires only that individuals attain competency in performing tasks; it does not take into account the maturity of judgment gained through years of actual work experience, which is a factor in attaining certification under the HHS Certification Program. The relationship between the two is that HHS uses its training program as one method of determining competency as prescribed under the Letter. It does not mean that an individual who attains competency in the contract management duties prescribed by OFPP will automatically be eligible for certification under the HHS Acquisition Workforce

Certification Program and does not guarantee that anyone fulfilling all education, training, and experience requirements for a given certification level will be promoted to the next certification and warrant level.

In FY 2001, HHS changed its existing acquisition training course curricula to one that parallels many of the acquisition courses offered by other civilian agencies, while teaching the competencies contained in the Contract Specialist's Training Blueprints. Many of these new courses are equivalent to Defense Acquisition University courses. HHS courses or their equivalents completed prior to October 1, 2000, count toward certification. A listing of acquisition courses equivalent to DoD acquisition courses are listed in the following website: <http://www.dau.mil/learning/appg.asp>. Course equivalencies are also listed in Appendices C-1 and D of this handbook. This crosswalk of course equivalencies ensures reciprocity of training between civilian and defense agencies. OFPP's goal is to ensure that training throughout the Federal Government satisfies a uniform set of required competencies, and is recognized by all agencies.

The acquisition courses have been reviewed by the American Council on Education (ACE) and contain recommendations for college-level credit. However, acceptance of ACE credit recommendations is at the discretion of the institution and may depend on such variables as the specific department or school within the college or the major and minor areas of concentration. A listing of ACE participating colleges and universities can be downloaded at the following website: <http://www.acenet.edu>.

B. Career Development Policy for the HHS Acquisition Workforce

This handbook provides the policy, procedures, and guidance to support the implementation of the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996, OFPP Policy Letter 97-01, OFPP Policy Letter 97-03, the Federal Acquisition Regulation, the Health and Human Service Acquisition Regulation and other Government-wide guidelines and policies used to foster and promote a professional acquisition workforce. This handbook describes the educational, experience and training requirements for the employment and advancement in contracting positions within HHS and includes the GS-1102 qualification standard mandated by the Office of Personnel Management. On behalf of the Senior Procurement Executive (SPE), each Head of Contracting Activity (HCA) is responsible for enhancing the development of a professional workforce by assuring compliance with mandatory acquisition training and experience standards.

This handbook provides information about the HHS Acquisition and Project Management Training and Certification Programs. It is intended as a management tool for supervisors in counseling employees in career development in the acquisition field. Employees will find it useful in identifying training needs to enhance their capabilities and in fulfilling certification requirements.

C. Purpose of the HHS Acquisition Workforce Training Program

The HHS Acquisition Workforce Training and Certification Program is designed to facilitate career planning and development, provide guidance, and outline the overall framework around which the acquisition career field is to be constructed. It offers a uniform and systematic approach toward increasing professionalism, and provides employees the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to progress in their career. As the business agents of the Government, contracting officers provide a critical link between the agencies and contractors. As such, formal and on-the-job training is critical to ensure that

HHS personnel are able to effectively perform their acquisition functions.

The primary objectives of the program are to attract, select, develop and retain a highly qualified workforce capable of performing current and future HHS acquisition functions. This training correlates to the FAI's Contract Specialist Training Blueprints, which offers advice on how to develop the skills and capabilities necessary for effective performance of acquisition roles and follows the acquisition career model established by FAI. Various aspects of the competencies and skills outlined in the Contract Specialist Training Blueprints align with the DoD competency model. The acquisition career model established by FAI includes the nine (9) core capabilities: develop, negotiate and manage business deals; communicate effectively; manage and lead change; solve problems in an ambiguous environment; analyze and understand the marketplace; build and manage relationships across functions and organizations; understand and effectively operate in the customer environment; develop and implement outcome oriented solutions; and execute.

The HHS Acquisition Workforce Training and Certification Program provides the acquisition workforce with standardized training that will prepare them to meet the challenges and career changes ahead and become the Government's business leaders. The goal of the program is to facilitate the career development of the HHS acquisition workforce through a comprehensive program built on assessment of employee skills, implementation of individual development plans covering competency-based training supplemented by on-the-job training, and adherence to minimum standards of education, training, and experience.

D. Roles and Responsibilities

1. According to the Clinger-Cohen Act, the Senior Procurement Executive (SPE) shall establish policies and procedures for effective management of the acquisition workforce of the agency. The SPE is responsible for:
 - a. Establishing mandatory training and education requirements and overall responsibility for the acquisition workforce training program.
 - b. Establishing the procedures, policies and requirements that govern the HHS Contracting Officer Warrant Program (COWP).
 - c. To the maximum extent practicable, ensuring that acquisition workforce policies and procedures are uniform in their implementation throughout the agency.
 - d. Issuing changes to the policies as necessary.
 - e. As appropriate, issuing waivers as a condition of hiring, in accordance with paragraph D of the OPM qualification standard for the GS-1102 series (see Chapter 2).
 - f. As appropriate, delegating authorities to effectively administer the acquisition workforce training and certification program (i.e., delegating and requiring the certification of contracting officers and contract specialists to the Head of Contracting Activity).

g. Developing the Department's procurement system standards and evaluating the system in accordance with approved criteria and ensuring that the Department's procurement system meets established criteria.

2. The Head of Contracting Activity of each OPDIV/Agency is responsible for:

a. Assisting and facilitating in the planning and development of departmental acquisition policies and procedures and assisting in responding to other agencies and organizations concerning policies and procedures affecting the federal acquisition process (see HHSAR 301.270).

b. Developing policies and procedures specific to the OPDIV/Agency, and fully implementing the Department's Acquisition Performance Measurement and Improvement System (also known as the Acquisition Balanced Scorecard) at his/her OPDIV/Agency.

c. Establishing adequate controls and conducting periodic reviews to ensure compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures (see HHSAR 302.101). Establishing an acquisition workforce performance management accountability system that sets a performance standard; identifies effective and ineffective performance; and issues annual performance appraisals. The OPDIVS/Agencies have latitude with regard to implementing the acquisition workforce performance management accountability system, but the Department provides overall oversight and guidance (reference HHSAR 301.270). Conducting an effective and efficient acquisition program.

d. Supporting the objectives and goals of the acquisition workforce training and certification program by permitting eligible employees to pursue training opportunities and advanced level skills and allowing employees to pursue other developmental activities, as mentioned in Chapter 7, "Career Planning" of this handbook.

e. Appointing and terminating contracting officers/contract specialists in accordance with FAR 1.603 and HHSAR 301.603. (signing the contracting officer's Certification of Appointment and assuring that contracting officers/contract specialists properly display the Certification of Appointment).

f. Ensuring that contracting officers/contract specialists in the GS-1102 series who satisfy the mandatory and agency/assignment specific training have fulfilled the requirement for at least 40 hours of continuing education/training every two years and ensuring that GS-1105's and GS-1106's have fulfilled the requirement for at least 24 hours of continuing education/training every two years. The HCA may determine what education/training will satisfy the continuing education/training requirement (see Appendix F of this handbook).

g. Distributing acquisition workforce information to its acquisition workforce members.

h. Ensuring that OPDIV/Agency acquisition workforce receive training and development opportunities that are in alignment with the OPDIV/Agency's specific needs and are consistent with the employee's Individual Development Plan (IDP).

i. Establishing separate funding lines in the budget for education/training of the acquisition workforce, and, according to the Services Acquisition Reform Act (which became Title XIV of the National Defense

Authorization Act for FY 2004), ensuring that appropriated funds for education/training are not used for any other purpose.

j. Coordinating and submitting all OPDIV/Agency requests for education/training waivers to the SPE.

k. Overseeing the management of the HHS Contracting Officer Warrant Program within the OPDIV/Agency.

l. Issuing purchase cards within the OPDIV/Agency in accordance with FAR 1.603 and HHSAR 301.603.

m. Ensuring that supervisors, training coordinators, and acquisition workforce members are knowledgeable about the HHS Acquisition Workforce Training and Certification Program and ensuring that they comply with the provisions of the program.

3. Supervisors of acquisition workforce members are responsible for:

a. Approving achievement of the employee's applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies listed in Appendix K-2, and, as resources permit, committing to develop the employee's competencies needed to ensure effective employee performance.

b. Ensuring that contracting officers and contract specialists in the GS-1102 series who satisfy their mandatory and agency/assignment specific training fulfill the requirement for at least 40 hours of continuing education/training every two years, and for individuals in the GS-1105 and GS-1106 series, ensuring that they fulfill the requirement for at least 24 hours of continuing education/training every two years.

c. In conjunction with the employee, developing and updating an Individual Development Plan (see Appendix I) for the employee that outlines the employee's short and long-term goals and objectives and identifies ways to achieve these goals and objectives, as well as indicating how deficiencies (if any exist) in skills, course competencies, and work-related technical and general competencies may be met. Supervisors should review and discuss the IDP with the employee at least once a year. (Completion of Appendix J (Assessment of General Competencies) and Appendix I (Individual Development Plan) is not required but is highly recommended and may be useful in determining gaps in an employee's skills/competencies).

d. Ensuring that contracting officers and contract specialists in the GS-1102 series, and individuals in the GS-1105 and GS-1106 series who have completed the education, training, and experience requirements have achieved the applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies necessary to be eligible for a particular certification/warrant level.

e. Ensuring that employees are qualified for their current assignments and are prepared for more responsible assignments. Allowing employees an opportunity to pursue other developmental activities such as taking business or self-development courses and encouraging employees to pursue cross-training and rotational assignments/details as workloads permit and as opportunities arise. (see Chapter 7, "Career

Planning," of this handbook).

f. Ensuring that employees are scheduled for their required training and on-the-job training assignments (as applicable). Supervisors must provide necessary and reasonable opportunities for their employees to fulfill the requirements for certification, including allowing students to take time off during the work day to attend training.

g. Filling vacancies with employees that meet organizational needs as well as the minimum qualifications set forth in the Office of Personnel Management's GS-1102 Contract Specialist Qualification Standard.

h. Registering in AC MIS (Acquisition Career Management Information System) and viewing and verifying accuracy of the employee's records in AC MIS. (see Section F of Chapter 7 of this handbook for more information on AC MIS).

i. Recommending employees for Contracting Officer appointment and submitting requests for Level I(a), I(b), II, and III Contracting Officer appointments to the OPDIV/Agency Board.

j. Submission of waiver requests and/or deviations to the HHS Contracting Officer Warrant Program to the HCA for SPE approval.

k. Monitoring the performance of Contracting Officers and Contract Specialists and establishing controls and procedures to ensure that they comply with the laws and regulations.

l. Ensuring that HHS acquisition workforce personnel are aware of the requirements of the HHS Acquisition Workforce Training and Certification Program.

4. Acquisition workforce members are responsible for:

a. Completing education, training (to include complying with the mandatory HHS training curricula), and experience requirements reflected in the employee's IDP and, as appropriate, ensuring that applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies are met for qualification at a particular acquisition certification and warrant level. Making a personal effort to take advantage of training opportunities and developmental opportunities, as authorized by their supervisor(s).

b. In conjunction with their supervisor, developing, discussing, and updating an Individual Development Plan that outlines the employee's short and long-term goals and objectives and identifies ways to achieve these goals and objectives and indicating how deficiencies (if any exist) in skills, core competencies, and work-related technical and general competencies may be met.

c. Ensuring that completion of education, training, and skills currency requirements is precisely reflected in his/her personnel file and in AC MIS. (the employee's supervisor reviews and ensures accuracy of an employee's data in AC MIS). Employees must keep a copy of all education/training certificates in their personnel file.

d. Identifying opportunities that may help the employee achieve his or her career goals and pursuing

personal career development. Examples of such opportunities may include requesting on-the-job training, other training (including technical, business, and self-development courses), taking on more challenging assignments, pursuing rotational assignments or details, or becoming involved in a professional association.

e. Entering data in ACMIS:

Each member of the acquisition workforce is required to enter specific data and update his/her record in ACMIS on a quarterly basis. The employee's supervisor is responsible for verifying the accuracy of the employee's data in ACMIS on a quarterly basis. (see Section F of Chapter 7 of this handbook).

f. According to FAR 1.602-2, "Responsibilities", Contracting Officers are responsible for ensuring performance of all necessary actions for effective contracting, ensuring compliance with the terms of the contract, and safeguarding the interests of the United States in contractual relationships. Contracting Officers are responsible for: (1) ensuring that the requirements of 1.602-1(b) have been met, and that sufficient funds are available for obligation; (2) ensuring that contractors receive impartial, fair, and equitable treatment; and (3) requesting and considering the advice of specialists in audit, law, engineering, transportation, and other fields, as appropriate.

g. Ensuring that a contracting officer complies with the requirements of his/her warrant.

5. HHS Certification Board:

The HHS Certification Board is responsible for: (1) Certifying Level IV applicants; and (2) Certifying headquarters and regional Office of the Secretary employees at any certification level. The Certification Board reviews and acts upon referrals from Operating Divisions and Agency boards. The HHS Certification Board routinely meets once every three months; however, this schedule may be adjusted based on need. Board members are drawn from a pool of representatives from each OPDIV/Agency. This pool of representatives is known as the Certification Committee. Each year, Heads of Contracting Activity submit names of nominees (who must be Level IV certified) to the Director, Office of Acquisition Management and Policy. The Director of OAMP selects the Chair for the Committee, who, in turn, selects Certification Board members. Members serve on a rotating basis. Each Board is comprised of no fewer than three (3) members nor more than five (5) members. Where possible, the OPDIV/Agency having employees requesting certification from the Board will be represented by one of its appointed Committee

members. The Chair may appoint an Alternate Chair to preside over the Board.

6. OPDIV/Agency Boards are responsible for:

Certifying applicants for Levels I(a), I(b), II, and III. These boards are scheduled to meet on a quarterly basis; however, this schedule may be adjusted based on need. At a minimum, boards are comprised of three members, two of whom should be an OPDIV/Agency senior acquisition manager (who may be the certifying official), and a nonsupervisory acquisition manager. Additionally, the OPDIV/Agency having employees requesting certification from an OPDIV/Agency Board must be represented.

Although OPDIV/Agency Boards are allowed latitude in establishing their own procedures for accomplishing

their individual needs, OPDIV/Agency certification procedures must include the following:

- Employees initiate and prepare their applications for certification and submit them to the Certifying Official through their first-line supervisor. Applications for certification shall include a SF-171, OF-612, resume, or equivalent document that specifically details the applicant's acquisition experience, training, and education, and a copy of the applicant's most recent performance appraisal. Applications must include completed Appendices forms C-2 and K-2 of this handbook.
- Supervisors may not reject an employee's application for certification. They must forward all requests for certification, along with their recommendation, to the certifying official in accordance with OPDIV/Agency procedures.
- Certifying officials must acknowledge in writing to employees that their application has been received and must retain applications in a file until the next scheduled Board meeting.
- The Board must review each application to determine whether the employee satisfies the requirements for the requested certification and warrant level. In the event the Board needs additional information to make a determination, the application will be returned to the employee, through supervisory channels, with a request to furnish supporting data.
- Whenever the Board determines that an applicant does not meet the established criteria for the level of certification requested, the Board must furnish the employee, through supervisory channels, a written explanation of the reason(s) why the request was denied.
- Employees have the right to appeal an OPDIV/Agency Board certification determination to an appointing authority(ies) within the OPDIV/Agency responsible for the certification board, whose decision shall be final.
- Board decisions require unanimous consent. The proper level of certification shall be binding on the Certifying Official.
- The Certifying Official shall issue certificates to employees approved by the Board for certification. Warranted and unwarranted acquisition personnel will receive a certificate upon completion of HHS acquisition training requirements under each certification level.

7. HHS University:

Beginning in FY 2005, HHS University will be responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the HHS Acquisition Workforce Training Program. Duties will include, but are not limited to, issuing the "call for training slots" memo to the OPDIVS/Agencies, offering acquisition and project management training courses, serving as the point of contact for class registration, and working with the Office of Acquisition Management and Policy in establishing policies and procedures in accordance with this handbook for effective management of the program.

8. Office of Acquisition Management and Policy, HHS:

OAMP is responsible for: (1) Determining the content of the course curricula in the acquisition and project management certification programs; (2) Certifying which commercially available courses will be acceptable for attainment of the various HHS contracting officer and project management certifications and contracting officer warrant authority; (3) Effectively managing the acquisition workforce of the agency; (4) Reviewing comments with regard to OPDIVS/Agencies' suggested changes to policy and making changes, as necessary; (5) Issuing changes to policy and regulations and notifying OPDIVS/Agencies of those changes; (6) Warranting of HHS Agreements Officers for "Other Transactions."

CHAPTER 2

GS-1102 QUALIFICATION STANDARD

A. Implementation of GS-1102 Qualification Standard at HHS

As a result of the Clinger-Cohen Act, P.L. 104-106, the Administrator of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy was given responsibility for establishing GS-1102 employment qualification requirements for acquisition workforce positions in non-Department of Defense agencies. On January 1, 2000, in response to Section 4307(g) of the Federal Acquisition Reform Act (FARA), the Office of Personnel Management issued a new qualification standard for GS-1102 contracting positions in civilian agencies. These new requirements are comparable to those established for the DoD positions in 1990 by the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA). Employees in GS-1102 positions will be considered to have met the standard for positions they occupy on January 1, 2000. Employees who occupy GS-1102 positions at grades GS-05 through GS-12 will be considered to meet the basic requirements for other GS-1102 positions up to and including those at the GS-12 level. The original standard included a grandfathering clause that allowed then current employees in the GS-1102 series to be promoted based on specialized experience until January 1, 2000. After January 1, 2000, promotions to the GS-13 and above required all employees to meet the new qualification requirement. The standard was then applied and provided a reasonable opportunity for employees to acquire the needed educational background for promotions. There is no grandfathering provision that allows experience to substitute for education to qualify for promotions. That is, those GS-1102 employees will not have to meet the new educational requirements in the qualification standard and can continue to qualify for other GS-1102 positions up to and including the GS-12 level. In other words, if an employee was already a GS-1102 between GS-5 through GS-12 as of January 1, 2000, the standard allows that employee to lateral into a position at any agency and then continue to be eligible for promotions through GS-12 without having to meet the educational and training requirements. This includes positions at other agencies. The "exceptions" language allows GS-1102s at the GS-13 level and above to lateral into positions within their agency or at other agencies at the grade occupied as of January 1, 2000 without a waiver and without having to meet the education and training requirements if the specialized experience requirements are met (see Section C of this chapter). Thus, employees entering the GS-1102 series and employees converting from the GS-1105 or GS-1106 series to the GS-1102 series must meet the basic standard. However, employees must meet specialized experience requirements when seeking a position at a grade level higher than the GS-1102 level. The educational requirement in the GS-1102 Qualification Standard applies to both warranted and non-warranted GS-1102 personnel.

The following text is the GS-1102 individual qualification standard developed by the Office of Procurement Policy and issued by OPM under the authority of 41 U.S.C. 433. This qualification standard does not apply to Department of Defense positions. The following text is taken verbatim from Section IV-B of the Operating Manual for Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions (p. 166-167). The OPM website that lists the GS-1102 Qualification Standard is:
<http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/sec-iv/b/gs1100/1102.htm>

Basic Requirements for GS-5 through GS-12:

- A. A 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree with a major in any field;

OR

- B. At least 24 semester hours in any combination of the following fields: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.

Applicants who meet the criteria for Superior Academic Achievement qualify for positions at the GS-7 level.

Graduate Education. To qualify for GS-1102 positions on the basis of graduate education, graduate education in one or a combination of the following fields is required: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.

Note - For positions at GS-7 through GS-12, applicants who are qualifying based on experience must possess at least one year of specialized experience at or equivalent to work at the next lower level, that provided the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform successfully the work of the position, in addition to meeting the basic requirements in paragraph A or B, above.

The following table shows the amounts of education and/or experience required to qualify for positions GS-7 through GS-12 covered by this standard.

- C. Exceptions: Employees in GS-1102 positions will be considered to have met the standard for positions they occupy on January 1, 2000. Employees who occupy GS-1102 positions at grades 5 through 12 will be considered to meet the basic requirements for other GS-1102 positions up to and including those classified at GS-12. This includes positions at other agencies and promotions up through grade 12. However, employees must meet specialized experience requirements when seeking a position at a grade level higher than the GS-12 level.

GRADE	EDUCATION	OR	SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE
GS-7	1 full academic year of graduate education or law school or superior academic achievement		1 year equivalent to at least GS-5
GS-9	2 full academic years of progressively higher level graduate education or masters or equivalent graduate degree or LL.B. ¹ or J.D.		1 year equivalent to at least GS-7
GS-11	3 full academic years of progressively higher level graduate education or Ph.D. or equivalent doctoral degree		1 year equivalent to at least GS-9

GS-12 and above	(No educational equivalent)	1 year equivalent to at least next lower grade level
Equivalent combinations of education and experience are qualifying for all grade levels for which both education and experience are acceptable.		

Basic Requirements for GS-13 and Above:

- A. Completion of all mandatory training prescribed by the head of the agency for progression to GS-13 or higher level contracting positions, including at least 4-years experience in contracting or related positions. At least 1 year of that experience must have been specialized experience at or equivalent to work at the next lower level of the position, and must have provided the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform successfully the work of the position.

AND

- B. A 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree, that included or was supplemented by at least 24 semester hours in any combination of the following fields: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.
- C. Exceptions: Employees in GS-1102 positions will be considered to have met the standard for positions they occupy on January 1, 2000. This also applies to positions at the same grade in the same agency or other agencies if the specialized experience requirements are met. However, they will have to meet the basic requirements and specialized experience requirements in order to qualify for promotion to a higher grade, unless granted a waiver under Paragraph D.
- D. Waiver: When filling a specific vacant position, the Senior Procurement Executive of the selecting agency, at his or her discretion, may waive any or all of the requirements of Paragraphs A and B above if the Senior Procurement Executive certifies that the applicant possesses significant potential for advancement to levels of greater responsibility and authority, based on demonstrated analytical and decision making capabilities, job performance, and qualifying experience. With respect to each waiver granted under this Paragraph D, the Senior Procurement Executive must document for the record the basis of the waiver. If an individual is placed in a position in an agency on the basis of a waiver, the agency may later reassign that individual to another position at the same grade within that agency without additional waiver action.

Although the human resource specialist makes initial qualification determinations, subject matter experts (the HCA or designee) may need to determine which courses satisfy the 24 semester credit hours by reviewing transcripts if it is obvious from the course title or number that a course falls in one of the required fields listed as follows: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.

Students may be eligible to receive college credit through a program sponsored by the American Council on Education (ACE). Credits must be awarded by an accredited college or university to be considered as credit toward the degree requirement or the 24 semester hour requirement. Some of the FAI compliant/DAU equivalent courses are ACE certified. The ACE website is at the following:

<http://www.acenet.edu>

B. HHS Process for Waiver to the GS-1102 Qualification Standard

At HHS, waivers are processed in accordance with the OPM GS-1102 Qualification Standard listed in this chapter, and in accordance with the questions and answers to the standard listed in Appendix E of this handbook. The January 1, 2000 qualification standard requirement establishes training, education, and experience requirements that must be met to qualify for GS-1102 positions, unless: (1) The individual meets one of the exceptions listed in the standard; or (2) The requirements are waived as provided by the standard. As stated in paragraph D of the OPM GS-1102 Qualification Standard, when filling a specific vacant position, the Senior Procurement Executive may waive any and all of the requirements of paragraphs A and B listed in the section entitled, "Basic Requirements for GS-13 and above" in this chapter if the SPE certifies that the applicant possesses significant potential for advancement to levels of greater responsibility and authority, based on demonstrated analytical and decision making capabilities, job performance, and qualifying experience.

At HHS, if an employee does not meet the minimum educational requirements as set forth in the GS-1102 Qualification Standard, a waiver may be issued, which allows the employee to be promoted into a position. That is, for GS-13 and above, in order to qualify for promotion to a higher grade, one must meet the basic requirements and specialized experience requirements or receive a waiver from the SPE of the hiring agency. The employee and selecting official must sign a written development plan that specifies the requirements remaining to satisfy the new standard, when and how they will be met, and the consequences if they are not met, and must be signed by the employee and his or her supervisor, approved by the HCA, and forwarded to the SPE. The SPE will either approve or disapprove the request for a waiver in writing. The employee's ability to demonstrate good faith progress toward meeting the standard will be weighed heavily in the waiver decision. **At HHS, only requests for waivers of the educational requirements in paragraph B of the standard will be considered.** This will allow individuals who do not meet the qualification standard to apply for the vacancy and be considered for the position. **It is the Department's policy that no waivers will be granted for the mandatory training and experience requirements set forth in paragraph A of the standard.** After January 1, 2000, promotions to the GS-13 and above required all employees to meet the new qualification requirement or receive a waiver from the SPE. The regular requirements for processing temporary promotions shall apply if a waiver is approved by the SPE. If a waiver is approved, the waiver and a copy of the employee's written development plan must be included in the OPDIV/Agency personnel file, the employee's Official Personnel File, and/or a waiver file. The SPE must document for the record the basis of the waiver granted under this authority.

"Grandfathering" does not apply to mandatory training requirements (that is, those courses required for attainment of certification). If an individual is placed in a position on the basis of a waiver, the Department of Health and Human Services may later reassign that individual to another position at the same grade within the Department without additional waiver action. Waiver authority cannot be delegated to the

OPDIV/Agency level. **Waivers will be granted only in rare cases when the individual who has been determined to be the most suitable candidate available for a specific position does not meet the basic requirements of the OPM GS-1102 Qualification Standard. Waivers will be the exception rather than the rule.** All requests for waivers must be endorsed in writing by the HCA prior to being forwarded to the SPE.

For consideration of a waiver request in the hiring and selection of an employee, the job vacancy announcement must state that waivers may be considered and which requirement(s) may be waived. If an OPDIV/Agency determines when recruiting for a GS-1102 vacancy for a Grade 13 or higher that it will consider applicants for a waiver, the OPDIV/Agency should work with human resource specialists to ensure that the vacancy announcement incorporates language requesting college transcripts; notifies potential candidates that waivers will be considered; and indicates that selection of a candidate will be contingent on SPE approval of the candidate not meeting educational requirements. The HCA must approve announcements that include the possibility of a waiver prior to submission to the SPE and must be supported by data that includes the previous attempts to hire in accordance with the qualification standard. At the OPDIV/Agency's option, the waiver may be applied to any of the educational requirements as specified in the vacancy announcement. If the selecting official considers an applicant who does not meet the qualification standard to be the best candidate for the position, the selecting official will seek a waiver from the SPE for that applicant to the pertinent requirement(s) of the qualification standard. The waiver request to the SPE shall consist of the following:

- Along with a cover memorandum, an explanation that a unique staffing situation exists (such as a difficult to fill position; duty location where it is difficult to attract qualified candidates; or when a high-quality performer fails to meet the basic educational requirements and is considered by the selecting official as the best candidate for the job).
- A justification for the waiver, including a description of why the individual was selected in place of a candidate who fully meets the educational qualification standard.
- The impact of the waiver disapproval on the organization.
- A description of the position, location, grade and anticipated warrant level.
- The candidate's efforts to meet the educational standard and the estimated time frame for completion of the standard.
- A description of the recruiting efforts and the results of those efforts, including the sources used for recruiting. (this is not required when considering a within ladder promotion or accretion action (see Appendix U of this handbook)).
- A copy of the previously approved vacancy announcement (this is not required when considering a within ladder promotion or accretion action (see Appendix U of this handbook)).
- The selected individual's resume or application. Also include a narrative from the selecting official describing the potential of the applicant for advancement to levels of greater responsibility based on analytical and decision making capabilities, job performance, and qualifying experience.
- A copy of the candidate's college transcripts.
- A copy of the employee's individual development plan (if available). The individual development plan shall be accompanied by a plan, or "conditions of employment" statement, signed by the selecting official and the tentative selectee showing a time line for achieving the educational requirements of Part B.
- A memorandum of concurrence and recommendation of approval of the waiver in writing from the HCA, or designee. (No offer may be extended to a selected candidate until the waiver is approved by the SPE).

A "Request for Waiver to the GS-1102 Qualification Standard Application Form" is in Appendix Q of this handbook.

Please mail the waiver request package to:

Mr. Marc R. Weisman
Director, Office of Acquisition Management and Policy
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Room 336E
Washington, D.C. 20201

C. Questions and Answers Concerning the Revised GS-1102 Qualification Standard

Questions and answers concerning the revised GS-1102 Qualification Standard are in Appendix E and can be accessed at the following website: <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/sec-iv/b/gs1100/1102.htm>

CHAPTER 3

PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY (WARRANTS)

A. Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to describe standards and procedures that must be met prior to delegation of procurement authority through a warrant. HHS is committed to ensuring that only individuals who are qualified and have a valid organizational need for contracting authority are delegated the authority to obligate the Department in the expenditure of public funds through the acquisition process. The Federal Acquisition Regulation 1.603 describes the requirements for the selection, appointment, and termination of contracting officers. Factors include experience in acquisition, education, knowledge of acquisition methods, satisfactory completion of required acquisition training courses, understanding of acquisition laws and regulations, and personal integrity and professional conduct in exercising their acquisition responsibilities. Neither the HHS Acquisition Certification Program nor the HHS Contracting Officers Warrant Program guarantee that fulfillment of all requirements for a given level will result in promotion. A description of the minimum training and experience requirements for the four warrant levels at HHS is found in Chapter 4 of this handbook. The HHSAR 301.603 supplements the FAR with policies and procedures specific to HHS. The roles and responsibilities of the SPE, HCA, supervisor(s), and contracting officers under the HHS Contracting Officer Warrant Program are listed in Section D of Chapter 1 of this handbook.

B. Applicability

The HHS Contracting Officer Warrant Program applies to personnel in the GS-1102, GS-1105, and GS-1106 series (as applicable), or other series having signature authority for simplified acquisitions. The mandatory training, education, and experience required for the warrant levels are listed in Section D of Chapter 4 of this handbook. OAMP will consider equivalency for training, experience, or other requirements through its fulfillment program (see Chapter 6, "Fulfillment Program").

C. Warrant Levels

Warrants are certificates of appointment for purchasing products and services. There are four (4) warrant levels at HHS. The established warrant levels are not to exceed the threshold established by HHS. OPDIVS/Agencies may further limit procurement authority, as appropriate. The training and certification requirements outlined in Chapter 4 directly correlate with the warrant levels outlined in Chapter 3. See Chapter 4 for experience and training requirements for purchase card holders. At HHS, certification and warrant levels are not linked to promotions or eligibility for a job assignment.

It is a mandatory prerequisite for delegated acquisition authorities as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Level I (a) | Purchasing Agent - Required for all personnel in the GS-1102, 1105, 1106 series, or other series having signature authority for simplified acquisitions, including orders from GSA sources over the micropurchase threshold. Also |
|--------------------|--|

includes people with purchase card authority above \$2,500 and up to \$25,000 per transaction, as well as DELPRO and card approving officials. Sufficient for delegation of contracting officer authority up to \$25,000 per transaction, or up to the maximum threshold on Federal Supply Schedule Blanket Purchase Agreements, not to exceed \$1,000,000.

Level I (b) Purchasing Agent - Required for all personnel in the GS-1102, 1105, 1106 series, or series having signature authority for simplified acquisitions, including orders from GSA sources over the micropurchase threshold. Also includes individuals with purchase card authority above \$25,000 and up to \$100,000 per transaction as well as card approving officials. Purchase card authority over \$25,000 and up to \$100,000 per transaction is only granted to purchasing agents in the centralized/decentralized acquisition offices. Sufficient for delegation of contracting officer authority up to \$100,000, or up to the maximum ordering threshold on Federal Supply Schedule Blanket Purchase Agreements, not to exceed \$1,000,000, as well as use of commercial purchasing up to \$5,000,000 per transaction on contracting established price line items. (commercial items are described in FAR Subpart 13.5).

Individuals who were granted a Level I certification prior to adoption of this version of the handbook will retain the authorities granted under the previous handbook, i.e., Level I Certification sufficient for delegation of authority up to \$100,000. Contract Formation I and Acquisition Planning II taken prior to October 1, 2004 will be considered equivalent to any of the courses now required for Level I(a) and I(b) on an equivalent hour basis. Individuals approved for Level I under the previous version of this handbook can be upgraded to Level I(b) (which would allow delegation of authority to acquire commercial products and services up to \$5,000,000) by completing the required courses and requesting a new certificate.

Level II Acquisition Official - Required for all personnel in the GS-1102 series to be delegated a warrant up to \$500,000 and commercial purchases up to \$5,000,000 per transaction.

Level III Senior Acquisition Official - Required for all personnel in the GS-1102 series for delegation of contracting officer authority with unlimited purchasing authority and commercial purchases at any level.

Level IV Acquisition Manager - Required for delegation of preaward review and approval authority as specified in HHSAR Subpart 304.71.

D. Selection, Appointment, and Termination of Contracting Officers

1. The appointment, selection, and termination of appointment of contracting officers shall be made by the Head of Contracting Activity (HCA). This authority is not delegable (HHSAR 301.603-1). The procedures for the selection and appointment of contracting officers shall apply to anyone seeking the authority for a contracting officer warrant. For those OPDIVS/Agencies that have contracting officers/contract specialists with dual signature warrants within some of the offices, the appointment and termination of contracting officers/contract specialists is done in accordance with OPDIV/Agency procedures.

2. The contracting officer appointment document for personnel in the GS-1101, GS-1102, and GS-1105 series, as well as personnel in any other series who will obligate the Government to the expenditure of funds in excess of the micropurchase threshold, shall be the Standard Form (SF 1402), Certificate of Appointment, and shall indicate the Contract Officer's warrant level and threshold and any other limitations (HHSAR 301.603-1). Appointing officials shall ensure that individuals delegated warrant authority meet the requirements stipulated in Chapter 4 of this handbook. Contracting Officer warrants will be issued to Civil Service personnel only. The HCA may determine an alternate appointment document for appointments at or below the micropurchase threshold. (for more information on HHS purchase card procedures, please access the following website: http://www.psc.gov/sas/acquisitions/credit_card.html.) Delegation of procurement authority is used to grant procurement authority to Federal employees who use the government purchase card for the procurement actions that they make. A delegation of procurement authority is also issued to authorize the holder to use other ordering mechanisms, such as calls or orders under already awarded contracts or BPA's or other contract vehicles. A delegation of procurement authority describes both the holder's spending limits and authority in a memorandum.

Changes to appointments shall be made by issuing a new appointment document. Each appointment document shall be prepared and maintained in accordance with FAR 1.603-1 and shall state the limits of the individual's authority (HHSAR 301.603-3(a)).

3. An individual must be certified at the appropriate level under the HHS Acquisition Certification Program as a prerequisite to being appointed as a contracting officer with authority to obligate funds in excess of the micropurchase threshold. (see Section D of Chapter 4 of this handbook). Thus, individuals selected for contracting officer warrant authority must meet the education, training, and experience requirements that are established for the warrant level. An individual shall be appointed as a contracting officer only in instances where a valid organizational need is demonstrated. Factors to be considered in assessing the need for an appointment of contracting officer include volume of actions, complexity of work, and structure of the organization (HHSAR 301.603-1).

4. The HCA will determine and require training for individuals appointed as contracting officers with delegated authority below the micropurchase threshold, and hours of training may vary. If delegated authority of a purchase card holder exceeds the micropurchase limit, purchase card holders are required to take the designated courses listed in Section D of Chapter 4. Additional resources for purchase card training are listed in Appendix M of this handbook.

5. According to HHSAR Section 301.603-70, "Contracting officer responsibilities which do not involve the obligation or deobligation of funds or result in establishing or modifying contractual

provisions may be delegated by the contracting officer by means of a written memorandum that clearly delineates the delegation and its limits. Contracting officers may designate individuals or ordering officials to make purchases or place orders under blanket purchase agreements, indefinite deliver contracts, or other preestablished mechanisms. Ordering officials, including those under NIH's DELPRO, are not contracting officers. Ordering officials should receive sufficient instruction from the contracting officer to ensure appropriate exercise of the responsibilities and knowledge of their limitations." Contracting officers cannot delegate warrant authority.

How to Request a Warrant.

6. When it has been determined that the appointment is in the best interests of the agency and there is a demonstrated need for the procurement authority requested, nominations for appointment of contracting officers shall be submitted to the HCA in writing through appropriate organizational channels for review. The HCA is responsible for appointing and terminating contracting officers/contract specialists in accordance with FAR 1.603 and HHSAR 301.603. This authority is not delegable. The nomination package, which typically is initiated by the prospective contracting officer's immediate supervisor, shall include the following:

- A recommendation from the employee's immediate supervisor providing justification for the appointment of an HHS Contracting Officer.
- Employee's name, grade, and office location; employee's phone and fax numbers and e-mail address.
- 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.
- A completed Appendix T (Contracting Officer's Warrant Application form) of this handbook.
- A copy of employee's most recent performance appraisal; documents supporting fulfillment (see Chapter 6 of this handbook)
- Proof of achievement of applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies (see Appendix K-2)
- A copy of the certificate issued under the HHS Acquisition Certification Program indicating the employee's current certification level, if applicable.

The request for appointment and other documentation shall be forwarded to the employee's supervisor who reviews it and determines if it is accurate and complete. If the employee's application package is approved by the supervisor, it is then forwarded to the HCA for approval. An application form for an HHS Contracting Officer's warrant is in Appendix T of this handbook. Appointing officials shall maintain a file containing the qualifications of each contracting officer. The file should contain copies of the warrant, the application form for a Contracting Officer's Warrant (Appendix T), and copies of the nomination package (see paragraph above). Individuals issued warrants must ensure that all contract award documents include their name as it appears on their warrant.

7. Appointing officials must ensure that a warrant candidate meets the experience, education/training requirements listed in Chapter 4, is certified in the HHS Acquisition Certification Program, and meets the skills currency training and other specific OPDIV/Agency standards that may apply.

8. The HCA will determine the documentation required, consistent with FAR 1.603-2, when the

resulting appointment and authority does not exceed the micropurchase threshold (HHSAR 301.603-2).

9. The appointment of contracting officers shall be made at levels commensurate with the employee's certification level listed in section D of Chapter 4 of this handbook. If it is essential to appoint an individual who does not fully meet the certification requirements for the contracting officer authority sought, an interim appointment may be granted by the HCA. HCAs are responsible for ensuring that training requirements are met within the specified time frame. Interim appointments may not exceed one (1) year in total, and shall not be granted unless the individual can meet the certification requirements within one (1) year from the date of appointment. The HCA may extend interim appointments when he/she determines it is appropriate by granting additional time to complete the requirements of a permanent appointment. The HCA and Contracting Officer will discuss time frames for extension of an interim appointment to allow completion of the requirements, and the HCA will make the final decision. If the certification requirements are not met by that date, the appointment will automatically terminate.

Termination or Revocation of a Contracting Officer's Appointment

10. The Head of Contracting Activity may terminate or revoke a Contracting Officer's warrant as a result of any of the following:

- Separation of the individual from the organization (e.g., retirement or resignation);
- Reassignment of the individual to a position not requiring a warrant;
- Failure to maintain a satisfactory performance rating;
- Failure to maintain training standards of the appointment;
- Violation of the Standards of Conduct of the Executive Branch (see C.F.R. Part 2635);
- Failure to comply with the applicable laws, regulation, or policy in the performance of his or her duties;
- Lack of organizational need for the appointment. Supervisors must provide written notification to the Head of Contracting Activity whenever a contracting officer is disciplined for violation of laws, regulations or is incompetent. Written notification must also be provided to the HCA when a contracting officer transfers to another office, resigns, retires, is no longer serving as a contracting officer, or is terminated. Termination of contracting officer appointments shall be accomplished in accordance with FAR 1.603-4. The original SF-1402 shall be returned to the issuing office for placement in the Contracting Officer's appointment file, and shall indicate "Cancelled." A cover memorandum indicating the reason for termination shall also be placed in the Contracting Officer's appointment file. No employee may sign a contractual document for or on behalf of a contracting officer. The only person authorized to sign a contractual document is the contracting officer whose name is typed on the contractual document. Each procurement office shall make periodic reviews of contracts to ensure that contracting officers do not exceed their warrant levels.

11. The original copy of the warrant will be mailed or given in person to the individual and a copy of the warrant will be maintained in a file within each OPDIV/Agency. Warrants are to be framed and displayed in a visible place near the contracting officer's desk. Each warrant shall include the individual's name, period of appointment, and Contracting Officer limitation of authority, warrant number, and other applicable restrictions. The limitation of authority for the warrant will be

commensurate with the level of experience and training. Appointments should be reviewed annually by the HCA.

12. A permanent appointment is issued to a candidate who meets all requirements for experience, training and education at the time the appointment is made.

Warranting of HHS Agreements Officers:

13. An Agreement Officer who has been delegated the authority to execute Other Transactions, CRADAs (Cooperative Research and Development Agreements), cooperative agreements, or standard FAR-type contracts must possess the appropriate knowledge, experience, training, and skills for awarding and administering these transactions. An Agreement Officer is a federal official who is generally warranted to execute any of the four instruments previously mentioned. Those selected to serve as an Agreement Officer must successfully complete the Cooperative Agreements, CRADAs & Other Transactions course taught by Federal Publications Seminars, or an equivalent course, prior to being appointed. The Office of Acquisition Management and Policy within the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management (ASAM) will have the sole authority to warrant Agreements Officers. To receive a warrant, an Agreement Officer must be a Contracting Officer, preferably with an unlimited warrant, with a Level III or Level IV certification in the HHS Acquisition Certification Program and have five (5) or more years of experience in awarding federal contracts. An additional two (2) or more years of experience in awarding federal grants, cooperative agreements, or Other Transactions is preferred. The delegation of authority to issue these types of transactions must be expressly stated on the individual's warrant.

Waivers to Warrant Standards:

14. Contracting Officer authority should be delegated only to employees who meet the standards in this handbook. However, there may be an unusual circumstance that requires delegation of a warrant to an employee who does not meet the warrant standards in of the HHS Contracting Officer Warrant Program. Any requests for waivers requesting deviations from the requirements and policies of the HHS Contracting Officer Warrant Program shall be sent in writing to the SPE for approval. The SPE will either approve or disapprove in writing the request for a waiver to the warrant standards. The SPE may grant waivers on a case-by-case basis in unique situations only. The request for an appointment waiver shall include the following:

- Justification documents to include: explanation that a unique staffing situation exists and the impact of the waiver disapproval would have on the organization. Also include a narrative that states how the candidate's background and experience are similar to the contract actions(s) in which the warrant is required;
- The individual's resume or Optional Form 612;
- A plan, such as an IDP, agreed upon by the candidate and the HCA, specifying a time frame for achieving the requirements;
- A memorandum of concurrence and recommendation of the permanent waiver from the HCA;
- The SPE will forward to the HCA a written approval or disapproval of the waiver request.

15. The Senior Procurement Executive, the Chief Acquisition Officer, and the OPDIV/Agency Head shall be considered Contracting Officers at HHS because of their positions. No Certificate of Appointment is required. All other contracting officers at HHS shall be selected and appointed

under the provisions of the HHSAR 301.603.

16. All Contracting Officers and Contract Specialists in the GS-1102 series are required to successfully complete a minimum of 40 hours of continuing education/training every two years in order to keep their warrants. All GS-1105's and GS-1106's are required to successfully complete a minimum of 24 hours of continuing education/training every two years in order to keep their warrants, if applicable. Failure to meet the maintenance of skills currency will result in the suspension or termination of an employee's warrant.

Exemptions from the warrant system:

17. The following transaction is not covered by the Federal Acquisition Regulation and is, therefore, exempt from the HHS warrant system: The Standard Form 182, "Request for Training Forms." This is for off-the-shelf training (or with minor customization to include HHS examples) up to \$25,000. This does not include substantial changes to a course content. The purchase of any classes requiring course development for over \$25,000 must be completed by a warranted contracting officer. Classes requiring course development must be purchased by contracting officers in accordance with the FAR procedures.

18. Contracting Officers/Contract Specialists (GS-1102's) are prohibited from signing actions, including modifications, options, or any other action that will result in the total amount of the contract exceeding their delegated warrant authority (as specified on the SF-1402). This includes Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contracts. But, orders issued against IDIQ contracts are processed differently. Once an IDIQ contract is awarded by a Contracting Officer with the appropriate authority, orders against the contract may be issued by others up to their delegated warrant authority, assuming that each order is separate and distinct (that is, not a follow-on of another order) from each other.

Employees delegated warrant authority are the only individuals legally authorized to bind the Government by executing contracts and to sign determinations and findings required by the FAR. The amount specified on the warrant should cover the estimated maximum contract amount, including all option periods. For example, an employee with a \$500,000 Contracting Officer Certificate of Appointment may not award a contract for a base year of \$300,000 if the contract includes a one-year option for an additional \$300,000. In this case, the total contract amount, including options, exceeds the amount stipulated in the warrant. If a warrant is limited to \$500,000 (for example), the holder may not sign a contract for more than that amount, even if the additional amount is subject to the availability of funds. Higher level contracting officers may sign the action when modifications to orders and contracts make the total amount of the contract exceed the contracting officer's warrant limitation.

CHAPTER 4

TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE HHS ACQUISITION WORKFORCE

A. Applicability

This program applies to all members of the HHS acquisition workforce. OFPP Policy Letter 97-01 states that the acquisition workforce of an agency includes:

- a. All positions in the General Schedule (GS-1102) Contracting Series and non-DoD uniformed personnel in comparable positions.
- b. All Contracting Officers regardless of General Schedule series with authority to obligate funds above the micropurchase threshold.
- c. All positions in the GS-1105 Purchasing Series.
- d. All Contracting Officer Representatives/Contracting Officer Technical Representatives, or equivalent positions.

Also, this program applies to any personnel issued a purchase card by the Department of Health and Human Services and to employees in other acquisition related positions (as designated by the Senior Procurement Executive).

B. Acquisition Certification Program and Certification Process (for GS-1101, GS-1102, GS-1105, and GS-1106 series)

The program is open to all employees in the GS-1101, 1102, 1105, and 1106 series, and to employees, regardless of series, who have been delegated preaward and approval authority (HHSAR 301.603). The certification standards may be used as a guide for employees in other series who are involved in the acquisition process and who want to receive acquisition training.

In October 2003, the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) issued the Contract Specialist Training Blueprints (Blueprints) (website address is <http://www.fai.gov/prodev/contract.htm>), which identified duties Federal Government employees who are GS-1102's, and other acquisition workforce members, must be competent to perform. The duties identified in the Blueprints are assigned to various courses that have been adopted as the Government-wide core training for acquisition professionals. The courses are mandatory training for GS-1102's and other acquisition workforce members who perform significant acquisition-related duties, whether or not the person is certified as a contracting officer.

HHS follows the DAU technical competency model listed in Appendix K-1 and the FAI general competency model listed in Appendix J. Competency based training ensures that each member of the acquisition

workforce has the knowledge and skills necessary to perform his/her job. To become certified at a particular level at HHS, each contracting professional must document in Appendix C-2 completion of the FAI/DAU equivalent courses by indicating which class(es) he/she has taken (please attach documentation, such as training certificates and/or school transcripts); proof of achievement of college degree and/or 24 semester hours in a combination of the following fields: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management; completion of Appendix form K-2 (Certification of Achievement of Applicable Education/Training and Work-Related Technical Competencies Form); completion of Appendix R (Acquisition Certification Application Form); completion of Appendix T (Contracting Officer's Warrant Application Form); and attach a resume, OF 612, or SF 171. Forward the entire application package to the employee's immediate supervisor for approval, who then forwards it to the reviewing official. DAU typically updates their equivalent course list on an annual basis. The most recent equivalent course list is in Appendix D of this handbook and can be accessed at the following DAU website: <http://www.dau.mil/catalog/default.asp>. To ensure acceptability of courses as DAU equivalent, employees should review Appendix D of this handbook. Employees should also review the training provider's course syllabus to assure coverage of course technical competencies. Once the certification information has been approved, the employee shall enter the data into ACMIS (see Section F of Chapter 7 of this handbook for information on ACMIS). HHS will provide a training certificate indicating the level of acquisition certification achieved. The HCA may require additional job specific classes for any certification level. Once an employee has completed training, he/she is responsible for submitting proof of completion of training to his or her supervisor, and the employee is responsible for updating the data in ACMIS.

The acquisition and project management courses are provided through HHS University. The acquisition courses in the HHS University curricula closely parallels the mandatory DoD contracting curricula.

Employees hired at HHS before October 1, 2004 are considered to have met the education/training and work-related technical competencies for their current certification and warrant level. Beginning October 1, 2004, the completion of Appendix K-2 of this handbook is required in order to progress to the next certification and warrant level.

The OPDIV/Agency Board (in which the HCA may be a member) has the final determination of certifying an employee at a particular level. Training requirements for a Level I(b) must be met before progressing to a Level II, while training requirements for a Level III must be met before progressing to a Level IV. In the event an employee does not achieve certification at the required level within the prescribed time limits due to causes beyond their control, the employee's supervisor must submit a plan to the cognizant certification board with 30 days of the prescribed date for certification. The plan must detail the specific manner in which the employee will be afforded the opportunity to meet the certification.

Every contracting professional must satisfy completion of the required training. Employees shall document either completion of the above courses, or completion of equivalent courses listed in Appendix C-2 and attainment of applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies listed in Appendix K-2. The process of certification at HHS requires training, education, and experience. It is not a statement of eligibility for promotion or job assignment. Therefore, the acquisition certification and warrant level is not linked to grade levels or eligibility for promotion. Upon completion or fulfillment of the mandatory courses, the employee can request to become acquisition training certified for the appropriate level. The acquisition training and certification levels in the HHS Acquisition Certification Program directly correlate with the

warrant levels listed in Chapter 3. The certification recognizes that the employee has met all the training and experience requirements for that level. The OAMP delegates HHS acquisition certification for Levels I(a), I(b), II, and III to the OPDIV/Agency Certification Board. The OPDIV/Agency will provide a training certificate indicating the achieved acquisition certification level. An application for acquisition certification at HHS is listed in Appendix R of this handbook.

C. Curricula Comparison

HHS employees who are acquisition workforce members and who completed acquisition training before October 1, 2004 should use the following table to determine how the following courses equate to the courses under the former HHS Acquisition Training and Certification Program.

Class	Level under previous HHS Acquisition Training and Certification Program	(Effective October 1, 2004) Level under HHS Acquisition Training and Certification Program
Basic Simplified Acquisition Procedures	No level designated	I(a)
Advanced Simplified Acquisition Procedures	No level designated	I(a)
Introduction to Contracting	No level designated	I(b), II
Acquisition Planning I	II	I(b), II
Contract Formation I	I	II
Cost Analysis	II	II
Price Analysis	II	II
Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques	II	II
Contract Administration I	II	II
Contract Formation II	III	III
Intermediate Contract Pricing	III	III
Contract Administration II	III	III
Government Contract Law	III	III
Acquisition Planning II	I	III

CON 301 (Executive Acquisition Seminar)	No level designated	IV
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D. Eligibility Requirements for Certification in the HHS Acquisition Certification Program

There are (4) four levels of certification in the HHS Acquisition Certification Program. The certification levels identify the requirements for employment, progression, and advancement to senior positions in the contracting field. HHS has identified the career path and critical skills, or competencies, for the contracting series. Progression in the career path is intended to develop an acquisition workforce that is well trained and highly experienced and one that is prepared to meet acquisition and management challenges. Level I(a) is for employees who essentially perform simplified acquisition duties. Individuals newly appointed to positions requiring certification at Levels I(a), I(b), and IV must obtain certification within one year. Individuals appointed to positions requiring certification at Level II and Level III will have up to two years to be certified. Grade levels do not imply a direct correlation with timing for completing the education, training, and experience requirements. Upon completion of the applicable education/training and work experience requirements, completion of mandatory skills currency and other requirements such as a satisfactory performance rating, and attainment of applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies, personnel in the GS-1102, GS-1105, and GS-1106 series are eligible for certification at Levels I(a), I(b), II, III, or IV (whether warranted or unwarranted). The Head of Contracting Activity shall be certified, or be certifiable, at Level IV of the HHS Acquisition Certification Program. Individuals appointed as HCA's who do not meet the Level IV requirements shall have one year from the date of appointment to obtain Level IV certification (HHSAR 302.101).

In the event an employee does not achieve certification at the required level within the prescribed time limits due to causes beyond their control, the employee's supervisor must submit a plan to the cognizant certification board within 30 days of the prescribed date for certification. The plan must detail the specific manner in which the employee will be afforded the opportunity to meet the certification standards. Therefore, supervisors should use the mandatory requirements as a guide when scheduling training and drafting Individual Development Plans for their staff. OPDIVS/Agencies may require additional training beyond the mandatory training requirements if the additional training is considered necessary to support the OPDIV/Agency's mission.

The GS-1102 training requirements follow the learning process that typically occurs within the federal procurement field. The GS-1102 Qualification Standard is listed in Chapter 2 of this handbook. The educational requirements as set forth by the Office of Personnel Management for the GS-1105 and GS-1106 series are listed at the following websites:

For the GS-1105 series, <http://www.opm.gov/fedclass/gs1105.pdf> and for the GS-1106 series, <http://www.opm.gov/fedclass/gs1106.pdf>.

Successful achievement of all of the factors listed below, including achievement of applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies, is required for becoming certified and warranted at a particular level in the HHS Acquisition Certification Program, but is not a basis for eligibility

for promotion or for job assignment. Following are experience and training requirements:

Level I (a) Purchasing Agent

1. *Experience:*
One (1) year of experience in the GS-1102, 1105, 1106, or other series having signature authority for simplified acquisitions, six (6) months of which includes hands on experience in small purchases/simplified acquisition procedures.
2. *Mandatory Training:*
Successful completion of eighty (80) hours of basic-level training which includes the following courses or their equivalent:
 - Basic Simplified Acquisition Procedures (40 hours)
 - Advanced Simplified Acquisition Procedures (40 hours)
3. *Mandatory Skills Currency:*
For GS-1102's, a minimum of forty (40) hours of skills currency training and continuing education every two years after all mandatory training requirements have been met. For GS-1105's and GS-1106's, a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours of skills currency training every two years is required after all mandatory training requirements have been met. A refresher course in "Green Purchasing" is required at this level every two years. Refresher training in purchase card procedures for purchase cardholders at this level is required every two years. Courses in Acquisition of Commercial Items and Services and Market Research are highly encouraged.
4. Satisfactory performance rating.
5. *Competency Achievement:*
Achievement of applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies (as listed in Appendix K-1. Submission of Appendix K-2 is required when applying for acquisition certification).

Level I (b) Purchasing Agent

1. *Experience:*
One (1) year of general acquisition experience (experience in the GS-1102, GS-1105, GS-1106 series, or other series having signature authority for simplified acquisitions), which may include experience in small purchases/simplified acquisition procedures.
2. Satisfies the requirements for Level I(a) certification.
3. *Mandatory Training:*
Successful completion of the following courses:

Introduction to Contracting (40 hours)

Acquisition Planning I (40 hours)

4. *Mandatory Skills Currency:*
For GS-1102's, a minimum of forty (40) hours of skills currency training and continuing education every two years after all mandatory training requirements have been met. For GS-1105's and GS-1106's, a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours of skills currency training every two years is required after all mandatory training requirements have been met. A refresher course in "Green Purchasing" is required at this level every two years. Refresher training in purchase card procedures for purchase cardholders at this level is required every two years. Courses in Acquisition of Commercial Items and Services and Market Research are highly encouraged.
5. Satisfactory performance rating.
6. *Competency Achievement:*
Achievement of applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies (as listed in Appendix K-1. Submission of Appendix K-2 is required when applying for acquisition certification).

Level II Acquisition Official

1. *Experience:*
Two (2) years of general acquisition experience.
2. *Mandatory Training:*
Successful completion of two-hundred and eighty (280) hours of basic-level training, which includes the following courses:
 - Introduction to Contracting (40 hours)
 - Acquisition Planning I (40 hours)
 - Contract Formation I (40 hours)
 - Cost Analysis (40 hours)
 - Price Analysis (40 hours)
 - Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques (40 hours)
 - Contract Administration I (40 hours)
3. *Mandatory Skills Currency:*
For GS-1102's, a minimum of forty (40) hours of skills currency training and continuing education every two years after all mandatory training requirements have been met. A refresher course in "Green Purchasing" is required at this level every two years. Refresher training in purchase card procedures for purchase cardholders at this level is required every two years.
4. Satisfactory performance rating.

5. *Competency Achievement:*
Achievement of applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies (as listed in Appendix K-1. Submission of Appendix K-2 is required when applying for acquisition certification).

Note: Certification (Certified Professional Contracts Manager) by the National Contract Management Association (NCMA) satisfies, and may substitute for, the courses prescribed for Level II certification. However, all the other requirements for a Level II certification must be satisfied.

Level III Senior Acquisition Official

1. *Experience:*
Two (2) years of specialized experience (in addition to the two (2) years of general acquisition experience required for Level II certification) in a senior acquisition position (see Appendix L for a definition of "Senior Acquisition Official") .
2. Satisfies the requirements for Level II certification.
3. *Mandatory Training:*
Successful completion of two-hundred and eighty (280) hours of advanced-level training, which includes the following courses or their equivalent:
 - Contract Formation II (40 hours)
 - Intermediate Contract Pricing (80 hours)
 - Contract Administration II (40 hours)
 - Government Contract Law (80 hours)
 - Acquisition Planning II (40 hours)
4. *Mandatory Skills Currency:*
For GS-1102's, a minimum of forty (40) hours of skills currency training and continuing education every two years after all mandatory training requirements have been met. A refresher course in "Green Purchasing" is required at this level every two years. Refresher training in purchase card procedures for purchase cardholders at this level is required every two years.
6. Satisfactory performance rating.
7. *Competency Achievement:*
Achievement of applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies (as listed in Appendix K-1. Submission of Appendix K-2 is required when applying for acquisition certification).

Level IV Acquisition Manager

1. *Experience:*
Minimum of (4) years of experience in an acquisition position. Examples of positions include supervisory contracting officer, contracting officer responsible for a major acquisition program, senior procurement analyst, and team leader; minimum of one (1) year in an acquisition management position; or a minimum of one (1) year as a contracting officer with an unlimited warrant.
2. Satisfies the requirements for Level III certification.
3. *Mandatory Training:*
Successful completion of CON 301 (Executive Acquisition Seminar)
4. *Mandatory Skills Currency:*
For GS-1102's, a minimum of forty (40) hours of skills currency training and continuing education every two years after all mandatory training requirements have been met. A refresher course in "Green Purchasing" is required at this level every two years. Refresher training in purchase card procedures for purchase cardholders at this level is required every two years.
5. Satisfactory performance rating.
6. Contracting personnel certified at Level IV are highly encouraged to attend additional training to further develop their management and leadership skills.
7. *Competency Achievement:*
Achievement of applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies (as listed in Appendix K-1. Submission of Appendix K-2 is required when applying for acquisition certification).

Purchase Card Holders - All purchase card holders and card approving officials, regardless of job series, are required to take HHS University's one-day Purchase Card Training course, or an equivalent course, before purchase cards are issued or duties are assumed. Purchase card holders and approving officials must be appointed in writing in accordance with the OPDIV/Agency procedures. Training requirements for purchase card holders are listed in Section D of Chapter 4. Refresher training in Purchase Card procedures for all purchase card holders and card approving officials, regardless of job series, is required every two years. Training requirements for purchase card holders shall reflect the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to perform duties related to micropurchases. At each OPDIV/Agency's discretion, the purchase card holder may be granted increased procurement authority to use the purchase card for purchases above the micropurchase limit. If that is the case, the required additional training shall provide the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to perform these additional duties. Additional purchase card training is required before purchase card limits are increased, and the number of hours required shall be determined by the HCA. At each OPDIV/Agency's discretion, contracting officers may be authorized to use Government purchase cards as a payment mechanism for various contractual actions (the authorized amount is established by the HCA). Recommended sources for purchase card training are listed in Appendix M of this handbook. **All purchase card holders and card approving officials, regardless of**

job series, are required to take a refresher course in “Green Purchasing” every two years. (see Appendix M, “Additional Sources of Training” in this handbook).

Note: Purchase card transactions above the micropurchase level are subject to the standard small business set-asides and competition requirements, as stated in the FAR. Purchase card holders are expected to comply with the Affirmative Procurement Program (recovered materials, environmentally preferred, and energy efficient products), Javits-Wagner O'Day Program (employment for the blind and severely disabled), Federal Prisons, etc. (see FAR Part 8) for purchasing supplies. Card holders are expected to comply with the Energy Star Program and Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP) energy efficiency requirements when purchasing energy consuming products (see website <http://www.ofee.gov/sb/femp.htm>). Also reference Appendix M of this handbook for additional sources of training.

E. Certification Retention and Maintaining Currency of Acquisition Knowledge and Skills

OFPP Policy Letter 97-01 issued September 12, 1997 states that contract specialists and contracting officers in the GS-1102 series who have satisfied the mandatory and agency/assignment-specific training shall take an equivalent of at least 40 hours of continuing education/training every two years. According to the Policy Letter this type of training may include, but is not limited to, agency-sponsored training and management/executive seminars, special job and/or professional association-related projects and/or participation in seminars/workshops, or other appropriate developmental activities (see Appendix N of this handbook for examples of developmental activities).

Forty (40) hours of continuing education/training for GS-1102s and twenty-four (24) hours of training for GS-1105's and GS-1106's every two years are in addition to the requirement for the Department's mandatory training. If an employee has completed all mandatory training for a particular level and is working towards achieving the next certification level, then the skills currency requirement applies to that employee. That is, the employee must first meet the certification standards set for his/her position. Once all mandatory training for a particular level is completed, then the employee must participate in continuing education/training. Beginning October 1, 2004, the Office of Acquisition Management and Policy will enforce this continuing education/training policy by making this a requirement for the attainment of acquisition certification/warrant level. Those GS-1102's, GS-1105's, and GS-1106's who did not achieve their continuing education/training requirement prior to October 1, 2004 are “grandfathered.” Employees in the GS-1105, GS-1106, and GS-1102 series may lose their certification and warrant authority if they fail to complete the continuing education/training requirement. Some resources for continuing education/training are listed in Appendices M and N. The Heads of Contracting Activity may impose additional training requirements as deemed necessary. Some examples of optional specialized courses for satisfying the continuing education training requirement are: Presentation Skills, Project Management, Customer Service, Writing Skills, Federal Appropriations Law, Protests, Small Business Training, Communication Skills, Green Purchasing, Leadership and Team Building, and related college/university business courses. Supervisors are encouraged to allow employees to pursue the mandatory and continuing education/training requirements during the work day, as appropriate.

On-the-job training activities in the acquisition area are recommended for employees who need to achieve work-related competencies for a particular certification level. These on-the-job training activities shall be

determined by both the employee and the employee's supervisor and shall be indicated in the employee's IDP. Rotational assignments are also an excellent way for the employee to gain additional work experience and shall be done in coordination and approved by the employee's supervisor.

The Head of Contracting Activity will determine, for the employees under his/her jurisdiction, which activities qualify for the required continuing education/training. Meeting the continuing education requirement is a criterion for receiving a contracting officer warrant. Employees shall begin to keep track of the 40 hours in the calendar year in which they are certified at their particular level (therefore, each maintenance period will commence on January 1 and end on December 31 of the following year). Guidelines for crediting continuing education/training activities are listed in Appendix F. It is the employee's responsibility to document completion of the 40 hours by entering the data into ACMIS in a timely fashion. The employee's supervisor is responsible for verifying accuracy of the employees' continuing education/training. ACMIS will track each employee's skills currency activity and will indicate that the highest certification is valid, provided the continuing education/training requirements were obtained in the two years beginning the year the HHS certification was issued. Some training certificates may be issued based on continuing education units (CEUs) or continuing learning points (CLPs). When converting to hours, note that one CEU equals 10 hours of instruction, and one CLP equals one hour of instruction.

F. Competencies/Critical Skills

1. Background

OFPP Policy Letter 92-3 requires that everyone in the GS-1102 job series, uniformed personnel in comparable positions, and all personnel who have been appointed as Contracting Officers in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation Subpart 1-6, are required to attain an appropriate level of skill in contract management duties. This requirement extends to those engaged in simplified acquisition activities, as well as those designated to serve as project managers on Government contracts. The Policy Letter also established a Government-wide standard and associated policies for competency-based training and related on-the-job training necessary to attain an appropriate level of skill in each task in the Federal Acquisition Institute's Contract Specialist Training Blueprint.

2. Application of Technical and General Competencies in the HHS Acquisition Workforce Training and Certification Program

FAI has identified nine core capabilities of the acquisition career model: develop, negotiate and manage business deals; communicate effectively; manage and lead change; solve problems in an ambiguous environment; analyze and understand the marketplace; build and manage relationships across functions and organizations; understand and effectively operate in the customer environment; develop and implement outcome-oriented solutions; and execute. To translate these capabilities into a way of doing business, FAI has developed a competency-based career management program, which provides a guide to workforce management among civilian and DoD agencies. Studies conducted by FAI have shown that competencies are valid predictors of successful contracting and may be used for improving the acquisition environment,

workforce planning, and performance management.

What are competencies?

FAI defines competencies as “observable, measurable patterns of skills, knowledge, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics that an individual needs to perform in occupational functions.” FAI has identified technical and general competencies that are specific to the acquisition workforce. Technical competencies are specific to the job functions of the acquisition workforce. Many of the technical competencies describe specific knowledge, skills, and abilities, and some of these technical competencies may not apply to certain aspects of contract specialists’ work. FAI also identified and validated professional business (or general) competencies. General competencies apply to many situations that members of the acquisition workforce experience while performing acquisition tasks. Examples of general competencies include effective communication skills, customer service skills, and problem solving skills. For additional information on general competencies, please reference the “Report on General Competencies for the Federal Acquisition Workforce” at the following website: <http://www.fai.gov/pubres/pdfs/CompRpt-General0519.pdf>.

FAI realized that to take on the new role as a business manager, contract specialists must have both general competencies and technical competencies. Since FAI and DAU are moving toward a common curricula and a common set of competencies, HHS will follow the technical competencies established by DAU (listed in Appendix K-1 of this handbook) and the general competencies established by FAI (listed in Appendix J of this handbook). The general competencies will not be used in formally evaluating an employee’s performance and determining certification levels, but the assessment of these competencies is highly recommended in the development of an employee’s Individual Development Plan and determining employees’ skills gaps. By the end of Fiscal Year 2005 (that is, beginning October 1, 2004), HHS’s Office of Acquisition Management and Policy will establish a requirement for achievement of applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies in order for a member of the acquisition workforce to become certified at the next level. Documentation of education/training and work-related technical competencies is not required for education/training and work experience prior to October 1, 2004. (That is, those who are currently certified at their present level will be “grandfathered” at their present level for providing documentation for achievement of education/training and work-related competencies). Beginning October 1, 2004, the Office of Acquisition Management and Policy is requiring that documentation of the achievement of applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies be submitted as part of the application process for qualification for a particular certification/warrant level.

The assessment of an employee’s competencies should be used in screening or selecting candidates for positions, assisting the employee and the employee’s supervisor in creating an IDP, identifying areas of concern to the employee, and assisting management in workforce management. This assessment will allow the employee and supervisor to come up with a plan to close the gaps in competencies and will help the employee to achieve his/her short and long-term career goals.

G. Documenting Mandatory and Continuing Education

Employees who have completed mandatory and continuing education are responsible for keeping all certificates for their records. The employee is responsible for entering this data in ACMIS (see Section F of Chapter 7 of this handbook).

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION PROGRAM AT HHS

A. Introduction

The mission of the Department of Health and Human Services is dynamic. HHS supports a broad spectrum of customers for many nationally-recognized programs and provides essential services to protect and improve public health and the quality of life for individuals and families through innovative policies and effective services. Federal program and project managers are accountable for the budgeting, planning, acquisition and management of capital assets and other key program activities. It is necessary to deliver capital assets on schedule and within budget, and to meet performance goals. It is this rapidly changing environment and the need to meet performance goals that is fueling the requirement for increased training in project management.

B. Applicability

OFPP Policy Letter 97-01 promotes the development of a professional acquisition workforce by establishing government-wide policies and standards for skill based training to perform contracting duties. (A contract is a promise or set of promises, for breach of which the law gives a remedy, or the performance of which the law in some way recognizes as a duty. To be a legal and binding contract, it must contain the following elements: (1) offer; (2) acceptance; (3) consideration; (4) competent parties; (5) legality of purpose; (6) clear terms and conditions). Policy Letter 97-01 states that the acquisition workforce of an agency includes contracting officer representatives/contracting officer technical representatives, or equivalent. The fundamental responsibilities of the project manager are to balance the various factors that influence cost, schedule, and performance to ensure that a high quality service or product is delivered. The project manager can be either a part-time or full-time responsibility. Project managers work with contracting officers, contract specialists, vendor representatives, and other members of the acquisition team, such as budget, finance, IT and logistics. While all training requirements are to be addressed, the approach to meeting the requirements should be tailored consistent with the cost, safety, complexity, visibility, and risk of the project. All program and/or project managers shall comply with all applicable regulations, laws, Executive Orders, etc.

C. What is Project Management and Why is it so Important?

Project management is a systematic approach to planning, organizing, controlling, and leading a project to successful completion by accomplishing project, cost, time, and performance objectives. Successful project management requires established processes for organizational planning and communication, availability of tools that support management processes, and a culture that values teamwork and collaboration. Project managers must have effective communication skills, possess the knowledge to calculate risks, and develop techniques for cost control. Officials at the Office of Management and Budget have made a case for improving project management across the Federal Government. OMB has said that federal agencies need to improve their ability to deliver projects on time and within budget if projects are to go forward at all.

Effective project management at HHS is critical to the success of the agency's programs. The Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 added extra incentives requiring agencies to operate IT investments efficiently and prioritize those that advance the agencies' strategic goals. In response to OMB's efforts to improve project management across the Federal Government, the Office of Personnel Management has issued the "Interpretive Guidance for Project Manager Positions" (available at the following website: <http://www.opm.gov/fedclass/html/whatsnew.asp>.) This guidance may prove beneficial for recruitment of project managers.

D. Purpose of the HHS Project Management Certification Program

The certification of project managers is a broader effort at HHS to provide an entire career track for project managers. The HHS Project Management Certification Program is designed to provide program personnel with a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the acquisition process, strengthen project monitoring and management within the acquisition process, improve technical input into all phases of this process, and foster a better working relationship between acquisition and program personnel. While HHS successfully delivers many of its projects, HHS must strengthen its management of those projects. The HHS Project Management Certification Program is a building block to improved project management. The development of a certification program for project managers represents a dramatic shift in terms of developing a professional cadre of project managers and a shift in the way the Department perceives the criticality of the project manager function and project managers themselves.

E. Project Manager Training Requirements

1. HHS will maintain a program for certifying employees before they may be considered eligible for appointment as a project manager. The program will include procedures for reviewing qualifications and employee certification of qualified project managers and maintenance of certification. According to the HHSAR Section 307.170, all program personnel selected to serve as project managers or alternate project managers for HHS contracts shall have successfully completed either the Department's "Basic Project Officer" course, or an equivalent course before assuming the duties of their designated role, or take the next available class (HHSAR Section 307.170). Determination of course equivalency shall be made by the HCA (not delegable) of the cognizant contracting activity. The contracting officer is responsible for ensuring that the project manager and proposal evaluators have successfully completed the required training. Project managers are encouraged to take a "Writing Statements of Work" course.
2. Employees designated as a project manager (to include CORs/COTRs) who manage a contract must have knowledge of the acquisition process. A guide published by the Federal Acquisition Institute entitled Contracting Officer's Representative Training Blueprints lists acquisition-related functions that project managers must follow. This guide is available at the following website: <http://www.fai.gov/prodev/COTRTraininBlueprintFinal2.pdf>
3. HHS program personnel performing the function of technical proposal evaluator on a technical evaluation team or panel for any competitively solicited HHS contract shall have successfully completed the appropriate "Basic Project Officer" course, or an equivalent course. This requirement applies to the initial technical proposal evaluation and any subsequent technical evaluations that

may be required. Project managers with more than three years experience, and project officers with less than three years experience who have successfully completed the appropriate "Basic Project Officer" course are qualified and encouraged to take the "Advanced Project Officer" course (HHSAR Section 307.170-2). *Peer and objective reviewers are excluded from these requirements (HHSAR Section 307.170-2).

*(The peer review process pertains specifically to NIH in the peer review of applications for grants and contracts. Applications are evaluated by a peer review group composed of scientists from the extramural research community).

4. By the end of FY 2005, HHS is requiring that all current and proposed IT project managers assigned to HHS projects for which HHS or OMB requires an *Exhibit 300 successfully complete the one-day training course, "Early Warning Project Management System Workshop" (as listed in Appendix B), or an equivalent Earned Value course.

*(There has been increased emphasis with the federal government on effectively managing significant investments in information technology, infrastructure, construction, and other capital asset projects, which has increased the importance of Exhibit 300 (also known as the Capital Asset Plan and Business Case). OMB requires business cases for all major IT acquisitions. The purpose of the preparation of an Exhibit 300 is to identify risks associated with each purpose and to determine the degree to which agencies' IT plans comply with the President's Management Agenda. The importance of project management in the federal government has gained more visibility as the Office of Management and Budget has placed more emphasis on completing projects on time, within budget, and within scope. OMB is scoring HHS, as well as other federal agencies, as part of its determination to provide funding for various projects.)

5. Project Managers who have successfully completed the Basic Project Officer course and Early Warning Project Management System Workshop course, or an equivalent Earned Value course are encouraged to take the "Advanced Project Officer" course.
6. By the end of FY 2005, HHS is requiring that all current and proposed IT project managers complete training on the Department's selected portfolio tool, *Prosight.

*(HHS has implemented Prosight Portfolios, a commercial portfolio management application, to support the HHS Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC) process and the Department's OMB Exhibit 300 submission. The Office of Information Resource Management (OIRM) at HHS has accelerated initial implementation of a reengineered CPIC Select process in Prosight. The OIRM will be able to score and rank all major IT investments as well as non-major investments over \$4.5 million for the Department based on various criteria such as investment value, investment risk, and quality of the business case documentation.)

F. Training Policy Exceptions

According to the HHSAR Section 307.170, in the event there is an urgent requirement for a specific

individual to serve as a project officer and that individual has not successfully completed the prerequisite training course(s), the HCA (not delegable) may waive the training requirement and authorize the individual to perform the project duties, provided that: (1) The individual first meets with the cognizant contracting officer to review the HHS Project Officer's Contracting Handbook, and to discuss the important aspects of the contracting-program office relationship as appropriate to the circumstances; and (2) The individual attends the next scheduled "Basic Project Officer" and/or "Early Warning Project Management System Workshop" course, or an equivalent course.

G. Need for Further Project Management Training at HHS

Successful project management will help an organization achieve its program and project goals. Project management training has become a specific area of concern by OMB and an important aspect of the Federal CIO Council's thrust on IT workforce planning. The OMB process for reviewing major capital asset projects includes specific criteria related to project management and specific reporting on performance, including use of earned value measurement. There will be increased scrutiny on IT project management in the coming years. The Department's "Basic Project Officer's Handbook" provides guidance on the contracting process and is available at the following website:
<http://www.knownet.hhs.gov/acquisition/POHBook100103.pdf>.

CHAPTER 6

FULFILLMENT PROGRAM FOR ACQUISITION CERTIFICATION

A. Introduction

The Office of Acquisition Management and Policy has established procedures to support the fulfillment process for acquisition certification at HHS. The fulfillment program for acquisition certification is a program based on accepting courses taken from other federal agencies, through other training providers, or through institutions of higher learning, to satisfy the mandatory training requirements under the HHS Acquisition Certification Program. The fulfillment program also applies to accepting related work experience obtained through other organizations to satisfy the requirements under the HHS Acquisition Certification Program. HHS does not accept work-related experience in lieu of the required courses in the HHS Acquisition Certification Program.

B. Fulfillment Process at HHS

Members of the acquisition workforce shall begin the fulfillment process by determining which requirement (i.e. education/training, work experience) they wish to satisfy through fulfillment. Acquisition workforce members must complete and submit Appendix C-2 (the "Course Fulfillment Request Form") indicating which course they have satisfied, along with supporting documentation (transcripts, course certificates, resume or Optional Form 612, letters from supervisors, etc.) to the applicant's immediate supervisor (reviewing official), who makes a determination of whether the applicant has achieved the requirements designated for certification. The applicant's immediate supervisor certifies course equivalency by signing under the "supervisor" line in Appendix C-2 indicating that the applicant has met the course requirements and that adequate documentation is included. Supervisors and certifying officials may also require the course syllabus to determine course equivalency. If a course is not listed in Appendix C-1 or Appendix D, it is likely that the course is not certified as DAU equivalent, and in this case, the employee needs to indicate the name of the course, vendor, and the duration and date of the course. If a course is not listed in this handbook as being equivalent, then course equivalency will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the OPDIV/Agency Board. If the applicant's immediate supervisor needs additional information to make a decision, the applicant's supervisor shall request further documentation.

The employee must satisfactorily meet all requirements for certification at a particular level, and the activity shall have successfully been completed and documented to qualify for fulfillment credit. Appendix K-2 of this handbook is required for purposes of applying for acquisition certification (Appendix K-2 indicates whether the applicant has either met or has not met the applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies). The applicant's package (to include transcripts, course certificates, Appendices C-2 and K-2, and any other supporting documentation) is then forwarded to the OPDIV/Agency Board (certifying official), who certifies that the applicant has either met or has not met the requirements for certification and that adequate documentation is included and signs under the line "OPDIV/Agency Certifying Official." The OPDIV/Agency Board certifying official(s) follows the same procedure as the applicant's immediate supervisor. If either the applicant's immediate supervisor (reviewing official) or the OPDIV/Agency certifying

official(s) disapproves an applicant's request for fulfillment, the certifying official must provide rationale for disapproval of the fulfillment request. The applicant's immediate supervisor should develop a strategy that will assist the applicant in obtaining certification by planning the employee's work assignments and training to gain competency in deficient areas, and the strategy shall be documented in the applicant's Individual Development Plan. Once the OPDIV/Agency certifying official has approved the applicant's request for fulfillment, the documentation shall be returned to the applicant, and the applicant will be certified at the appropriate level in the HHS Acquisition Workforce Training and Certification Program. It is the applicant's responsibility to make sure the documentation is included in his/her personnel/training records and for updating the record in ACMIS.

If an employee is requesting fulfillment based on the National Contract Management Association's Certified Professional Contracts Manager (CPCM), or based on a master's degree or other college program credential, a copy of the certificate or transcript must be attached to the application. The CPCM must be current when the application for fulfillment is submitted to the reviewing/certifying officials. Employees who are DAWIA certified by any Department of Defense Agency may meet the HHS Fulfillment Program certification requirements, but the applicant must submit the appropriate documentation. Employees are responsible for ensuring that their training records are current (see Section F of Chapter 7).

C. Instructions for Completing the Fulfillment Package

Documentation of achievement of applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies prior to October 1, 2004 is not required. After October 1, 2004, documentation of applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies is required (that is, submission of Appendix K-2) when applying for acquisition certification and applying for a warrant.

CHAPTER 7

CAREER PLANNING

A. Importance of Career Planning

Thought must be given not only to the recruitment, selection, and retention of appropriately skilled staff but also to career development and planning. Career planning is a process whereby an individual employee chooses and sets his/her career goals and identifies the means to achieve them. The focus is to match the individual's personal preferences and goals with the opportunities that are available. The career plan, or individual development plan, is based on both formal and informal assessment and includes areas in which the employee needs to increase his/her knowledge and skills to reach documented goals.

B. Organizational and Individual Career Planning

Although the individual is primarily responsible for career planning, the organization should take an active interest in an employee's career planning. Career planning involves the employee, supervisor, and (if appropriate) the human resources specialist working together to set attainable career goals for the employee that are identified through training, special assignments, rotational/developmental opportunities, and other career enhancing activities.

Career planning begins with self-awareness and self-understanding. Individuals should recognize and evaluate their own skills, abilities, and interests before they can establish any career goals and plan the activities to achieve those goals. A self-assessment involves gathering information to assist in making a decision about a career, understanding of self, including values, interests, aptitudes, abilities, personal traits and desired life style. One of the best ways to ensure a long and successful career is to learn the strategies and tools of proactive career management.

C. Individual Development Plans for Members of the HHS Acquisition Workforce

A career plan, or individual development plan (IDP), addresses the training, education, development, and job assignments needed by an individual to progress in the field of acquisition, improve business skills, and grow personally and professionally and should be consistent with an employee's capabilities, aspirations, and mission of the agency. Career planning is separate and distinct from the performance appraisal function.

An IDP is highly recommended for each member of the HHS acquisition workforce. With the support and approval of the supervisor, each employee should develop an IDP that indicates specific training and development needs for both the short (within the next year) and long term (3-5 years) career goals and objectives. A blank IDP form is included in Appendix I. The employee's supervisor should use the IDP when planning work assignments and training for employee's career development. The employee's position description(s), training records, performance appraisals, and previous IDP (if available) may be used for developing an IDP. The employee's IDP shall be built upon the education/training and work-related technical and general competencies listed in Appendices K-1 and J, respectively, and should attempt to bring the employee to an appropriate level of skill in all competencies in the acquisition field.

To attain the necessary skills and competencies for successful job performance, employees may request one or several of the following: a rotational assignment; on-the-job training; increasingly challenging work assignments; a mentor relationship; training/education beyond the Department's mandatory acquisition training curricula; participation in inter-office, inter-agency, or department teams or workgroups; or involvement in a professional association or other job-related activities. (Reference Appendix N in this handbook for examples of developmental opportunities).

D. IDP Process

The Office of Acquisition Management and Policy recommends that an IDP be developed at the same time as the employee's performance plan and be reviewed with the employee's performance evaluation.

It is highly recommended that each supervisor:

- 1) Conduct an IDP interview with a new employee within 30 days of duty for the new employee. The purpose of the interview is to determine areas in which the employee is currently proficient and where additional training is necessary.
- 2) Work with the employee in the design of the IDP. This should be done early in the process when supervisors identify major areas where development should occur and let the employee propose more specific ways to accomplish this.
- 3) Ensure that there is higher management support for the IDP, including time commitment and use of resources. Ensure that the employee's IDP is completed within 90 business days of the employee's start date. The IDP should include all mandatory HHS and OPDIV/Agency education/training requirements, as applicable.
- 4) Ensure that the employee's IDP is updated each year to reflect the employee's progression and review and discuss progress with the employee at least once a year.
- 5) Ensure that the employee's IDP reflects the course and work-related technical competencies listed in Appendix K-1 and FAI's general competencies listed in Appendix J. IDP's should identify mandatory scheduled HHS core and desired/elective courses, as well as continuing education/training and other professional development activities.
- 6) Ensure that the supervisor and the employee sign and date the IDP to document mutual agreement with the document and commitment to completing it.
- 7) If desired, establish a reporting system so that supervisors know the employee's progress at any given time allowing the supervisor to make adjustments to the plan as needed.
- 8) Conduct periodic meetings with the employee to monitor progress.

The employee keeps the original IDP signed by the supervisor and the employee. The supervisor receives a copy of the employee's IDP.

E. Leadership and Career Development Programs

The programs listed below were established by federal agencies to promote career development and to establish careers in the Federal Government. The programs listed are a sampling of the many intern and career development programs in the Federal Government, and may be of interest to members of the HHS acquisition workforce. Participation in the Federal Acquisition Council's Acquisition Rotational Program and pursuing rotations/details at HHS requires supervisory approval.

1. The Government-wide Acquisition Management Intern Program

The Government-wide Acquisition Management Intern Program, which is managed by the U.S. Department of the Interior University, is a two-year program designed to recruit, develop, and retain a group of diverse and motivated individuals interested in careers in the Federal Government's acquisition management field. Individuals are recruited as GS-1102 Contract Specialists in the GS-5, 7, or 9 level, with full potential to the GS-12 level. The program consists of four, six-month rotational assignments that take place at sponsoring federal agencies. Information on the Government-wide Acquisition Management Intern Program can be accessed at the following website: <http://www.doiu.nbc.gov> (go to "intern programs").

2. HHS Emerging Leaders Program

Another way for an employee to develop his/her career is through the HHS Emerging Leaders Program (ELP). The HHS Emerging Leaders Program is a 24-month program that provides training in various program areas based on your chosen path. Emerging leaders will be given multiple 60-90 day rotational assignments. Applicants will select one of the following career paths: 1) Scientific; 2) Public Health; 3) Social Sciences; 4) Information Technology; 5) Administrative. Individuals wishing to enter a career in acquisition should select the administrative field. Information about the ELP program is available at the following website: <http://www.hhs.gov/jobs/elp>.

3. Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program (SESCDP)

The SESCO is an 18-month executive level development program that prepares individuals at the GS-14/15 or equivalent level, for the Senior Executive Service. The website for this is: <http://www.opm.gov/ses/candevprg.asp>.

4. The NIH Management Cadre Program (MCP)

The MCP is a program to train and qualify highly motivated NIH employees at Grades 12, 13, or 14 levels to prepare employees for leadership positions at NIH. Information about this program is available at the following website: <http://www.mcp.nih.gov/information/purpose.html>.

5. Excellence in Government Fellows Program

The Excellence in Government Fellows Program focuses on leadership development for mid-level federal executives. For more information about this program, reference the following website:
<http://www.excelgov.org/>.

6. Federal Acquisition Council Acquisition Rotational Program (ARP)

Established by the Procurement Executives Council, the ARP provides federal acquisition personnel an opportunity to rotate through other organizations to gain new skills and strengthen existing competencies. For more information about this program, reference the following website:
<http://www.fac.gov/index.cfm?display=rotass>.

7. Rotations/Details/Developmental Assignments at HHS

Rotations/Details:

Although the Office of Acquisition Management and Policy has not formally established a rotational program for members of the acquisition workforce, OPDIVS/Agencies may wish to arrange these assignments on their own. The employee can gain valuable experience by working on a particular assignment or a variety of assignments in another office or organization for a specified period of time.

Rotational assignments or details provide cross-training so that the employee can develop skills in other areas. (for information regarding rotations at other federal agencies, see #6 in this section).

OPDIVS/Agencies may wish to provide rotations/details in operational contracting offices as well as policy offices. This will provide the individual with multi-specialty experience and further the individual's career development. Employees participating in a rotation/detail should be exposed to a variety of experiences as specified in their IDP. In selecting the rotation/detail, the employee should choose assignments that will expose him or her to various areas of competencies that will assist the employee in achieving his or her career goals.

OPDIVS/Agencies should give detailees the appropriate credit toward the skills currency requirement. (see Appendix F of this handbook for a guideline on credits). Skills currency credit should be negotiated with management before the assignment begins. The rotational assignment/detail should be in writing in a formal document signed by all parties. Performance evaluation requirements should be stated in the rotational assignment agreement developed by an OPDIV/Agency. For those who strive for senior level acquisition positions, multi-specialty experience and training in more than one of the functional areas may be beneficial.

Developmental assignments:

Developmental assignments are typically project specific and may not require the individual to actually rotate to another organization. In a developmental assignment, the individual usually works on the assignment in addition to his/her current work load. The goal of a developmental assignment is to attain skills in other areas.

F. **Acquisition Career Management Information System (ACMIS)**

The Clinger-Cohen Act and the OFPP Policy Letter 92-3 require federal agencies to maintain a system for certifying and reporting the completion of all required courses and on-the-job training. In response to this mandate, ACMIS was developed in the late 1990s under the oversight of the Federal Acquisition Institute in response to the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 which states, "The head of each executive agency, after consultation with the Administrator of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy, shall establish policies and procedures for the effective management (including accession, education, training, career development, and performance incentives) of the acquisition workforce of the agency." The Clinger-Cohen Act also requires the head of each executive agency to ensure that acquisition workforce policies and procedures are uniform in their implementation throughout the agency and that the Administrator of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy shall create a government-wide system for civilian agencies.

OFPP Policy Letter 97-01 states that the agencies are required to collect and maintain standardized information on the education, training, and experience of the acquisition workforce and that such management information systems will conform to the standards established by the Office of Personnel Management for the Central Personnel Data File.

For several years, HHS has used the Procurement and Acquisition Management System (PAMS) to maintain and track acquisition workforce training data. While the PAMS system has many useful features, including report generation capability, the Department's goal in the near future is to transition to a comprehensive and centralized database called ACMIS. ACMIS is a government-wide, web-based system that manages training, education, certification and contracting officer certification levels, and other information on an agency's acquisition workforce. Most of the data from ACMIS will come from the Office of Personnel Management's Central Data Personnel File. The records will be verified by each employee and will be supplemented with education, training, warrant, and certification data provided by individuals in the acquisition workforce. The Federal Acquisition Institute is responsible for maintenance of ACMIS and ensuring compliance with OFPP requirements. ACMIS will allow management to run statistical reports and determine the employee's acquisition certification and/or warrant levels, and data used in ACMIS may be used in making budgeting, training, and staffing decisions. Individual records in ACMIS may be used by employees and supervisors for preparing employees' Individual Development Plans. These reports will also assist management in workforce planning. ACMIS will also allow management to determine whether employees have achieved compliance with the training requirements listed in this handbook and compliance with regulations and policies specific to the acquisition workforce.

1. How does ACMIS work?

ACMIS will allow a member of the acquisition workforce to update and maintain his/her own records. The employee will grant different levels of access to information to agency managers (i.e., the employee's supervisor and/or OPDIV/Agency training manager). By registering in ACMIS, the employee will be able to see the information that is reported about him/her, and the employee will have the opportunity to correct errors and provide additional information, including college degrees, contracting officer warrants, certification, and training. The employee must select a supervisor or training manager and grant him/her access to view and verify accuracy of the employee's records. The employee must select a supervisor and/or OPDIV/Agency training manager and grant him/her access to view and verify accuracy of the record. The OPDIV training manager and the employee's supervisor must first register in ACMIS and must identify a current job series before the employee can actually register.

2. Data Security and Integrity

Each federal agency using ACMIS has the responsibility for securing ACMIS against unauthorized access while making the system accessible for maintaining and tracking acquisition workforce data. Preserving access to information resources requires each individual with access to observe all relevant laws, contractual obligations, and maintain the highest standards of ethics. Nearly all data about users is confidential and must not be divulged to anyone other than the user, except with his/her approval.

3. The employee is responsible for:
 - a. Keeping his/her data updated in ACMIS.
 - b. Reviewing the accuracy of information and ensuring the integrity of the data.
 - c. Keeping a copy of all training certificates and ensuring that his/her personnel records are updated to reflect any training received.

G. Performance Incentives

The Federal Acquisition Reform Act (41 U.S.C. 433) requires that each federal agency establish a system for providing performance incentives to members of the acquisition workforce for success in areas such as meeting cost, schedule, or performance goals. HHS may reward the performance of employees who perform at an outstanding level and/or who contribute to achieving the agency's performance goals. OPDIV/Agency acquisition offices are encouraged to provide monetary, certificates of appreciation and/or other forms of recognition to employees who have made substantive contributions to the Department. The process for determining and providing outstanding performance recognition is at the discretion of each OPDIV/Agency.

CHAPTER 8

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

A. ACE Accreditation/DAU Equivalency

Currently, HHS has a contract with Business Management Research Associates (BMRA) to conduct the Department's acquisition and project officer training courses. Business Management Research Associates (BMRA) has many courses that have been reviewed by the American Council on Education (ACE) for college credit.

Please visit BMRA's website for more information: <http://www.bmra.com/ace.htm>. BMRA also offers academic courses equivalent to mandatory acquisition courses provided by the Defense Acquisition University (DAU). Information pertaining to DAU equivalency can be accessed at the following website: <http://www.dau.mil/>. ACE evaluates formal education/training programs and courses sponsored by government agencies, business, and industry entities, and it makes college credit recommendations. Members of the acquisition workforce planning to use ACE credit recommendations for college or university credit programs should have their education/training experience reviewed by their institution's admissions officer. More information on ACE can be accessed at the following website: <http://www.acenet.edu/>. Management Concepts, Inc., Northwest Procurement Institute, and other vendors may also have acquisition courses that have been approved by ACE for college credit.

B. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who are scheduled to attend HHS acquisition and project management courses must contact HHS University one month in advance of the first day of the class in which the student is registered to discuss any special accommodations the student may require. OPDIVS/Agencies are responsible for arranging for interpreters and arranging transportation and accommodations for students. OPDIVS/Agencies are responsible for covering costs associated with these arrangements. Training vendors may provide visually impaired students with a CD that covers the textbook material.

C. Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is a critical factor in student success in a class. Students are expected to attend all the scheduled hours of each class. The record of each student's presence, absence, tardiness, and early departure will be recorded by the instructor each morning and afternoon for each day of class. Students are encouraged to arrange their personal and business activities outside the scheduled classroom time.

If a student knows in advance that he or she will miss more time than is allowed, please encourage the student to register for a class he or she can attend in its entirety. We understand that situations may arise while a student is enrolled in class; however, we cannot deviate from the attendance policy. If a student misses more time than is permitted, he or she will not receive a certificate for course completion. Students are responsible for reporting leave taken during a course offering to their employing organization.

D. Building Security and Access to Training Facilities

Students attending courses at government facilities must bring their Government identification badges, along with another form of picture ID (such as a driver's license), in order to be admitted to the building. Students who fail to display proper identification may be denied admittance to the building.

For visitors (for example, interpreters for hearing impaired students) attending training at any of the Government facilities, the following information must be e-mailed 14 days prior to the start of the training course to HHS University (at the following website: HHS_University@PSC.gov) visitor's name, OPDIV/Agency/Organization, date and location of training.

E. Class Substitutions and Cancellations

In order to reduce the number of unused slots in classes, HHS encourages OPDIVS/Agencies to submit the name of a student who may substitute for a student who is not able to attend a particular class. Please notify HHS University at HHS_University@PSC.gov at least 2 days prior to the start of a class if a substitution is to be made. This ensures that OPDIVS/Agencies do not lose the slot.

If it is necessary to move a slot from one session of a course to another, please contact HHS University at HHS_University@PSC.gov at least three weeks prior to the start date of the class. Student cancellations or substitutions should be limited to emergencies only. Students must notify their supervisor(s) if an absence occurs. **No refunds are given for unused slots.**

F. Classroom policy

During class, students should switch their cell phones and pagers to silent operation. Smoking is prohibited in all buildings. It has come to our attention that, on occasion, supervisors have asked students to leave students from class to work on projects in the office. Supervisors should refrain from this practice, as this jeopardizes the student's ability to successfully complete the course and interferes with the learning process.

G. Course Evaluations

Students are encouraged to complete an evaluation for each course they attend. These evaluations are used as essential feedback concerning instructors and courses and in determining improvements for future classes.

H. Inclement Weather Policy

Please reference HHS University's website at the following address: <http://learning.hhs.gov>.

I. Pass/Fail Scores and Retesting Policy

Pass/Fail Scores: The passing score for acquisition courses is 70%. If a student receives 80% or better on an acquisition course and meets the course attendance requirements, this course will meet DAU equivalency, and this will be indicated on the student's certificate. A grade of 65% on the test is passing for project management courses. Students who do not achieve these passing scores will not be issued a certificate of course completion and will need to contact HHS University to schedule a time to retake the exam.

Retesting Policy: Questions on the retest will cover material from the entire course session. The test will be given at an address designated by HHS University. If a student wishes to retake the examination, he/she must obtain his/her supervisor's approval to be away from the office and make arrangements with HHS University at least one week before a student is available to take a retest. The retest should be scheduled no later than 90 days from the date of this failure notice. Students should bring to the retest session all materials used in taking the final examination during the course.

Students will be notified of the results of the retest approximately 10 days after the day it is taken. If a student correctly answers at least 65% of the questions on the retest for project management courses and at least 70% of the questions on the retest for acquisition courses, and if he/she meets the course attendance requirements, he/she will receive a certificate of course completion. If a student does not receive a passing score on the retest, he/she will be required to retake the course and meet all course requirements in order to receive a certificate.

J. Prerequisites

Since many of the courses in the curricula build on one another, it is important that students take them in the order indicated by the prerequisites. The suggested prerequisites are highly recommended but are not mandatory. Students are expected to be competent in prerequisite knowledge and skills. Instructors may not have the time to remediate students who lack the prerequisite knowledge necessary to benefit from the course.

K. Training Certificates

Students who successfully complete the course will receive a certificate of completion. Please allow four to six weeks after a course is completed to allow for processing of completion certificates. HHS University will forward certificates of completion to OPDIV/Agency training coordinators for distribution. Please discourage students from contacting HHS University or vendors to inquire about the status of his/her certificate.

L. Class Registration Procedure

To register for courses, a training nomination and authorization form must be prepared and submitted for approval in accordance with OPDIV/Agency prescribed procedures. All requests for additional course slots shall be made to HHS University at the following e-mail: HHS_University@PSC.gov. Further guidance on class registration procedures shall be provided by HHS University in a separate memo.

M. Course Offerings

Course offerings, schedules, and the location of courses are sent to each OPDIV/Agency's training coordinator, who in turn distributes it to the respective offices. Appendices A and B of this handbook list the

courses offered in the HHS Acquisition Workforce Training and Certification Program. Most HHS courses are offered in a classroom setting. Please reference Appendix M for additional sources of training.

Appendix A

DESCRIPTION OF ACQUISITION TRAINING COURSES

The HHS Acquisition Training Program provides competency-based classroom training in simplified acquisitions and contracts, as well as courses designed to meet the specific needs of program personnel who have responsibilities in the acquisition process. Employees who require training to achieve certification are given priority over employees who are taking courses for other reasons. In addition to the content description, length, and learning objectives listed for each course, information is also provided on the course replacements, the number of college credits recommended by the American Council on Education (ACE) (if applicable), and whether a course is equivalent to a Defense Acquisition University (DAU) course. Course descriptions listed below are from the Business Management Research Associates, Inc. (BMRA) catalog. BMRA is one of the training vendors that HHS utilizes for conducting the acquisition and project management courses for the Department.

Courses taught by BMRA for HHS are as follows:

Acquisition Planning I (5 Day Course)

(Acquisition Planning I, originally offered as a 10-day course, is now being offered as two separate 5-day courses, Introduction to Contracting, which is followed by Acquisition Planning I. Both courses combined are equivalent to DAU's Acquisition Planning I). Acquisition Planning I is week 2 of DAU's CON 101 (Basics of Contracting).

Acquisition Planning I is designed to provide contracting professionals and other interested personnel with the skills, knowledge, and abilities to perform all actions required of the journeyman contract specialist in the procurement process. Acquisition Planning I deals with many of the presolicitation activities necessary to properly plan and document an agency requirement. In addition to the acquisition plan itself, students will learn about requirements forecasting, market research, purchase request preparation, and other presolicitation activities. The course is designed around a comprehensive set of learning objectives that are achieved through lecture-discussion, practical exercises, and case study techniques that expose the student to every aspect of the procurement planning process relevant to the journeyman contract specialist. The target audience for this course consists of personnel involved in the contract specialist (GS-1102) career path, and other personnel involved in the planning of requirements and monitoring contract performance.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, the completion of both Introduction to Contracting and Acquisition Planning I results in a recommendation of 3 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Prerequisites:

- Introduction to Contracting (Week 1 of CON 101)

Learning Objectives:

- **Federal Framework for Contracting**

Describe the Federal framework for contracting; state the roles and responsibilities of the branches of government within the procurement process; identify the statutes, regulations, court and administrative

rulings, and other guidance that define the procurement system; describe the relationship between the Federal budgetary and acquisition systems.

- Purchase Requests and Requirements Documents

Given a purchase request and requirements documents:

- Determine if the documents are adequate for procurement.
- Identify the procedures for correcting deficiencies in a purchase request.
- Determine the type of funding, the date by which funds must be obligated, and whether the amount of funding is realistic.
- Determine if a requirement is commercial or non-commercial.
- Describe the process for reviewing and correcting deficiencies in requirements documents.
- Identify conditions for providing government property to a contractor or permitting use of government sources of supply.

- Market Research and Sources

Given a purchase request, acquisition history, and other requirements documents:

- Screen required sources.
- Conduct market research.
- Select sources for solicitation mailing lists.

- Lease vs. Purchase

Given a purchase request, acquisition plans, results of market research and acquisition histories:

- Recommend whether to solicit for lease, purchase, or both.

- Services

Given purchase requests for services:

- Determine whether the services may be acquired and any special requirements for the acquisition (e.g., wage determinations).

- Methods of Procurement

Given a purchase request and information from market research:

- Determine the appropriate method of purchasing or procurement.

- Small Business Considerations

Given a contracting situation:

- Determine whether to set aside the procurement and the type of set aside to establish (e.g., 8(a), partial, total, HUBzone, very small business).

- Competition Requirements

Given purchase requests, requirements documents, and market data:

- Determine competition requirements for simplified acquisitions and contract actions over the simplified acquisition threshold.

- Contract Types

Given a variety of contracting situations:

- Determine the compensation arrangement that would best apportion expected risk (e.g., Firm Fixed Price,

Fixed Price with Economic Price Adjustment, Cost Reimbursement, etc.).

- Recognize the alternative contractual instruments for recurring requirements (e.g., Indefinite Delivery contracts, Options, Multi-Year contracts).
- Identify when letter contracts are used.

- **Selecting Evaluation Factors**

Given a purchase request, acquisition history, market research data, and requirements documents:

- Select and incorporate price, price-related, and non-price evaluation factors for solicitations.

- **Presolicitation Considerations**

Given a purchase request, acquisition history, and market research information:

- Identify the appropriate types of contract financing and the requirement for a bond to protect the government.

- **Solicitation Preparation**

Given a purchase request, acquisition histories, market data, and presolicitation decisions:

- Explain oral solicitation procedures.
- Summarize the procedures for soliciting quotations to provide commercial items under FAR Part 13.
- Describe the procedures for soliciting offers to provide non-commercial items.
- Select the appropriate solicitation method for a procurement.
- Construct a commercial solicitation.

Acquisition Planning I replaces the HHS Basic Acquisition course under the previous HHS curricula. Acquisition Planning I and Introduction to Contracting COMBINED with Contract Formation I and Contract Administration I, are equivalent to DAU Course CON 101, Basics of Contracting.

Acquisition Planning II (5 Day Course)

Acquisition Planning II covers presolicitation activities in more depth than Acquisition Planning I. Additionally, the course addresses a number of special topics that are not discussed in Acquisition Planning I. The course is designed around a comprehensive set of learning objectives that are achieved through lecture-discussion, practical exercises, and case study techniques.

The target audience for this course consists of personnel involved in the contract specialist (GS-1102) career path. Others involved in the planning of complex requirements could benefit from the text and classroom discussion as well. A minimum of one year of experience in the contracting field is recommended as preparation for this course.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, 2 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Prerequisites:

- Introduction to Contracting
- Acquisition Planning I
- Contract Formation I
- Contract Administration I

- Price Analysis
- Cost Analysis
- Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques

Learning Objectives:

- Initiating the Acquisition

- Distinguish the roles and responsibilities of acquisition personnel in forecasting requirements.
- Determine an effective acquisition strategy.

- Market Research

Given a purchase request for a complex requirement:

- Determine the extent of, and techniques for, acquiring additional market research needed for an acquisition.
- Assess the impact of market research on an acquisition.

- Requirements Documents

Given market research and draft requirements documents:

- Determine adequacy of the requirements' documents.
- Determine whether to authorize acceptance of a variation in quantity and/or the use of reconditioned materials, former government surplus property or residual inventory.

- Advisory and Assistance Services

Given various sample requirements for specialized services:

- Determine if advisory and assistance services are appropriate and if there are potential conflicts of interest.

- Government Property

Given a purchase request and information on the availability of government property:

- Determine whether to furnish the property.

- Type of Contract

Given a variety of acquisitions:

- Determine the type of contract agreement, as well as associated pricing arrangements, that will best mitigate and apportion expected risk and select a method to provide for recurring requirements.

- Contract Financing

Given a purchase request and market research data:

- Select government financing methods (or none), including related provisions and clauses, for a noncommercial requirement.
- Complete the appropriate finance provisions and clauses for inclusion in the solicitation.

- Bonds

- Identify the need for bonds in contracts other than construction.
- Recognize situations that require bonding terms and conditions due to high-risk markets.

- Non-Price Factors

Given acquisition histories, market data, purchase requests, requirements documents, the statement of work and/or recommended non-price factors for award:

- Analyze non-price factors used in prior or comparable acquisitions.
- Recognize how to develop evaluation factors for a new or complex requirement.

- Acquisition Planning

Given acquisition forecasts, histories, and market research:

- Develop an acquisition plan.

- Source Selection Plans

Given purchase requests, acquisition histories, market data, and decisions made in all previous steps of the procurement planning phase:

- Determine the roles and responsibilities of each source selection participant, including non-government evaluators.
- Assess procedures for safeguarding source selection information.
- Identify key elements of a source selection plan including those to be incorporated into the RFP.
- Develop a source selection plan so that sound business judgments can be made.

Acquisition Planning II replaces the HHS Advanced Simplified Acquisition course under the previous HHS curricula. Acquisition Planning II COMBINED with Contract Formation II and Contract Administration II, are equivalent to DAU's course CON 202, Intermediate Contracting.

Advanced Simplified Acquisition Procedures (5 Day Course)

This special course is a must for government professionals who have purchasing requirements exceeding \$25,000 for equipment and services. The course focuses on the importance of market research in planning and preparing for the buy. It explores the dimensions of best value methodology as it applies to simplified acquisition and builds confidence in making successful purchasing decisions on every requisition.

Prerequisites:

- Basic Simplified Acquisition Procedures

Learning Objectives:

- Determine when you have adequate competition.
- Describe strategies and techniques for improving accomplishment of socio-economic requirements.
- Implement effective planning techniques.
- Use evaluation factors and negotiation techniques to achieve best value.
- Discuss how the evaluation process is a key component in the best value decision.
- Recognize and deal with fraud.
- Identify relevant quality assurance issues.
- Describe the steps involved in payment and closeout.
- Use appropriate monitoring techniques.

Basic Simplified Acquisition Procedures (5 Day Course)

This entry-level course provides participants with a working knowledge of purchase cards and other procedures for acquiring supplies and services under the micropurchase threshold; of simplified acquisition procedures for acquiring non-commercial supplies and services up to \$100,000; and the procedures and policies of both FAR Parts 12 and 13 when acquiring commercial supplies and services up to \$5,000,000.

Prerequisites:

None

Learning Objectives:

- Make micro-purchases.
- Evaluate purchase requests.
- Conduct oral or written solicitations for commercial and non-commercial items.
- Issue purchase orders.
- Apply acquisition-related sections of the Small Business Act.
- Manage purchase and delivery orders.

Construction Contracting (5 Day Course)

This course provides contracting (GS-1102 and equivalent) personnel with skill at awarding and administering contracts for construction. This course is also of value to other Federal personnel who are involved in the development, management, or administration of construction projects. The focus of the course is on where and how the construction contracting environment differs from contracting in general. The target audience for this course consists of personnel involved in the GS-1102 career path who are or may become involved with construction requirements. Others involved in the development, management, or administration of construction contracts will find the course helpful in executing their responsibilities. A minimum of one year of experience in the contracting field is recommended as preparation for this course.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, 2 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Recommended Prerequisites:

- Introduction to Contracting
- Acquisition Planning I
- Contract Formation I
- Contract Administration I
- Price Analysis
- Cost Analysis
- Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques
- Acquisition Planning II
- Contract Formation II
- Contract Administration II

Learning Objectives:

- Devise a construction acquisition plan.
- Recognize the differences between situations in which IFB or RFP would be the appropriate solicitation type for a construction requirement.
- In both sealed bid and negotiated situations, analyze bid/proposal documents and select appropriate awardees.
- Identify the critical elements of a quality control plan for construction.
- Diagnose, troubleshoot, and determine the appropriate compliance approach in various contract administration situations.
- Appropriately execute modifications to construction contracts.

- Ensure costs of construction contract invoices are allowable and allocable, be able to process invoices for progress payments, and conduct contract closeout.

This course replaces the HHS Construction Contracting course under the previous HHS curricula.

Contracting for Architect and Engineering Services (5 Day Course)

This course is a comprehensive study of the Brooks Act procedures in contracting for Architect-Engineering (A-E) Services. Procedures covered apply to procurement by direct Federal Government contracts and by Federal Government grantees' contracts. Students will learn how the Brooks Act defines A-E services, the procedures that must be followed, and practical application of those procedures to various A-E situations.

This course is recommended for members of the contract specialist (GS-1102) career path who have requirements for Architect-Engineering Services. Other personnel associated with A-E requirements, i.e., project managers, construction supervisors, and estimators, will find the course helpful in executing their responsibilities. A minimum of one year of experience in the contracting field is recommended as preparation for this course.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, 2 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Recommended Prerequisites:

- Acquisition Planning I
- Contract Formation I
- Price Analysis
- Cost Analysis
- Acquisition Planning II
- Contract Formation II

Learning Objectives:

- Determine the need for using Brooks Act procedures when contracting for Architect-Engineering Services.
- Understand and apply the steps required to formulate an Architect-Engineering Services contract.
- Understand the requirements for advertising Architect-Engineering contract requirements.
- Identify methods used to solicit Architect-Engineering services.
- Properly evaluate firms and determine the order in which they will be ranked.
- Properly evaluate firms and determine the order in which they will be ranked.
- Determine applicable cost principles specific to Architect-Engineering contracting.
- Conduct a government cost estimate.
- Develop a negotiation strategy and conduct negotiations.
- Understand how the government maintains quality assurance on the contract.
- Describe the roles and responsibilities of those who manage and administer the contract

Contract Administration I (5 Day Course)

This course instructs the student in all of the knowledge, skills and abilities required of the journeyman contract specialist. This course takes the student through the various facets of postaward contract administration, covering everything from the postaward orientation conference to contract closeout.

Lecture-discussion is heavily supported by practical exercises and case studies to cover a comprehensive group of learning objectives required by FAI. Students are taught the concepts by the instructor, and are then expected to demonstrate their knowledge by completing individual and group exercises.

The target audience for this course consists of members of the contract specialist (GS-1102) career path. Others involved in contract administration activities could also benefit.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, 2 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Prerequisites:

- Introduction to Contracting
- Acquisition Planning I
- Contract Formation I

Learning Objectives:

- **Initiation of Contract Administration**

Given the awarded contract and contract administration requirements:

- Identify and describe applicable processes and procedures for postaward orientations, subcontracting, government furnished property, labor issues, and environmental issues.

- **Modifications and Claims**

Given a contract and a request to modify:

- Differentiate between unilateral and bilateral modifications.
- Recognize the process for modifying a commercial contract.
- Determine the process for exercising an option.
- Describe the claims process.
- Prepare a contract modification.

- **Quality Assurance**

Given a contract with a quality assurance plan:

- Determine the appropriate quality assurance procedures.
- Determine surveillance required by contractor and government personnel to ensure monitoring, inspection, and acceptance criteria are met.
- Determine when a stop work order should be used and its potential impact.
- Conclude whether delays are excusable and if consideration is appropriate.
- Recognize remedies available for commercial and noncommercial contracts.
- Describe procedures for developing and reporting contractor past performance.

- Payment

Given regulatory guidance:

- Recognize contractual payment or accounting terms and conditions.
- Identify invoice and payment procedures.
- Identify contract financing and request for assignment of claims.
- Recognize the types of commercial financing and their implications for contract administration.
- Recognize the terms "accounting system," "estimating system," "cost accounting standards," and "defective pricing."

- Terminations

Given a contract situation:

- Recognize the similarities and differences between terminations for commercial and noncommercial contracts.
- Determine whether to terminate for convenience for a commercial or noncommercial contract.
- Identify the reasons for a termination for default on a noncommercial contract.
- Determine the adequacy and appropriate remedies for a termination for cause on a commercial contract.
- Prepare a termination notice.

- Contract Closeout

Given a contract scenario:

- Describe the process for properly closing out a contract.
- Recognize when a contract is complete.
- Recognize indications of fraud and exclusion or other civil or criminal offense.
- Perform a contract closeout.

Contract Administration I, together with Contract Administration II, replaces the HHS Basic Contract Administration course, the HHS Advanced Contract Administration I course, and the Advanced Contract Administration II course under the previous HHS curricula. This course, COMBINED with Introduction to Contracting, Acquisition Planning I, and Contract Formation I, are equivalent to DAU Course CON 101, Basics of Contracting.

Contract Administration II

(5 Day Course)

Contract Administration II covers the post-award activities required to manage a contract in more extensive detail than Contract Administration I. Additionally, the course addresses a number of special topics that are not discussed in Contract Administration I. The course is designed around a comprehensive set of learning objectives that are achieved through lecture-discussion, practical exercises, and case study techniques. The target audience for this course consists of personnel involved in the contract specialist (GS-1102) career path. Others involved in the administration of complex contracts could also benefit. A minimum of one year of experience in the contracting field is recommended as preparation for this course.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, 2 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Prerequisites:

- Introduction to Contracting
- Acquisition Planning I
- Contract Formation I
- Contract Administration I
- Price Analysis
- Cost Analysis
- Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques
- Acquisition Planning II
- Contract Formation II

Learning Objectives:

- Initiating Contract Administration

Given a contract file:

- Prepare to administer the contract.
- Identify contract requirements.
- Recognize the appropriate topics for a postaward orientation.

- Modifications and Claims

Given a contract file and a request to modify the contract:

- Recognize the procedures for processing modifications.
- Identify the circumstances prohibiting modification.
- Determine the impact of the proposed modification and consideration required, if any, and apply procedures for completing a modification.
- Determine whether to recommend granting extraordinary relief and the nature and extent of such relief.

- Payment and Accounting

Given various financial management contract scenarios, applicable references, and input from the contractor:

- Describe the invoice payment process.
- Describe the procedures for determining whether to permit an assignment of claims.
- Determine the procedures for making payments based on cost.
- Determine the procedures for administering progress payments based on cost including computation of payment amount and liquidation amount.
- Determine the procedures for administering performance-based payments.
- Identify the procedures for administering advance payments.
- Assess the situation and appraise the procedures for debt collection.
- Identify the steps necessary to approve, disapprove, or request changes to a contractor's accounting or estimating system.

- Payment

Given regulatory guidance:

- Recognize contractual payment or accounting terms and conditions.

- Identify invoice and payment procedures.
- Identify contract financing and request for assignment of claims.
- Recognize the types of commercial financing and their implications for contract administration.
- Recognize the terms accounting system, estimating system, cost accounting standards, and defective pricing.

- Terminations

Given a contract situation:

- Recognize the similarities and differences between terminations for commercial and noncommercial contracts.
- Determine whether to terminate for convenience for a commercial or noncommercial contract.
- Identify the reasons for a termination for default on a noncommercial contract.
- Determine the adequacy and appropriate remedies for a termination for cause on a commercial contract.
- Prepare a termination notice.

- Contract Closeout

Given a contract scenario:

- Describe the process for properly closing out a contract.
- Recognize when a contract is complete.
- Recognize indications of fraud and exclusion or other civil or criminal offense.
- Perform a contract closeout.

Contract Administration I and Contract Administration II replaces the HHS Basic Contract Administration course, the HHS Advanced Contract Administration I course, and the Advanced Contract Administration II course under the previous HHS curricula. Contract Administration II, COMBINED with Acquisition Planning II and Contract Formation II, are equivalent to DAU Course CON 202, Intermediate Contracting.

Contract Formation I

(5 Day Course)

This course provides a comprehensive study of the fundamentals of the solicitation and award process in Government acquisition. Students will be introduced to both commercial and non-commercial purchasing procedures and will explore both oral and written solicitation techniques. The lecture-discussion sessions of the course are heavily supplemented by group exercises and case studies to provide the student with practical experience in the application of the learning objectives.

The target audience for this course consists of members of the contract specialist (GS-1102) career path. Program managers, technical managers, and others who are involved with the acquisition process will also find this course helpful.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, 2 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Prerequisites:

- Introduction to Contracting
- Acquisition Planning I

Learning Objectives:

Handling Quotes and Offers

- Given the FAR:

- Identify the steps in safeguarding quotes, proposals, and bids; describe the procedures for processing quotes, proposals, and bids; recognize when to accept late quotes, proposals, and bids.

- Inquiries/Amendments

Given a solicitation scenario:

- Explain the procedures for resolving inquiries pertaining to the solicitation.
- Summarize the process for conducting a pre-proposal conference.
- Prepare an amendment.

- Evaluation

Given the solicitation, responses received, price, price-related and non-price-related information:

- Apply technical and other non-price-related factors; describe the role of price and cost analysis in evaluating offers and quotations; recognize techniques to evaluate other terms and conditions.

- Publicizing Proposed Procurements

Given a purchase request and market research information:

- Identify the various techniques of publicizing proposed procurements and produce a synopsis.

- Selection

Given a scenario:

- Describe the decision process for awarding with or without discussions; recognize when fact-finding is appropriate; determine whether to establish a competitive range; select contractors to include within the competitive range; identify the steps in conducting negotiations.

- Responsibility

Given a solicitation response, market research findings, and an excerpt of the list of excluded parties:

- Describe the procedures for determining responsibility; determine if a contractor is debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, or otherwise ineligible; describe the process for referring a nonresponsibility determination to the small business administration; determine the responsibility or non-responsibility of a

prospective contractor.

- Awards and Debriefings

Given an evaluated quote and a responsible contractor:

- Describe the procedures for preparing and documenting an award using FAR Part 14 and 15 procedures; explain the process for completing a purchase order; recognize regulatory requirements for notification of award; describe the process of conducting a debriefing; determine the method for processing postaward mistakes; prepare award documents.

- Protests

Given a scenario and related facts pertaining to a protest:

- Identify those actions that may be protested; explain the process for handling protests; explain the procedures for the alternative dispute resolution process; determine an appropriate response to the protest.

This course replaces the HHS Basic Simplified Acquisition course and the HHS Basic Contracting by Negotiation course under the previous HHS curricula. Contract Formation I, COMBINED with Acquisition Planning I and Contract Administration I, are equivalent to DAU course CON 101, Basics of Contracting.

Contract Formation II

(5 Day Course)

This course discusses the solicitation and award activities required to form a government contract in more detail than Contract Formation I. Additionally, the course addresses a number of special topics that are not discussed in Contract Formation I. The course is designed around a comprehensive set of learning objectives that are achieved through lecture-discussion, practical exercises, and case study techniques. The target audience for this course consists of personnel involved in the contract specialist (GS-1102) career path. Others involved in the formation of contracts could also benefit. A minimum of one year of experience in the contracting field is recommended as preparation for this course.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate/associate degree category, 2 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Prerequisites:

- Introduction to Contracting
- Acquisition Planning I
- Contract Formation I
- Contract Administration I
- Price Analysis
- Cost Analysis
- Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques
- Acquisition Planning II

Learning Objectives:

- Requests For Proposal

Given a purchase request, acquisition history, market research data, and pre-solicitation business decisions:

- Determine funding availability considering obligation period and whether fund amount is realistic.
- Select provisions and clauses.
- Prepare instructions for proposal preparation and an oral presentation.

- Non-Price Evaluation

Given a purchase request, acquisition history, market research data, proposals, and information from the offeror:

- Critique instructions to technical evaluation teams for adequacy.
- Assess the technical evaluation report(s).
- Recognize appropriate procedures for evaluating past performance.

- Discussions

Given a purchase request, acquisition history, market research data, proposals/quotes, technical reports and cost/price analysis

reports:

- Determine the competitive range.
- Discuss the components of a prenegotiation plan.
- Analyze documented discussion records and final proposal revisions.
- Discuss the procedure for excluding offerors outside the competitive range.

- Subcontracting Requirements

Given a solicitation and proposal information:

- Identify the effects of the make or buy program.
- Recognize the required elements of a subcontracting plan.
- Critique the proposed subcontracting plan.

- Responsibility

Given a solicitation, several offers, and a preaward survey:

- Make a responsibility determination.
- Given a solicitation and the proposal in line for award:
- Determine applicability of the cost accounting standards via the exemptions.
- Identify the compliance requirements for full or modified coverage.
- Identify the requirements for a disclosure statement.

- Source Selection

Given an evaluated proposal and supporting documentation:

- Develop the award recommendation and the debriefing agenda for the source selection authority.

- Protests

Given a protest, a recommended resolution of the protest, offers, solicitation, and supporting documents:

- Determine the reasonableness of the protest resolution and whether sound business judgments were made.

Contract Formation II replaces the HHS Advanced Contracting by Negotiation course and the HHS Research and Development course under the previous HHS curricula. This course, COMBINED with Acquisition Planning II and Contract Administration II, are equivalent to DAU Course CON 202, Intermediate Contracting.

Cost Analysis (5 Day Course)

This course employs a combination of lecture-discussion, case study, and practical exercise techniques to provide training to cover the comprehensive set of learning objectives established by FAI. Students learn which of many approaches to cost analysis should be applied to different pricing situations. In addition, students will have the opportunity to use such approaches to answer particular pricing questions. Target audience for the course consists of members of the contract specialist career path. Other personnel involved in contract pricing decisions will find the course helpful.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, 2 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Prerequisites:

- Introduction to Contracting
- Acquisition Planning I
- Contract Formation I
- Contract Administration I
- Price Analysis

Learning Objectives:

- **Cost and Cost Analysis Defined**
 - Define contract cost as used in contract pricing.
 - Identify considerations necessary for cost analysis.
 - Compare cost estimating systems to cost accounting systems.
 - Describe cost estimating methods.
- **Obtaining Offeror Information for Cost Analysis**

Given market research:

 - Determine whether cost or pricing data are required.
 - Describe the process for obtaining required cost or pricing data.
 - Identify the elements necessary for the proper execution of the certificate of current cost or pricing data.
 - Recognize the need for pricing information other than cost or pricing data.
 - Solicit information from offerors required or otherwise necessary to analyze proposed costs.
- **Allowability**

Given cost proposals, market research, and the FAR:

 - Identify the five factors to consider in determining cost allowability.

- Research the specific cost principles in FAR 31.205.
- Classify proposed costs as allowable, unallowable, or allowable with restrictions.

- Data Collection

Given market research (including acquisition histories), cost proposals, and input from the acquisition team:

- Extract relevant data from the market research.
- Develop requests for technical, audit and field pricing support.
- Critique the findings of technical, audit and field pricing reports.

- Evaluating the Proposed Work Design

Given market research (including acquisition histories), cost proposals, and the findings of technical, audit and field pricing reports:

- Identify the offeror's planning assumptions, including contingencies.
- Develop positions on the proposed work design.
- Identify the level of risk inherent in the offeror's cost estimate and methods for mitigating risks.

- Direct Material Costs

Given market research (including acquisition histories), cost proposals, the findings of technical, audit and field pricing reports, and the government's position on the proposed work design:

- Develop prenegotiation positions on the material mix, summary level cost estimates, detailed quantity estimates, unit price estimates, and subcontracts.

- Direct Labor Costs

Given market research (including acquisition histories), cost proposals, the findings of technical, audit and field pricing reports, and the government's position on the proposed work design:

- Develop prenegotiation positions on the direct labor mix, direct labor hours, and labor rates.

- Other Direct Costs

Given market research (including acquisition histories), cost proposals, the findings of technical, audit and field pricing reports, and the government's position on the proposed work design:

- Develop prenegotiation positions on other direct costs.

- Indirect Costs

Given market research (including acquisition histories), cost proposals, the findings of technical, audit and field pricing reports, and the government's position on the proposed work design:

- Identify the elements of an indirect cost rate.
- Define "indirect cost pool".
- Relate the allocation base(s) to indirect cost pools.
- Define the "cost allocation cycle".
- Examine proposed indirect costs to assure compliance with FAR 31.2.
- Calculate a forward pricing rate.
- Apply the forward pricing rate to develop prenegotiation positions on indirect costs.

- Facilities Capital Cost of Money

Given prenegotiation positions on elements of cost:

- Recognize elements affecting facilities capital cost of money.
- Identify the steps to calculate the facilities capital cost of money.
- Calculate facilities capital cost of money.

- Profit or Fee

Given market research (including acquisition histories), cost proposals, the findings of technical, audit and field pricing reports, the government's position on the proposed work design, and prenegotiation positions on elements of cost:

- Identify the factors affecting profit/fee analysis and develop a prenegotiation position on profit or fee using the appropriate structured approach.

- Preparing for Negotiation

Given market research (including acquisition histories), cost proposals, the findings of technical, audit and field pricing reports, the government's position on the proposed work design, prenegotiation positions on elements of cost and profit, and an independent assessment of the proposed price based on price analysis techniques:

- Identify any differences between the results of cost analysis and price analysis.
- Recognize how cost drivers, cost risk, and available tradeoffs with contract requirements affect the prenegotiation objective.
- Identify key pricing elements in prenegotiation objectives.
- Describe the documentation required to support the government's prenegotiation position.
- Develop an overall position on the proposed price.

Cost Analysis replaces the HHS Basic Cost and Price Analysis course under the previous HHS curricula. Cost Analysis COMBINED with Price Analysis and Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques, are equivalent to DAU Course CON 104, Principles of Contract Pricing.

Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques

(5 Day Course)

This course guides students through the various aspects of the negotiation process. This includes the reasons for negotiation, human characteristics that influence the negotiation process, presentation skills, and negotiation strategies. Through a combination of lecture-discussion sessions, case studies, and practical exercises, students will learn to formulate negotiation objectives, plan and execute negotiation strategies, and get real-time feedback on the effectiveness of their approach.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, 2 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Prerequisites:

- Introduction to Contracting

- Acquisition Planning I
- Contract Formation I
- Contract Administration I
- Price Analysis
- Cost Analysis

Learning Objectives:

- Introduction to Negotiations

- Describe negotiations as defined in FAR.
- Identify the factors necessary for a successful negotiation.
- Recognize the three possible negotiation outcomes and perceived negotiation styles.
- Describe negotiator attitudes that lead to successful negotiations.

- Exchanges Prior to Negotiations

Given a proposal, the government's analysis(es) of the proposal(s), and a competitive range determination (in competitive negotiations):

- Participate in exchanges (i.e. fact-finding sessions) between the government and one or more offerors to obtain the information necessary to finalize prenegotiation positions.

- Negotiation Preparation

Given a proposal, background materials for government teams, background materials for offeror teams, and the results of exchanges:

- Organize the negotiation team in the negotiation process.
- Inventory the negotiation issues and objectives.
- Identify the other party's negotiation history and probable approach.
- Describe potential bargaining strengths and weaknesses of both parties.
- Identify negotiation priorities and potential tradeoffs or concessions.
- Determine an overall strategy for attaining the prenegotiation objectives.
- Prepare a negotiation plan.

- Non-Competitive Negotiations

Given a proposal, background materials for government teams, background materials for offeror teams, the results of exchanges, and negotiation plans:

- Identify the steps in conducting and documenting both pre-award and post-award non-competitive negotiations.
- Conduct a non-competitive negotiation.

- Non-Verbal Communications

Given negotiation scenarios:

- Recognize different forms of nonverbal communications that may be present during a negotiation.
- Describe different forms of body language and the effects they can have on negotiations.
- Describe different elements of the physical environment and the effects they can have on negotiations.
- Recognize the importance of personal attributes in negotiations.
- Employ non-verbal communication techniques.
- Interpret non-verbal cues from other participants in the negotiations.

- Bargaining Techniques

Given negotiation scenarios:

- Identify and apply bargaining techniques.

- Bargaining Tactics

Given negotiation scenarios:

- Recognize Win/Win and Win/Lose tactics.
- Identify ways to apply Win/Win tactics in negotiating a fair and reasonable price.
- Recognize tactics used by the other party.
- Apply counter-measures to Win/Lose tactics.

- Competitive Discussions

Given two or more proposals, background materials for government teams, background materials for offeror teams, the results of exchanges, the negotiation plan, and the agenda:

- Recognize the steps for a competitive discussion.
- Conduct competitive discussions.
- Conduct a comparative assessment of final proposals.
- Develop a presentation that communicates the findings.
- Identify the use of the Price Negotiation Memorandum (PNM) in documenting a fair and reasonable price.

Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques replaces the HHS Arts and Techniques of Negotiation course under the previous HHS curricula. Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques, COMBINED with Cost Analysis and Price Analysis, are equivalent to DAU Course CON 104, Principles of Contract Pricing.

Government Contract Law

(10 Day Course)

This course discusses the impact of the legal system on the process of Government contracting. A variety of topics are covered, including the legal framework in which the contracting process is conducted, various federal statutes that affect the contracting process, the variety of regulations that govern the process, and the impact of judicial and administrative review on Government contracting. Text material and instructor lecture are heavily augmented by case studies and practical problems. This allows students to understand the numerous legal concepts and ideas presented in the course, as well as see them applied to actual situations.

The target audience consists of personnel involved in the GS-1102 career path. Others interested in Government contracting will also find the course helpful in executing their responsibilities.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, 3 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Prerequisites:

- Introduction to Contracting

- Acquisition Planning I
- Contract Formation I
- Contract Administration I
- Price Analysis
- Cost Analysis
- Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques
- Acquisition Planning II
- Contract Formation II
- Contract Administration II
- Intermediate Contract Pricing

Learning Objectives:

- Introduction to Government Contract Law and Business Ethics
 - Describe the constitutional, statutory, and common law framework for government contracting.
 - Describe business ethics and standards of conduct that apply to the practice of government contracting.
- General Contract Elements, Principles, and Authority
 - Review the elements of contract formation.
 - Describe provisions of the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) that apply to contract formation in the commercial marketplace as they relate to the intentions of the parties that seek to enter the contractual relationship.
 - Examine how the unique status of the government affects the authority of its representatives to form contracts.
- Government Contract Formation
 - Describe methods of forming contracts (e.g., sealed bidding; negotiation; commercial vs. non-commercial variations on contract award).
 - Explain the principles of law and policy related to each method.
- Protests
 - Discuss the forums for deciding protests.
 - Describe the policies and procedures of each forum for such matters as eligibility to file a protest, the standard of review of the agency's action, and the effect of the forum's decision.
- Property
 - Describe the concept of property: Its types, its characteristics, and methods of transfer and use.
 - Describe title to property, bailment, and various types of intellectual property.
 - Explain how certain contract clauses operate to refine and shape the legal positions of the parties in relation to the ownership, use and transfer of property.
- Funding Contracts and Fiscal Matters
 - Describe the various legal facets of fiscal management and funding.
 - Identify problems involved and some of the means of resolving those problems.
- Labor, Social, Economic, and Environmental Concerns
 - Describe the legal obligations of contracting officers for implementing labor, social, economic, and

environmental policies that directly or indirectly apply to Federal contracting and the limitations on their role in administering those policies.

- Fraud
 - Define and describe acts of fraud.
 - Identify the Federal statutes, and methods to implement those statutes, that the government can use in affirmative litigation to prosecute firms that may be engaged in illegal practices related to government contracting.
- Inspection, Delivery, Acceptance, and Warranties
 - Examine inspection, delivery, acceptance, and warranties with a view toward interpreting and defining contract compliance with respect to quality.
- Changes
 - Describe the modification or alteration of government contracts.
 - Describe the various approaches to measuring the "equitable adjustment".
- Contract Disputes
 - Describe the process for resolving disputes that arise in connection with the performance of government contracts.
 - Discuss the evolution of that process.
- Terminations
 - Describe the authority, reasons, procedure, and applications of terminations

Government Contract Law replaces the HHS Basic Contract Law course and the HHS Advanced Contract Law course under the previous HHS curricula This course is equivalent to DAU Course CON 210, Government Contract Law.

Intermediate Contract Pricing

(10 Day Course)

Intermediate Contract Pricing progresses to greater depth than the Price Analysis and Cost Analysis courses. This advanced curriculum is directed to the student with a basic understanding of cost and price analysis. The course materials and discussions illustrate how mathematical techniques and analytical methods may be used to solve problems related to contract pricing. The student is required to demonstrate an understanding of the material by applying appropriate techniques to course problems.

This course relies heavily on case studies and practical exercises to ensure that students understand the learning objectives and can apply them. There is, of course, some lecture required to present various mathematical and analytical concepts, but students will work daily in small groups to cement the learning.

This is an advanced course, and as such should not be taken by the casual student who only requires an introduction to contract pricing. Students in this course should be contract specialists and others who are actively involved in complex contract pricing activities. A minimum of one year of experience in the contracting field is recommended as preparation for this course.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, 3 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Prerequisites:

- Introduction to Contracting
- Acquisition Planning I
- Contract Formation I
- Contract Administration I
- Price Analysis
- Cost Analysis
- Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques
- Acquisition Planning II
- Contract Formation II
- Contract Administration II

Learning Objectives:

● Math Techniques

Given data and analytical references and resources:

- Differentiate among statistical methods in pricing.
- Select the appropriate statistical technique.
- Describe the linear regression process and use regression analysis to predict the dependent variable.
- Use Net Present Value analysis to determine the best procurement alternative.
- Apply price indexing to project a new Fixed Price Economic Price Adjustment (FPEPA) rate.
- Paraphrase the Unit Improvement Curve Theory and estimate work differences using Improvement Curve Analysis.

● Production

Given a production contract scenario, references, mathematical techniques, and analytical resources:

- Identify costs to include in the indirect cost pool.
- Calculate the indirect cost rate.
- Identify Fixed Price Incentive Firm (FPIF) elements.
- Calculate FPIF elements.

● Supplies

Given a commercial supply contract scenario, references, mathematical techniques, and analytical resources:

- Determine commerciality.
- Determine the cost data required.
- Recognize issues and factors to consider in a lease vs. purchase decision.
- Use Net Present Value analysis to make a lease vs. purchase decision.
- Uses price indexing to calculate contract cost changes.
- Execute a Termination for Commercial Item modification.

● Services

Given a services contract scenario, references, mathematical techniques, and analytical resources:

- Identify Cost Plus Incentive Fee (CPIF) elements.

- Calculate CPIF elements.
- Recognize issues and factors to consider in making equitable adjustments.
- Determine the equitable price adjustment for a contract modification.
- Determine the contract price adjustment for defective pricing data.

- Construction

Given a construction contract scenario, references, mathematical techniques, and analytical resources:

- Use Improvement Curve Analysis to determine labor hour changes.
- Determine the adjusted labor cost for changing labor conditions.
- Determine a proposed equitable price adjustment for work stoppages.
- Calculate the adjusted settlement for a partial Termination for Convenience.

Intermediate Contract Pricing replaces the HHS Advanced Cost and Price Analysis course and the HHS Cost Analysis Workshop under the previous HHS curricula. This course is equivalent to DAU Course CON 204, Intermediate Contract Pricing.

Introduction to Contracting

(5 Day Course)

(Acquisition Planning I, originally offered as a 10-day course, is now being offered as two separate 5-day courses, Introduction to Contracting and Acquisition Planning I. Both courses combined are equivalent to DAU's Acquisition Planning I).

This course is for Federal entry-level personnel in acquisition-related fields. For contracting (GS-1102) professionals, it is the first course of a skill-based curricula. The course is written from the perspective of Federal contracting officers because they oversee the entire system - from the moment that a requirement for supplies or services is generated to the final termination or closeout of the contract.

The target audience for this course consists of personnel involved in the contract specialist (GS-1102) career path, and other personnel involved in the planning of requirements and monitoring contract performance.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, the completion of this course and Acquisition Planning I (CON 101-week 2), results in a recommendation of 3 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Prerequisites:

None

Learning Objectives:

- Federal Framework for Contracting
 - Describe the Federal framework for contracting.
 - State the roles and responsibilities of the branches of government within the procurement process.
 - Identify the statutes, regulations, court and administrative rulings, and other guidance that define the procurement system.
 - Describe the relationship between the Federal budgetary and acquisition systems.

- Using the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR)
 - Practice use of the FAR and supplementary regulations as acquisition tools.
 - Recognize the constitutional and statutory authority for contracting.
 - Explain how the FAR and agency supplemental regulations are organized, administered, and updated.
 - Recognize the methods of procurement authorized for government contracting.

- Legal and Regulatory Principles of Contracting

Describe and apply:

- The elements of a contract.
- Law of agency.
- Goals and guiding principles of the Federal acquisition system.
- Standards of conduct and ethical principles.

- Purchase Requests and Requirements Documents

Given a purchase request and requirements documents:

- Determine if the documents are adequate for procurement.
- Identify the procedures for correcting deficiencies in a purchase request.
- Determine the type of funding, the date by which funds must be obligated, and whether the amount of funding is realistic.
- Determine if a requirement is commercial or non-commercial.
- Describe the process for reviewing and correcting deficiencies in requirements documents.
- Identify conditions for providing government property to a contractor or permitting use of government sources of supply.

- Market Research and Sources

Given a purchase request, acquisition history, and other requirements documents:

- Screen required sources.
- Conduct market research.
- Select sources for solicitation mailing lists.

- Lease vs. Purchase

Given a purchase request, acquisition plans, results of market research and acquisition histories:

- Recommend whether to solicit for lease, purchase, or both.

- Services

Given purchase requests for services:

- Determine whether the services may be acquired and any special requirements for the acquisition (e.g., wage determinations).

- Methods of Procurement

Given a purchase request and information from market research:

- Determine the method of purchasing or procurement.

- Small Business Considerations

Given a contracting situation:

- Determine whether to set aside the procurement and the type of set aside to establish (e.g., 8(a), partial, total, HUBzone, very small business).

- Competition Requirements

Given purchase requests, requirements documents, and market data:

- Determine competition requirements for simplified acquisitions and contract actions over the simplified acquisition threshold.

- Contract Types

Given a variety of contracting situations:

- Determine the compensation arrangement that would best apportion expected risk (e.g., Firm Fixed Price, Fixed Price with Economic Price Adjustment, Cost Reimbursement, etc.).
- Recognize the alternative contractual instruments for recurring requirements (e.g., Indefinite Delivery contracts, Options, Multi-Year contracts).
- Identify when letter contracts are used.

- Selecting Evaluation Factors

Given a purchase request, acquisition history, market research data, and requirements documents:

- Select and incorporate price, price-related, and non-price evaluation factors for solicitations.

- Presolicitation Considerations

Given a purchase request, acquisition history, and market research information:

- Identify the appropriate types of contract financing and the requirement for a bond to protect the government.

- Publicizing Proposed Procurements

Given a purchase request and market research information:

- Identify the various techniques of publicizing proposed procurements and produce a synopsis.

- Solicitation Preparation

Given a purchase request, acquisition histories, market data, and presolicitation decisions:

- Explain oral solicitation procedures.
- Summarize the procedures for soliciting quotations to provide commercial items under FAR Part 13.
- Describe the procedures for soliciting offers to provide non-commercial items.
- Select the appropriate solicitation method for a procurement.
- Construct a commercial solicitation.

- Inquiries/ Amendments

Given a solicitation scenario:

- Explain the procedures for resolving inquiries pertaining to the solicitation.

- Summarize the process for conducting a pre-proposal conference.
- Prepare an amendment.

Performance-Based Service Contracting (5 Day Course)

Current Administration and Departmental policies require agencies to use performance-based contracting methods to the maximum extent practicable, for forming and administering contracts for services. This intensive 5-day BMRA course is intended to give participants extensive “hands on” practice in applying PBC techniques to contracts, using computer-aided tools and supplementary readings. The course is designed for program and contracting personnel, and all others who are involved in soliciting and administering contracts for services. Members of the same project team are welcome to participate. Students should feel free to provide the Office of Acquisition Management and Policy with PBC examples for class discussion at least four weeks before each session. In this course, you will have an opportunity to practice: writing Performance Work Statements (PWSs)/Statement of Objectives (SOOs); developing performance indicators, standards and acceptable quality levels; writing Quality Assurance Surveillance Plans; developing and administering positive and negative incentives; and determining the extent to which a specific acquisition should follow PBC precepts. Introduction to Contracting and Acquisition Planning I, or the “Basic Project Officer” course, is a prerequisite.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, 2 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Prerequisites:

None

Learning Objectives:

- Describe the history, purpose and benefits of PBSC contracting.
- Explain Performance Work Statements (PWSs).
- Develop performance indicators, standards and acceptable quality levels.
- Define the roles of various participants in the PBSC process.
- Write Quality Assurance Surveillance Plans.
- Discuss positive and negative incentives used in performance based contracting.
- Determine whether your specific agency requirements are appropriate for the PBSC method.

The Performance-Based Service Contracting course replaces ALL of the HHS Writing Statements of Work courses under the previous HHS curricula. To be eligible to attend this course, program personnel should be engaged in developing requirements. Simplified acquisition personnel at the GS-7 level and above may attend this course.

Price Analysis (5 Day Course)

This course addresses all facets of price analysis and provides a student with the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to conduct price analysis. The course employs a combination of lecture-discussion, case study, and practical exercise techniques to provide training to cover the comprehensive set of learning objectives established by FAI.

The target audience for this course consists of members of the contract specialist career path. Other personnel involved in contract pricing decisions would find the course helpful.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, 2 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Prerequisites:

- Introduction to Contracting
- Acquisition Planning I
- Contract Formation I
- Contract Administration I

Learning Objectives:

- Introduction to Contract Pricing
 - Describe the sellers' pricing goals in a market.
 - Describe the key elements of the government's pricing objective.
 - Learn the three basic approaches to contract pricing (price analysis, cost analysis and cost realism analysis).
 - Understand the role of each acquisition team member in analyzing prices.
 - Market Research for Price Analysis

Given a purchase request containing the Independent Government Cost Estimate (IGCE), excerpts from relevant acquisition histories, and sample market data:

 - Determine whether the IGCE is reasonable.
 - Identify internal and external sources of market data for estimating and analyzing prices.
 - Develop an estimate of the proper price level.
 - Maximizing Price Competition

Given sample requirements documents, excerpts from relevant acquisition histories, and sample market data:

 - Identify actions that would increase price competition, including potential changes to the solicitation terms and conditions.
 - Price-Related Information from Offerors

Given sample requirements documents, excerpts from relevant acquisition histories, and sample market data:

 - Determine the need to obtain additional price-related information from offerors
 - Identify requirements for cost or pricing data.
 - Recognize the applicability of one or more exceptions to the requirement for such data.
 - Determine the need for information from offerors other than cost or pricing data.
- 4 & 5.

- Price-Related Factors

Given the solicitation:

- Develop price-related factors for award.
- Given offers:
- Calculate the evaluated price of each offer.

- Price Comparisons

Given evaluated prices, information from offerors and market research, and quantitative techniques:

- Select prices for comparison (i.e., commercial, historical, ICE).
- Identify factors that affect price comparisons.
- Determine the effect of the factors on the price comparisons.
- Apply quantitative techniques to compare prices.
- Develop an estimate of the "should pay" price.

- Accounting For Differences

Given evaluated prices, information from offerors and market research and the should pay price:

- Investigate the reasons and consequences of differences (if significant) between offered prices and the "should pay" price.

- Price-Related Decisions in Sealed Bidding

Given bids, the evaluated prices bid, information from bidders and market research, the should pay price, and analyses of significant differences between the should pay price and evaluated prices bid:

- Identify possible mistakes in bids.
- Determine whether to reject a bid that is unreasonably low or materially unbalanced.
- Determine the applicability of price-related reasons for canceling the IFB.

- Price-Related Decisions in Negotiations

Given proposals, evaluated prices, information from offerors and market research, the should pay price, and the findings of the analysis of significant differences between the should pay price and evaluated prices:

- Identify the need to request additional pricing information from offerors.
- Recognize the role of price-related information in establishing the competitive range.
- Plan fact-finding related to proposed prices.
- Establish prenegotiation positions on price.
- Consider potential trade-offs between price and other terms and conditions of the contract.
- Identify the conditions that may require cancellation of the solicitation and/or resolicitation.

- Documentation

- Identify documentation requirements for sealed bidding and negotiated procurements.

Price Analysis replaces the HHS Basic Cost and Price Analysis course under the previous HHS curricula. Price Analysis, COMBINED with Cost Analysis and Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques, are equivalent to DAU Course CON 104, Principles of Contract Pricing.

Writing Statements of Work for Research and Development

(5 Day Course)

This 5-day course teaches contracting and project personnel how to write, review, and improve statements of work for research and development programs. This includes basic and applied research and development and R&D support service requirements. It also includes (a) instruction on developing evaluations factors and significant subfactors and (b) determinations on the extent to which the program manager should apply performance-based service precepts to the acquisition.

Prerequisites:

Introduction to Contracting and Acquisition Planning I, or Basic Project Officer course (or equivalent)

Appendix B

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT TRAINING COURSES

Basic Project Officer

The Basic Project Officer's course is a comprehensive course which provides the student with a thorough understanding of the Project Officer's responsibilities within the acquisition cycle. The course commences with a description of a contract and a comparison of its use to a grant or cooperative agreement, discusses the authority of individuals involved in the acquisition process, covers what is required of the Project Officer in planning and developing the requirement, and delves into contract types and their relationship to preparation of the statement of work. Considerable time is devoted to exploring specialized sources, e.g., 8(a), HUB Zones, and small business contracting; focusing on preparing an independent government cost estimate; developing technical evaluation criteria; evaluating technical proposals; and negotiating and selecting a source. The course concludes with a discussion of the Project Officer's responsibilities related to contract monitoring; the personnel involved and their authority; tools and methods of contracting; examination of vouchers; inspection and acceptance; termination; final report; and contract closeout. Three versions of this course are offered, as described below:

- **Standard Version (4 Day Course)**
Described above.
- **Research and Development (4 Day Course)**
Covers the peer review process. Case studies focus on the unique characteristics of contracting for research and development.

Advanced Project Officer (3 Day Course)

The Advanced Project Officer course is a seminar oriented toward current acquisition problems and issues. It addresses areas of acquisition policy, regulations, and technical monitoring that are subject to debate, disagreement, misinterpretation, or are recurring problems for program and/or contracting officers. The course is structured to create a dialog between program and contracting personnel so as to generate an understanding and appreciation of their respective responsibilities each plays in the acquisition process. The course commences with a review of the key preaward problem areas of planning, clearances, justification for noncompetitive acquisition, and establishing independent cost estimates. The Advanced Project Officer course is designed for experienced program managers and project officer as well as contract managers and contracting officers.

To be able to attend this course, program personnel must have completed a Basic Project Officer (or equivalent) course.

Contracting for Architect and Engineering Services

(5 Day Course)

This course is a comprehensive study of the Brooks Act procedures in contracting for Architect-Engineering (A-E) Services. Procedures covered apply to procurement by direct Federal Government contracts and by Federal Government grantees' contracts. Students will learn how the Brooks Act defines A-E services, the procedures that must be followed, and practical application of those procedures to various A-E situations.

This course is recommended for members of the contract specialist (GS-1102) career path who have requirements for Architect-Engineering Services. Other personnel associated with A-E requirements, i.e., project managers, construction supervisors, and estimators, will find the course helpful in executing their responsibilities. A minimum of one year of experience in the contracting field is recommended as preparation for this course.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, 2 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Recommended Prerequisites:

- Acquisition Planning I
- Contract Formation I
- Price Analysis
- Cost Analysis
- Acquisition Planning II
- Contract Formation II

Learning Objectives:

- Determine the need for using Brooks Act procedures when contracting for Architect-Engineering Services.
- Understand and apply the steps required to formulate an Architect-Engineering Services contract.
- Understand the requirements for advertising Architect-Engineering contract requirements.
- Identify methods used to solicit Architect-Engineering services.
- Properly evaluate firms and determine the order in which they will be ranked.
- Properly evaluate firms and determine the order in which they will be ranked.
- Determine applicable cost principles specific to Architect-Engineering contracting.
- Conduct a government cost estimate.
- Develop a negotiation strategy and conduct negotiations.
- Understand how the government maintains quality assurance on the contract.
- Describe the roles and responsibilities of those who manage and administer the contract

Construction Contracting

(5 Day Course)

This course provides contracting (GS-1102 and equivalent) personnel with skill at awarding and administering contracts for construction. This course is also of value to other Federal personnel who are involved in the development, management, or administration of construction projects. The focus of the course is on where and how the construction contracting environment differs from contracting in general. The target audience for

this course consists of personnel involved in the GS-1102 career path who are or may become involved with construction requirements. Others involved in the development, management, or administration of construction contracts will find the course helpful in executing their responsibilities. A minimum of one year of experience in the contracting field is recommended as preparation for this course.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, 2 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Recommended Prerequisites:

- Introduction to Contracting
- Acquisition Planning I
- Contract Formation I
- Contract Administration I
- Price Analysis
- Cost Analysis
- Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques
- Acquisition Planning II
- Contract Formation II
- Contract Administration II

Learning Objectives:

- Devise a construction acquisition plan.
- Recognize the differences between situations in which IFB or RFP would be the appropriate solicitation type for a construction requirement.
- In both sealed bid and negotiated situations, analyze bid/proposal documents and select appropriate awardees.
- Identify the critical elements of a quality control plan for construction.
- Diagnose, troubleshoot, and determine the appropriate compliance approach in various contract administration situations.
- Appropriately execute modifications to construction contracts.
- Ensure costs of construction contract invoices are allowable and allocable, be able to process invoices for progress payments, and conduct contract closeout.

This course replaces the HHS Construction Contracting course under the previous HHS curricula.

Performance-Based Service Contracting (5 Day Course)

Current Administration and Departmental policies require agencies to use performance-based contracting methods to the maximum extent practicable, for forming and administering contracts for services. This intensive 5-day BMRA course is intended to give participants extensive "hands on" practice in applying PBC techniques to contracts, using computer-aided tools and supplementary readings. The course is designed for program and contracting personnel, and all others who are involved in soliciting and administering contracts for services. Members of the same project team are welcome to participate. Students should feel free to provide the Office of Acquisition Management and Policy with PBC examples for class discussion at least four weeks before each session. In this course, you will have an opportunity to practice: writing Performance Work Statements (PWSs)/Statement of Objectives (SOOs); developing performance indicators, standards and

acceptable quality levels; writing Quality Assurance Surveillance Plans; developing and administering positive and negative incentives; and determining the extent to which a specific acquisition should follow PBC precepts. Introduction to Contracting and Acquisition Planning I, or the “Basic Project Officer” course is a prerequisite.

ACE Credit Recommendation:

In the baccalaureate degree category, 2 semester hours in Business Administration, Federal Acquisition, Public Administration, Procurement Management, or Purchasing.

Prerequisites:

None

Learning Objectives:

- Describe the history, purpose and benefits of PBSC contracting.
- Explain Performance Work Statements (PWSs).
- Develop performance indicators, standards and acceptable quality levels.
- Define the roles of various participants in the PBSC process.
- Write Quality Assurance Surveillance Plans.
- Discuss positive and negative incentives used in performance based contracting.
- Determine whether your specific agency requirements are appropriate for the PBSC method

The Performance-Based Service Contracting course replaces ALL of the HHS Writing Statements of Work courses under the previous HHS curricula. To be eligible to attend this course, program personnel should be engaged in developing requirements.

Writing Statements of Work for Research and Development (5 Day Course)

This 5-day Business Management Research Associates’ course teaches contracting and project personnel how to write, review, and improve Statements of Work for research and development programs. This includes basic and applied research, development, and R&D support service requirements. It also covers instruction on developing evaluations factors and significant subfactors, as well as determining the extent to which PBC precepts should apply to the acquisition. Members of the same project team are welcome to participate. Introduction to Contracting and Acquisition Planning I, or the “Basic Project Officer” course is a prerequisite.

PROJEX™ For Project Managers (3 Day Course)

Taught by CIBER, Inc., this course provides a thorough examination of the PROJEX™ process, which addresses proven project management principles that will help project officers, project managers, and project

team members to better plan, manage, and monitor their projects. Also, participants learn to develop work breakdown structures, and learn techniques for team-building, resource management, and risk management. Attendees apply the concepts discussed to individual and team exercises.

This course is designed to serve as a bridge between the HHS Basic Project Officer course and the LMI Early Warning Project Management System Workshop.

Early Warning Project Management System Workshop (1 Day Course)

Taught by the Logistics Management Institute (LMI), this course is designed to help students use an “earned value” methodology to derive projects from agency goals; enter cost and schedule data to track projects; identify significant project deviations that require corrective action; take corrective action early in the project, as needed; and meet OMB Circular A-11 (Section 300) and related requirements. Attendees apply the concepts discussed to individual and team exercises.

This workshop is intended for all members of a capital asset project team - including representatives from acquisition, budget, finance, program/project management, logistics, information technology, and the contractor. Hands-on computer instruction (using a Microsoft Excel-based “Early Warning” computer template) is provided to each student. The focus of the workshop is on capital asset projects in the areas of construction and information technology.

As a prerequisite, students must be familiar with Windows and Excel (or similar spreadsheet software).

Earned Value Project Management Overview for Managers (3.5 Hour Course)

Also taught by LMI, this workshop is intended for mid-to-senior level managers or staff who do not participate in day-to-day project management, but who play a significant leadership, oversight, or supporting role (e.g., Chief Financial Officers, Chief Information Officers, Heads of Contracting Activity, Budget, Finance, or Information Technology analysts). The course includes discussion on the benefits of project management; OMB Circular A-11 (Section 300) and its requirements; related legislation; performance deviations; earned value concepts; and common project cases faced by managers. The focus is on capital assets in the areas of information technology and construction.

LMI Workshop on Performance-Based Contracting (1 Day Course)

This course is designed to optimize HHS’s web-based Performance-Based Contracting (PBC) Desk Reference (DR). LMI delivers a half-day tailored presentation on PBC concepts addressing the latest developments in the area, and shows how to use the PBC DR to support PBC implementation throughout the entire acquisition process. The second half of the day-long session is devoted to a team-oriented sample case study.

Stryker Associates Workshop on Performance-Based Contracting (2 Day Course)

Stryker Associates provides a brief orientation to HHS's web-based PBC DR and continues to refer to the DR throughout the course to introduce each major PBC training element. The balance of the workshop is comprised of hands-on, just-in-time, customized training and discussion, with focus on actual, PBC-related, HHS-oriented case studies, examples, lessons learned, and successful practices. Post-course feedback is made available to students on PBC documents under development.

Students attending the LMI and Stryker courses should familiarize themselves with the PBC DR before attending the workshops. The PBC DR may be found at: www.knownet.hhs.gov/acquisition/performDR/. Also, students should come prepared to contribute examples for discussion, refinement, and conversion. Both workshops will embrace a practical, team-based approach, and both will help the OPDIVS/Agencies to effectively apply PBC principles on a day-to-day basis. Each workshop fills an important training niche. While the two-day workshop allows for a more in-depth look for the PBC newcomer, the one-day workshop will be adequate if a student desires a solid overview. These workshops are suitable for all members of a project team – such as staff from acquisition, program/project management, information technology, budget and finance, and Office of General Counsel.

Appendix C-1

EQUIVALENT TRAINING COURSES (TRAINING "CROSSWALK")

HHS follows the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) course equivalency matrix listed below. If a course is listed in the matrix below, it is certified as equivalent by DAU. If a course is not listed in the matrix below, acceptability of course equivalency will be determined by the OPDIV/Agency Certification Board.

(see Chapter 6, Fulfillment - attach copy of training certificate, transcripts, and other supporting documentation as listed in Chapter 6 of this handbook).

CON 101, Fundamentals of Contracting, or equivalent(s) (see below)

Primary Provider	Course Title and/or Number
Defense Acquisition University (DAU)	CON 101, Fundamentals of Contracting
Equivalent DOD Providers	Course Title and/or Number
Naval Facilities Contracts Training Center (NFCTC)	Management of Defense Acquisition Contracts (Basic)
U.S. Army Logistics Management College (ALMC)	Management of Defense Acquisition Contracts (Basic)
Defense Logistics Agency (DLA)	Management of Defense Acquisition Contracts (Basic)
Navy Acquisition Management Training Office (NAMTO)	Management of Defense Acquisition Contracts (Basic)
U.S. European Command Contract Training Office (EUCOM)	Management of Defense Acquisition Contracts (Basic)
Lowery Technical Training Center	Central Systems Level Contracting
Naval Postgraduate School (NPS)	MN 3303
NPS	Acquisition & Contract Management (815) Degree Program

NPS	Systems Acquisition Management (816) Degree Program
U.S. Army Command & General Staff College	A423, Basics of Contracting
Equivalent non-DOD Providers	Course Title and/or Number
General Services Administration (GSA)	Management of Defense Acquisition Contracts (Basic)
Temple University	Acquisition and Contracting Seminar/Public Procurement Policy
College of William & Mary (Richard Bland College)	Acquisition (Parts 1 and II)
University of West Florida	Acquisition Management
University of Dallas	Acquisition and Contract Management/Acquisition Management
Pensacola Junior College	Acquisition and Procurement I and II
University of District of Columbia	Government Programs and the Procurement Process
Massachusetts Bay Community College	Introduction to Government Contract Procurement/Contract Management
Tidewater Community College	Introduction to Procurement Acquisition/Acquisition Management I and II
College of Southern Maryland (formerly Charles County Community College)	Introduction to Procurement and Contract Acquisition Management I and II (BAD 1451 & 1461)
Northern Virginia Community College	ACQ 121 and ACQ 122
Middlesex Community College	Management of Defense Acquisition Contracts
Rose State College	Management of Defense Acquisition Contracts I and II
Rancho Santiago College	Management of Defense Acquisition Contracts I

San Diego City College	BUS 160 and BUS 162
St. Ambrose University	Principles of Procurement and Contracting/Contract Administration
Western New England College	Principles of Acquisition and Contracting
University of St. Thomas	Principles of Procurement
American University	Principles of Procurement Management
University of Phoenix	Principles of the Acquisition Process
George Washington University	Procurement and Contracting
University of Virginia	Procurement and Contracting
Florida Institute of Technology	Procurement/Contract Management and Administration I
University of Florida	Introduction to Federal Acquisition
Athens State College	Introduction to Federal Procurement
Bowie State University	BUAD 130
Webster University	PROC 5000, Procurement & Management Acquisitions
Management Concepts, Inc.	Acquisition Procurement Planning I, Contract Formation I, and Contract Administration I
Business Management Research Associates, Inc.	Introduction to Contracting, Acquisition Planning I, Contract Formation I, and Contract Administration I

CON 104, Fundamentals of Contract Pricing, or equivalent(s) (see below)

Primary Provider	Course Title and/or Number
DAU	CON 104, Fundamentals of Contract Pricing
Equivalent DOD Providers	Course Title and/or Number
NFCTC	Defense Cost & Price Analysis/Defense Contracting Negotiation Workshop
NFCTC	Defense Cost and Price Analysis/Negotiation
EUCOM	Principles of Contract Pricing
NAMTO	Principles of Contract Pricing
Navy Center for Acquisition Training (NCAT)	Principles of Contract Pricing
Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT)	Principles of Contract Pricing
US Army Command & General Staff College	A424, Fundamentals of Contract Pricing
Defense Logistics Agency (DLA)	Principles of Contract Pricing
NPS	Acquisition & Contract Management (815) Degree Program
NPS	MN 3304
Equivalent non-DOD Providers	Course Title and/or Number
University of Dallas	Contract Pricing and Negotiation
GSA	Contract Pricing
Temple University	Contract Pricing and Negotiation
American University	Cost & Price Analysis & Contract Negotiation
Florida Institute of Technology	Cost Principles, Effectiveness and Control/Contract Negotiation
St. Ambrose University	Cost and Price Analysis
Tidewater Community College	Cost and Price Analysis/Principles of Pricing and Negotiations

University of District of Columbia	Cost and Price Analysis
University of West Florida	Cost and Pricing
University of Virginia	Cost & Price Analysis & Negotiation of Contracts & Modifications
Northern Virginia Community College	ACQ 216 and ACQ 218
University of California (Irvine University extension)	Financial Aspects of Contract Management
Pensacola Junior College	Governmental Accounting
Massachusetts Bay Community College	Government Contract Cost and Price Analysis
University of St Thomas	Pricing and Negotiation
Webster University	Pricing and Negotiation
Middlesex Community College	Principles of Contract Pricing and Contract Negotiations
University of Phoenix	Principles of Contract Pricing, Estimating and Analysis
College of William & Mary (Richard Bland College)	Principles of Contract Pricing and Negotiation
Rancho Santiago College	Principles of Contract Pricing
Western New England College	Principles of Contract Pricing/Principles of Cost and Price Analysis
San Diego City College	BUS 164 and BUS 166
Rose State College	Principles of Contract Pricing/Pricing and Negotiation
George Washington University	Principles of Contract Pricing/Pricing and Negotiation
College of Southern Maryland (formerly Charles County Community College)	BAD 1471 and BAD 1481
University of Central Florida	Costs Price Analysis and Contract Negotiation

Bowie State University	BUAD 230
Business Management Research Associates, Inc.	Price Analysis, Cost Analysis and Federal Contract Negotiation
Management Concepts, Inc.	Price Analysis, Cost Analysis & Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques

CON 202, Intermediate Contracting, or equivalent(s) (see below)

Primary Provider	Course Title and/or Number
DAU	CON 202, Intermediate Contracting
Equivalent DOD Providers	Course Title and/or Number
ALMC	Management of Defense Acquisition Contract (Advanced)
DLA	Management of Defense Acquisition Contract (Advanced)
EUCOM	Management of Defense Acquisition Contract (Advanced)
NAMTO	Management of Defense Acquisition Contract (Advanced)
ALMC	Pre-Award Contracting
DLA	Pre-Award Contracting
AFIT	Contract Administration (Advanced)
NAMTO	Contract Administration (Advanced)
NPS	Acquisition & Contract Management (815) Degree Program
NPS	MN 3305
EUCOM	Pre-Award Contracting
NAMTO	Pre-Award Contracting
NFCTC	Pre-Award Contracting
NFCTC	Advanced Contract Management (Construction)
Equivalent non-DOD Providers	Course Title and/or Number
Tidewater Community College	Advanced Procurement Acquisition Management I

College of Southern Maryland (formerly Charles County Community College)	Advanced Procurement Acquisition Management I
Pensacola Junior College	Acquisition & Procurement III
Rancho Santiago College	Management of Defense Acquisition Contract II
San Diego City College	BUS 168 and BUS 170
Western New England College	Principles of Government Contracting
University of District of Columbia	Public Contracts
Pensacola Junior College	Acquisition & Procurement IV
American University	Advanced Contract Administration
Rancho Santiago College	Advanced Contract Administration
University of St Thomas	Advanced Contract Administration
University of Dallas	Advanced Contract Administration
University of West Florida	Advanced Contract Administration
Northern Virginia Community College	ACQ 221 and ACQ 222
University of Virginia	Contract Administration
University of Phoenix	Management of Government Acquisition Contracts
Florida Institute of Technology	Procurement/Contract Management and Administration II
Bowie State University	BUAD 330
Management Concepts, Inc.	Acquisition/Procurement Planning II, Contract Formation II, and Contract Administration II
Business Management Research Associates, Inc.	Acquisition/Procurement Planning II, Contract Formation II, and Contract Administration II

CON 204, Intermediate Contract Pricing, or equivalent(s) (see below)

Primary Provider	Course Title and/or Number
DAU	CON 204, Intermediate Contract Pricing
Equivalent DOD Providers	Course Title and/or Number
AFIT	Cost & Price Analysis
AFIT	Introductory Quantitative Analysis (prior course)
AFIT	Quantitative Techniques for Cost & Price Analysis
NPS	Acquisition & Contract Management (815) Degree Program
NPS	MN 3304
Equivalent non-DOD Providers	Course Title and/or Number
Bowie State University	BUAD 430
Northern Virginia Community College	ACQ 295
Business Management Research Associates, Inc.	Intermediate Contract Pricing
Management Concepts, Inc.	Intermediate Contract Pricing

CON 210, Government Contract Law, or equivalent(s) (see below)

Primary Provider	Course Title and/or Number
DAU	CON 210, Government Contract Law
Equivalent DOD Providers	Course Title and/or Number
Lowery Technical Training Center	Basic Contract Law
AFIT	LAWS 550, Government Contract Law
NAMTO	Government Contract Law
NPS	Acquisition & Contract Management (815) Degree Program
NPS	MN 3312
NFCTC	Government Contract Law (Construction)
Equivalent non-DOD Providers	Course Title and/or Number
GSA	Contract Law
College of William & Mary (Richard Bland College)	Contract and Law
St. Ambrose University	Contract and Law
Temple University	Contract and Law
Tidewater Community College	Contract and Law
Northern Virginia Community College	ACQ 215
American University	Federal Procurement Law
Middlesex Community College	Government Contract Law
University of Phoenix	Government Contract Law
Rancho Santiago College	Government Contract Law
Rose St. College	Government Contract Law

University of St Thomas	Government Contract Law
Western New England College	Government Contract Law
University of West Florida	Government Contract Law
Massachusetts Bay Community College	Government Contract Law
Pensacola Junior College	Government Contract Law
San Diego City College	BUS 172
University of California (Irvine University extension)	Principles of Contract Formation & Contract Law: Performance & Remedies
University of Virginia	Principles of Law for Contract Formation
University of Dallas	Procurement Law
University of District of Columbia	Procurement Law
Webster University	PROC 5810, Acquisitions Law
Florida Institute of Technology	Procurement: The Legal Concepts
University of Central Florida	Government Contract Law
Business Management Research Associates, Inc.	Government Contract Law
Management Concepts, Inc.	Government Contract Law

CON 301, Executive Contracting

Primary Provider	Course Title and/or Number
DAU	CON 301, Executive Contracting
Equivalent DOD Providers	Course Title and/or Number
Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development and Acquisition)	Defense Acquisition Contracting Executive Seminar
NPS	Acquisition & Contract Management (815) Degree Program
Equivalent non-DOD Provider	Course Title and/or Number
Atlantic Management Center, Inc.	Executive Contracting

COURSE FULFILLMENT REQUEST FORM

Appendix C-2

Instructions: Employees wishing to attain fulfillment of course work taken at other organizations or from other training providers are required to complete Appendix C-2. This form must be submitted as part of the request for HHS Acquisition Certification.

Fulfillment information:

1) Employee name:

2) OPDIV/Agency:

3) Mailing address:

4) Phone number/fax number:

5) E-mail:

6) Title/Series/Grade:

7) Employee: I certify that I have successfully completed the following course(es)(or equivalent(s): (list courses) _____ for certification at Level _____. I have attached the appropriate documentation and certify that this information is accurate.

Employee's signature and date: _____

8) Employee's Supervisor: I have reviewed the applicant's documentation and I certify that the applicant has _____ has not _____ successfully completed the courses noted above. The applicant meets _____ does not meet _____ the requirements for certification at Level ____.

Supervisor's signature and date: _____

9) Reviewing official: I have reviewed the applicant's documentation and I certify that the applicant has _____ has not _____ successfully completed the courses noted above. The applicant meets _____ does not meet _____ the requirements for certification at Level ____.

Reviewing official's signature and date: _____

Appendix D

COURSE EQUIVALENCIES FOR PURPOSES OF FULFILLMENT

HHS follows the matrix below established by the DoD. Any one of the courses listed in column B is equivalent to all of the courses listed in column A. Also reference Appendix C-1 for a course equivalency crosswalk and the following website for a more complete listing of DAU course predecessors:

<http://www.dau.mil/catalog/cat2004/CATALOG%202004.pdf>

Column A	Column B
1. Acquisition Planning I	CON 101 Fundamentals of Contracting Army Command and Staff General College, A423
2. Contract Formation I	Acquisition and Contract Management Degree Program, NPS-815
3. Contract Administration I	Principles of Acquisition and Contracting, NPS MN 3303
	Predecessors/Previous Courses:
	CON 101 Contracting Fundamental (BDQ)
	CON 102 Operational Level Contracting Fundamentals (PEC)
	CON 103 Facilities Contracting Fundamentals (HEI)
	Management of Defense Acquisition Contracts (Basic) - (8D-4320) (MMW, BDQ)
	Management of Defense Acquisition Contracts (Basic) - CTC - 142 (HEI)
	Central Systems Level Contracting (G30BR6532-010) (WHS, PD6)
	Defense Procurement Management (8D-4320)(MMW, BDQ)
	Central Procurement Officer (G30BR6531-003)
	Contract Management Officer (G30BR6531-004)
	Systems/R&D Procurement Officer (G30BR6531-005)
	R&D Procurement Officer (G30BR6531-006)
	Contract Management, Systems R&D Officer (G30BR6531-007)
	Organizational Level Contracting (PEC)
	Base Procurement Officer (G30BR6531-002)
	Base Level Contracting (G30BR6431-002)

<p>4. Price Analysis</p> <p>5. Cost Analysis</p> <p>6. Negotiation Techniques</p>	<p>CON 104 Fundamentals of Contract Pricing Army Command & General Staff College - A424</p> <p>Cost & Price Theory - CMGT545</p> <p>Contract Pricing and Negotiation - NPS MN3304</p> <p>Acquisition and Contract Management Degree Program - NPS-815</p> <p>Predecessors/Previous Courses:</p> <p>CON 104 Contract Pricing (BDR)</p> <p>CON 105 Operational Level Contract Pricing (8BH, QNU)</p> <p>CON 106 Facilities Contracts Pricing (MWB, BDU)</p> <p>Principles of Contract Pricing-QMT-170 (PBC, BDR)</p> <p>Defense Cost and Price Analysis/Negotiation-PN (MWB, BDU)</p> <p>Base Level Pricing - G30ZR6534-009 (8BH, QNU)</p>
<p>7. Acquisition Planning II</p> <p>8. Contract Formation II</p> <p>9. Contract Administration II</p>	<p>CON 202 Intermediate Contracting Acquisition and Contract Management Degree Program - NPS-815</p> <p>Predecessors/Previous Courses:</p> <p>CON 211 Intermediate Contracting (BDN)</p> <p>CON 221 Intermediate Contract Administration (BDQ)</p> <p>CON 222 Operational Level Contract Administration (PDQ)</p> <p>CON 223 Intermediate Facilities Contracting (BE4)</p> <p>Management of Defense Acquisition Contracts (ADV0-8D-F12 (MMX, BDN)</p> <p>Contract Administration (Advanced) - PPM 304 (AAS,BDO)</p> <p>CON 222 Organizational Level Contract Administration (PDQ)</p> <p>Advanced Contract Management (Construction) - CTC-542 (BE4)</p>

10. Intermediate Contract Pricing	CON 204 Intermediate Contract Pricing CON 235 Advanced Contract Pricing Contract Pricing and Negotiation NPS MN3304 Acquisition and Contract Management Degree Program - NPS-815 Predecessors/Previous Courses: CON 231 Intermediate Contract Pricing (131-161) Intermediate Cost & Price Analysis QMT-345 (UGH,BCC) Intermediate Pricing QMT-340 (BCC)
11. Government Contract Law	CON 210 Government Contract Law Legal Principles of Government Contracting-LAWS550 Acquisition and Contract Management Degree Program - NPS-815 Contract Law NPS-MN3312 Predecessor/Previous Courses: CON 201 Government Contract Law CON 201 ©) Government Contract Law (Construction) Government Contract Law PPM-302 (D99, BDP) Government Contract Law construction - CTC-302 (D99, BDP) Base Contract Law G30zR6534-007 (PDT) AFIT Contract Law 166 USAF ECI Correspondence Course 6607

Appendix E

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CONCERNING THE REVISED GS-1102 QUALIFICATION STANDARD

The text below is taken verbatim from the following OPM website:

<http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/1102QAs.htm>

1. Why does the GS-1102 series have a separate qualification standard?

The Clinger-Cohen Act, issued in February 1996, amended the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) Act to require that the Administrator of OFPP establish qualification requirements, including educational requirements, for positions at civilian agencies in the GS-1102 series (see 41 U.S.C. 433). Five years earlier, Congress had established requirements for 1102 positions in defense agencies through the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (see 10 U.S.C. 1724, 1732). The Clinger-Cohen language stipulates that qualification requirements established by OFPP shall be comparable to the DAWIA requirements. In June 1997 the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) published a qualification standard imposing requirements established by OFPP pursuant to Clinger-Cohen.

2. In a nutshell, how is this standard different than its predecessor?

The predecessor to this standard introduced educational requirements that were effective January 1, 1998 for new hires and January 1, 2000 for existing employees. The revised standard does not change the minimum educational levels defined by the former standard. However, it does make three changes. First, it expands the waiver authority related to filling GS-13 and above positions. The former standard only allowed the Senior Procurement Executive to waive one of the two educational requirements, whereas the revised standard permits waiver of any or all requirements. Second, it removes language that permitted examinations to substitute for the 24-hour requirement since acceptable examinations have not been designated. With the exception of college course credit obtained through testing programs designed to grant credit by examination (such as the College Level Examination Program), you cannot take a test to qualify in lieu of the 24 hours. Third, it replaces the January 1, 1998 date found in the former standard with a January 1, 2000 date, meaning employees hired under the former standard have grandfathering rights as "current" employees.

3. When does this standard go into effect?

This revised qualification standard was effective January 1, 2000. It applies to all new hires and to existing employees selected to fill GS-1102 positions in civilian agencies.

Educational Requirements

1. Summarize the basic educational requirements of the qualification standard.

In order to qualify for positions at grades GS-5 through GS-12, you must possess either a bachelor's degree OR have completed at least 24 semester hours of course work in certain business-related fields. In order to qualify for positions at grades GS-13 and above, you must possess a bachelor's degree AND at least 24 semester hours of course work in certain business-related fields. The 24 hours may be included in, or in addition to, course work taken to complete the degree program.

2. Does the phrase "a 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree" mean I must have a degree, or just that I must be enrolled in a degree program?

The phrase means you must possess a bachelor's degree conferred or approved by an accredited U.S. college or university based on a 4-year course of study. Simply being enrolled and working toward a degree does not meet the qualification standard. Furthermore, "honorary" degrees or other degrees with no basis in course work do not satisfy the standard.

3. Does "4-year course of study" mean I had to finish my degree in four years?

No. You can earn the bachelor's degree in whatever length of time is necessary and accepted by the college or university conferring the degree. The descriptive phrase relates to how the educational institutions characterize the degree program, not to how long it takes you personally to complete the program.

Does the degree have to be a business degree?

No. A qualifying bachelor's degree may be in any field of study and may be of any type, such as Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, and Bachelor of Business Administration. The 24 semester hours, however, must be in some combination of the eleven fields listed in the standard.

4. How do I document that I have satisfied the degree and course work requirements?

You need to check with your local human resource office to see what procedures they use. If you already had a degree when you were hired, you probably furnished a college transcript with your application and, if so, that information is included in your personnel records. If you have completed courses since being hired, you will probably need to furnish evidence to your human resource office, such as a new transcript and a copy of your diploma, as applicable. It may be necessary also to provide descriptive information on a course (e.g., course syllabus) to convince a human resource specialist that a particular course qualifies toward the 24-hour requirement. You should periodically review your personnel records to ensure information has been recorded accurately, and work with your human resource office to update the records as needed. In the near future, your educational status will be maintained with other personnel and training data in a Government-wide acquisition career management information system.

5. When the degree AND 24-hour course work requirements must be met for GS-13 and above positions, can I count courses taken as part of my degree program to satisfy the 24-hour requirement?

Yes, course work could simultaneously count for the degree requirement and the 24-hour requirement. For example, if you earned a business degree, you should have completed sufficient credits in the required fields to

satisfy the 24-hour requirement. However, if your degree is in another field, such as sociology, you might need to take some additional courses in the fields identified in the qualification standard to complete the 24-hour requirement.

6. The qualification standard identifies eleven fields for the 24-hour course work requirement. Does this mean an acceptable course must have a course number identifying one of the fields (for example, an "economics" course might be "ECN 401")?

The answer to this question first requires an understanding of the purpose of the 24-hour course work requirement, which is to provide a person with a minimum amount of business knowledge. This is particularly important because the primary function of contract specialists is to negotiate and execute business relationships on behalf of the Government. The eleven fields listed in the standard are identical to those set forth by Congress in DAWIA, and presumably they were selected because they capture the types of knowledge and skills desired for members of the acquisition workforce to execute this function.

Colleges and universities do not use a standard convention for course numbering aligned to the eleven fields. For example, one institution identifies its accounting curricula as "ACMIS" courses, standing for "accounting and management information systems." Therefore, it is neither practical nor reasonable to restrict interpretation of the word "fields" to institutional programs using precisely the same language. Instead, it is appropriate to consider the identified fields as general subject areas. If the content of a course arguably fits within the general subject area represented by one of the fields, it should qualify toward the 24-hour requirement. A human resource specialist, or whoever in your organization credits completion of the 24 hours, may need to review the course syllabus whenever it is not obvious from the course title that content fits the field. Consider these examples: a sociology course in statistics; a public administration course in quantitative techniques; a psychology course in organizational behavior. If the content of these courses is comparable to, or perhaps is recognized by the academic institution as a substitute for, courses clearly resting in the listed fields, you should receive credit toward the 24-hour requirement. It is your responsibility to furnish supporting descriptive information if credit for a course is being questioned.

7. Can I credit procurement training courses toward the 24-hour requirement?

Not unless a college actually gives you credit under its curricula. Education/training are separate components of agency career development programs. Training courses are designed to build job-specific knowledge and skills, complementing and supplementing the general level of knowledge and skills acquired through formal college education. The 24-hour requirement is intended to be satisfied through course work taken at colleges and universities. A college may give credit for certain on-the-job training courses, or teach a course that has been determined "equivalent" to a prescribed training course. In such cases, you may be satisfying educational and training requirements simultaneously. However, unless a college specifically awards you course credit, your training courses do not count toward the 24-hour requirement. This is at the discretion of the college, and you do not have an automatic entitlement to the credit.

"Grandfathering" – The Exception Provisions

1. I am currently working as an 1102 in a civilian agency. Am I "grandfathered" for civilian agency positions based on having a certain number of years of experience (meaning the requirements do not apply to me)?

The GS-1102 qualification standard does have some grandfathering features for the existing workforce, although none of those features are tied to a prescribed number of years of experience. Every 1102, regardless of grade, is considered to meet the standard for the position and grade held as of January 1, 2000, and is qualified for positions in other civilian agencies at the same grade without having to meet the educational and training requirements. In addition, an 1102 can be promoted through grade GS-12 without meeting the qualification requirements. There is no grandfathering provision that allows experience to substitute for education in order to qualify for promotions to GS-13 and above.

2. Do existing Federal employees in other series, such as GS-1105, have to meet the educational requirements to move into the 1102 field?

Yes. The 1102 standard applies to every civilian agency 1102 position and must be met by individuals entering the series from outside the Government, or from other series within the Government. If you are a current 1105, you must meet the educational requirements to lateral or promote into the 1102 series. What does this phrase mean: "Employees who occupy GS-1102 positions at grades 5 through 12 will be considered to meet the basic requirements for other GS-1102 positions up to and including those classified at GS-12"?

This statement is found in the "exceptions" paragraph for GS-5 through GS-12. Simply stated, it exempts employees hired by January 1, 2000 from the educational requirements for any position up to GS-12. If you meet neither the degree nor 24-hour requirement, you can still be promoted through GS-12. All individuals hired since January 1, 1998 should meet the educational requirements since they were hired under the former standard. However, many 1102s hired before January 1, 1998 do not have the education now required, and the exception accommodates those employees. Additionally, in the event someone was inadvertently hired into the 1102 series between January 1998 and January 2000 who did not actually meet the former standard, that employee would be covered by the exception.

The Waiver Provision

1. Who is the "Senior Procurement Executive" as referred to in the standard?

For purposes of this qualification standard, the "Senior Procurement Executive" is the highest career civil servant having responsibility for the procurement function within an agency (e.g., policy, procedures, workforce, etc.). Typically, this person is located in the agency headquarters office. This person may be different from the person designated as a "Senior Procurement Executive" pursuant to the OFPP Act (41 U.S.C. 414(3)) and as defined in the Federal Acquisition Regulation, who is a political appointee in some agencies. OFPP established the requirements of this standard with the intention that senior career procurement officials would possess the waiver authority.

2. Can the Senior Procurement Executive delegate the waiver authority to my contracting office so waivers can be issued locally?

No. The waiver authority is not delegable. The contracting office desiring to hire an applicant who needs a waiver would probably have to provide justification to the Senior Procurement Executive to aid the waiver decision, but only the Senior Procurement Executive can grant waivers.

3. Can the qualification requirements for positions in grades GS-5 through GS-12 be waived?

No. All new entrants into the GS-1102 career field at grades 5 through 12 must meet the qualification requirements. The requirements cannot be waived. However, if you are already an 1102 below grade GS-12 as of January 1, 2000, the "exception" language of the standard allows you to be promoted through GS-12 even if you do not have the education specified by the standard.

4. Do I need a waiver for any promotions up to GS-12?

No. A waiver is not necessary for promotions under grade GS-13 because all promotion candidates would either meet the standard or qualify for the "exception" at those lower grades. Waivers only exist for the requirements that apply to positions at GS-13 and above.

5. I do not meet the educational requirements for a position at GS-13 and above. Do I have to obtain a waiver to apply for a job?

No. The Senior Procurement Executive of the hiring agency must grant a waiver only if the agency wants to select you to fill a position. If the vacancy announcement indicates that waivers may be granted, you can apply for the position. The human resource office will forward your application for review, along with the other applications, with a note that one or more applicants may need a waiver.

6. How will vacancy announcements inform potential applicants about the possibility of a waiver?

When drafting vacancy announcements, human resource offices extract information from relevant qualification standards. In the case of 1102 positions, if an agency has decided for a specific vacancy that it will consider applicants who need a waiver, the vacancy announcement will state that candidates who do not meet the qualification requirements may be considered for a waiver in accordance with the standard. At the agency's option, the waiver may be applied to any of the educational, training, or experience requirements, or combination thereof, as specified in the vacancy announcement.

7. Can I get a waiver and "carry it with me" every time I apply for a job?

No. A waiver is the prerogative of the hiring agency and would be granted based on the unique circumstances of a hiring action. "Blanket" waivers do not exist.

8. If I receive a waiver for a GS-13 position, do I need a new waiver for a GS-14 promotion, even if it is in the same agency?

Yes. Waivers are specific to a selection action, so any selection for a future promotion would require another waiver if you still did not meet the qualification requirements.

9. Do I need a waiver to lateral?

The answer depends on the circumstances. A "lateral" is a reassignment into a position at the same grade. If you meet the qualification requirements, obviously you can lateral into positions within your own agency or other agencies without a waiver. If you do not meet the qualification requirements, the rules vary by grade and circumstances as described here. There is no waiver provision applicable to grades GS-5 through GS-12, only for grades GS-13 and above. Below GS-13, the "exceptions" language of the standard permits you to lateral into a position at any agency and then to continue to be eligible for promotions through GS-12. For grades GS-13 and above, the "exceptions" language permits you to lateral into positions at your agency or other agencies at the grade you occupy as of January 1, 2000 without a waiver. These "exceptions" are "grandfathering" features afforded to the existing workforce.

Suppose you are promoted into grade GS-13 or above after December 31, 1999 on the basis of a waiver. The need for a waiver for a subsequent lateral in this circumstance depends on whether you are changing agencies. If another agency wants to lateral you into one of its GS-13 or above positions, that agency must grant a waiver in order to give you the lateral. If your own agency (the one that gave you the waiver for the position you now occupy) wants to lateral you into another position within the agency, it may do so without processing a new waiver, even if geographic relocation is involved. For example, if you were promoted to a GS-13 Contract Specialist position at NIH-Bethesda MD based on a waiver, you could be selected for a lateral into a GS-13 Procurement Analyst position at CDC-Atlanta GA without the HHS Senior Procurement Executive granting another waiver (since both organizations are within HHS). However, you could not lateral from the NIH position into a GS-13 Contract Specialist position at EPA unless the EPA Senior Procurement Executive granted you another waiver.

10. Have criteria been established for issuing waivers?

No. The waiver authority was created to provide flexibility to accommodate unique circumstances faced in each agency, but it is expected that waivers will be the exception rather than the rule. Waivers will be considered on a case-by-case basis within an agency and granted in those exceptional cases where the best candidate for a specific job does not meet some requirement of the standard. For example, an agency could benefit from this authority when hiring for hard-to-fill positions or duty locations where it is difficult to attract qualified candidates. Another case may be where a strong performer is on a career ladder but fails to meet the requirements for promotion. Hiring is an agency responsibility, and the decision to grant a waiver of the qualification requirements is at the discretion of the agency's Senior Procurement Executive. Since you do not need a waiver to be considered for a position, and provided the announcement states waivers may be considered, hiring officials will review your qualifications and rate you against other applicants. If the hiring official considers you the best candidate for a position, presumably the official would seek a waiver to allow your selection.

11. Must the applicant specifically request a waiver when applying for a position where the vacancy announcement indicates waivers may be considered?

Submittal of the application implies a request for waiver when the applicant does not meet the requirements of the standard. Although the standard specifically identifies the Senior Procurement Executive as having waiver authority and responsibility, the likely practice will be that a selecting official prepares and submits a justification document to the Senior Procurement Executive relating the applicant's background and characteristics to the performance requirements of the job being filled. It is the agency's responsibility to document its decision to issue a waiver.

Relationship Between Civilian Agency and Defense Agency Positions

1. I am a civilian agency 1102. Can I qualify for a DoD position?

The qualification standard does not apply to defense agency positions; instead, applicable requirements are set forth in DAWIA. However, comparability exists between both sets of requirements. DoD positions through grade GS-13 require either a bachelor's degree OR 24 semester hours in identified fields, which is the same requirement the 1102 standard sets for civilian agency positions through grade GS-12. DoD has also created an "acquisition corps" to fill GS-14 and above positions, with GS-13s eligible for membership. The acquisition corps requires a bachelor's degree AND 24 semester hours, like the 1102 standard requires for GS-13 and above positions. If you meet the DAWIA educational requirements, you could qualify for DoD jobs. If you do not meet the educational requirements, but you have at least ten years of acquisition experience as of October 1991, you are grandfathered by DAWIA and could qualify for DoD jobs. If you do not meet the educational requirements or have enough experience to be grandfathered, you are not qualified for DoD jobs, even though you may be grandfathered for civilian agency positions under the qualification standard. However, DAWIA does allow DoD to waive the requirements to hire you.

2. I am a defense agency 1102. Can I qualify for a civilian agency position?

Like anyone else competing for a civilian agency position, generally you would have to meet the educational requirements of the standard for the position you seek in order to qualify. Suppose you do not meet the educational requirements. If you were an 1102 as of January 1, 2000, the standard allows you to obtain a lateral or a promotion into a civilian agency position at grades GS-5 through GS-12. At grades GS-13 and above, you could lateral only into a position at the same grade that you held as of January 1, 2000. For promotions into civilian agency positions at grades GS-13 and above, you are not qualified if you do not meet the educational requirements; hence, you could only receive such a promotion if the hiring agency issued you a waiver. Your "DoD grandfathering" does not extend to civilian agency positions and does not give you access to promotions outside DoD. After you are placed in a civilian agency position, you are subject to the qualification standard for future civilian agency promotions. If you lateral into a civilian agency position below GS-12, you would be eligible for promotions through GS-12 even though you do not meet the educational requirements. For promotions to grades GS-13 and above, you would have to obtain a waiver if you do not meet the educational requirements.

Appendix F

GUIDELINES FOR CREDITING CONTINUING EDUCATION/TRAINING ACTIVITIES

The Office of Acquisition Management and Policy recommends that OPDIVS/Agencies use the following guidelines for crediting continuing education/training activities. OFPP Policy Letter 97-01 issued September 12, 1997 states that contract specialists and contracting officers in the GS-1102 series who have satisfied the mandatory and agency/assignment-specific training shall take an equivalent of at least 40 hours of continuing education/training every two years. According to the Policy Letter, this type of training may include, but is not limited to, agency-sponsored training and management/executive seminars, special job and/or professional association-related projects and/or participation in seminars/workshops, or other appropriate developmental activities. HHS requires GS-1102's to complete 40 hours of continuing education/training activities every two years, and GS-1105's and GS-1106's to complete 24 hours of continuing education/training activities every two years, which is in addition to the requirement to the for the Department's mandatory training.

The chart provided below is a guide to help the SPE, the HCA, or the designee determine the appropriate hours for various activities. This chart is only a guide; the SPE, the HCA, or designee has the final authority regarding the activities and the number of hours to be granted. Credit is granted for the year in which the activity is completed. Not all training providers issue certificates based on hours. Some training providers issue certificates based on continuing education units (CEUs) or continuing learning points (CLP). When converting to hours, one CEU equals 10 hours of instruction, and one CLP equals 1 hour of instruction. **Note: All activities may earn points only in the year accomplished, awarded or published.**

Suggested Activities	Recommended Number of Hours of Credit
Active Association Membership (i.e., National Contract Management Association, Institute of Supply Management)	5 hours per each active year of membership
Publication of acquisition-related articles, text books, technical papers, etc.	10 hours per article
Conference presentations	2 hours for every 60 minutes of presenting; maximum of 20 points per year
Formal mentor training, teaching, lecturing, team leadership activities	1 hour for every 60 minutes of instruction; maximum of 5 hours per year.

Acquisition-related patents	10 to 15 hours
Academic Courses:	
Quarter Hour	10 per Quarter Hour
Semester Hour	10 per Semester Hour
Continuing Education Unit (CEU)	10 per CEU
Equivalency Exams	Same points as awarded for the course
Professional examination, license, and/or certification (i.e., Certified Professional Contracts Manager (CPCM), Certified Federal Contracts Manager)	10 to 30 hours
Rotational Assignment/Detail	
12 months	40 hours per year
9 months	35 hours per year
6 months	30 hours per year
3 months	20 hours per year
2 months	15 hours per year
1 month	10 hours per year
Mentor training, teaching/lecturing, team leadership activities	1 hour for every 60 minutes of instruction; maximum of 20 hours per year
Workshop Participation	1 hour for every 60 minutes; maximum of 8 hours per day and 20 hours per year
Symposia/Conference Attendance	.5 hour for every 60 minutes; maximum of 4 hours per day and 20 hours per year

Appendix G

OFPP POLICY LETTER 92-3, "Procurement Professionalism Program/Policy - Training for Contracting Personnel"

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

Office of Federal Procurement Policy June 24, 1992

Policy Letter 92-3

TO THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

SUBJECT: Procurement Professionalism Program Policy - Training for Contracting Personnel

1. Purpose. To establish a Government-wide standard and associated policies for skill-based training in performing contracting and purchasing duties.
 2. Authority. This Policy Letter is issued pursuant to Section 6(a) of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) Act [Public Law 93-400], as amended, (41 U.S.C. 405(a)). It establishes a standard for procurement systems (which includes the professional development of procurement personnel) under the authority of Section 6(d)(2) of the OFPP Act, as amended, (41 U.S.C. 405(d)(2)).
 3. Background. The quality of contracting actions depends largely on the professional skills of the Government procurement workforce to help meet agency mission needs. Improved management will help ensure Government interests are effectively represented within a changing legislative and regulatory environment.
- In July 1990, this office established an inter-agency group to develop a detailed Procurement Professionalism Plan for agencies to identify a comprehensive program of workforce improvement. Four subgroups devised recommended actions on the recruitment, training, retention and the evaluation of performance of the procurement workforce. The Defense Systems Management College led the training subgroup, which identified several opportunities for improvement and efficiencies when coupled with an enhanced Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI).
- Among other things, the training subgroup strongly recommended competency based education for Federal contracting and purchasing personnel. Competency-based education refers to programs that provide an opportunity for the trainee to develop and demonstrate an appropriate level of skill (given the characteristics of the agency's overall mission) at performing a duty. The training subgroup recommendations were used in formulating this policy.

This Policy Letter establishes a standard set of contracting competencies after repeated and extensive coordination with Executive agencies through the FAI. The FAI conducted Government-wide research from 1977 to 1979 to identify contract management tasks. The survey used had a very high participation rate of almost half

of all contract specialists in all Executive agencies at the time. During the period 1980 - 1985, FAI worked with representatives of Procurement Executives to select duties and tasks for training. The selected duties collectively constitute the body of Contracting "competencies." Subsequently, the FAI developed "Units of Instruction" for core competencies, each of which is a blueprint for training one of the selected duties both in the classroom and on-the-job. In 1992, the FAI published these "Units of Instruction" under the title Contract Specialist Workbook. The 1992 edition covers almost 80 duties (see [Attachment I](#) for a summary list) and more than 800 related tasks. Every contracting official in the Federal Government is expected to attain an appropriate level of skill (refer to [Attachment 1](#)) at performing all contracting competencies identified by FAI. However, agencies may modify this standard by assigning levels of learning commensurate with agency needs and adding agency-level competencies.

4. Policy. Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies shall ensure that the procurement career management program required under Section 16 of the OFPP Act (41 U.S.C. 414(4):

a. Requires personnel in the contracting occupational series (General Schedule Series 1102), and uniformed personnel in comparable positions, to complete course work and related on-the-job training necessary to attain an appropriate level of skill (given the unique missions, policies and workload of the agency) in each Contract Management duty represented by a Unit of Instruction in the FAI Contract Specialist Workbook. These may be supplemented with additional contracting duties and tasks by the agency head. Alternative means may be used for these individuals to demonstrate their competence to perform required duties (e.g. through practicums, equivalency examinations, or managerial reviews of an individual's current level of skill in each duty);

b. Requires civilian and uniformed personnel appointed under Section 1.6 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) as contracting officers with authority to award or administer contracts above the small purchase threshold to complete course work and related on-the-job training necessary to attain an appropriate level of skill (given the unique missions, policies, and workload of the agency) in each Contract Management duty represented by a Unit of Instruction in the FAI Contract Specialist Workbook, or otherwise demonstrate their competence to perform those duties through alternative means;

c. Requires personnel in the purchasing occupational series (General Schedule Series 1105), other civilian and uniformed personnel performing purchasing duties, and individuals with contracting authority at or under the small purchase threshold, or with authority to place delivery orders at any dollar level, to complete training in duties related to making small purchases under FAR Part 13 and placing delivery orders;

d. Provides for a system for certifying and reporting the completion of all required courses and on-the-job training;

e. Encourages self-development activities of contracting personnel to stay current with the acquisition knowledge base for professional growth throughout their careers, and

f. Directs the Senior Procurement Executive to designate a procurement career manager with authority for agency-wide policy and oversight responsibility for the procurement career management program, including authority and responsibility for working in cooperation with other agencies through the FAI to make the most effective and efficient use of existing instructional material or facilities and minimize duplication of effort in the development and delivery of training and education.

5. Implementation. The FAI is developing instructional materials in the contracting competencies to support comprehensive training in formal classroom settings as well as at the work site and through on-the-job training.

FAI training courses now available or under development include "Introduction to Contracting," "Procurement Planning," "Sealed Bidding," "Negotiation Process," "Price Analysis," "Cost Analysis," "Advanced Cost or Price Analysis," "Basic Contract Administration," "Construction Contracting," "Contracting for Federal Information Processing Resources," and "Source Section." These courses will be offered by the General Services Administration Interagency Training Center.

As courses are completed, the FAI will provide the instructional materials for that course (in hard copy or electronic forms) to agencies for incorporation (in whole or in part, with any necessary agency-specific tailoring) in their respective courses. An agency may modify the Contract Specialist Workbook, and associated FAI instructional materials, to reflect the unique missions, policies and workload of the agency.

The Director of FAI shall further assist agency training programs through the following actions:

- Maintain the Contract Specialist Workbook as a Government-wide standard for the professional development of contracting personnel, and distribute copies of Procurement Executives.
- Recommend minimum Government-wide training requirements and goals to the Administrator, OFPP.
- Assist agencies, and encourage cooperation among agencies, in the development of instructional materials to implement the training requirements of Section 4 above.
- Advise the Administrator, OFPP, on the effectiveness of Federal training programs to develop competence in the performance of acquisition-related duties and tasks.
- Establish joint programs with other Federal procurement training facilities or contracting activities under Section 4103 of Title 5, United States Code, to help Federal agencies implement provisions of this Policy Letter.
- Assist colleges and universities in establishing procurement and acquisition courses as part of continuing education, associate, baccalaureate, and graduate programs.
- Review the acquisition courses of colleges and universities, identify and document the levels of learning attained in contracting duties and tasks, and recommend academic courses to Procurement Executives that may be substituted for Government training in those duties and tasks.

6. Reporting Requirements. Within 90 days of the effective date of this Policy Letter, the Senior Procurement Executive of each agency is to advise the Administrator, OFPP, of the agency's procurement career management program required by 41 U.S.C. 414(4) and implementing Section 4 of this letter, including:

- (1) a description of the agency's plan for prescribing and providing the training required;
- (2) a description of actions taken or planned to assess the extent to which training courses now provide, or will provide, skill training in the Units of Instruction of the FAI Contract Specialist Workbook, including the level of skill in each Contract Management duty that the training will be designed to attain;
- (3) a description of the agency's system for certifying and reporting the completion of training requirements, and
- (4) the name and position of the individual designated under Section 4.f. above.

Periodic reports on the procurement career management program may be requested by the Administrator, OFPP, thereafter.

7. Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Councils. The Defense Acquisition Regulatory Council and the Civilian Agency Acquisition Council shall conduct a thorough review of the relevant parts of the FAR to (1) assure that no unintended encumbrances to this Policy Letter are contained therein, and (2) that the policies established by this Policy Letter are fully reflected in the FAR within 210 days of the effective date of this Policy Letter. Issuance of final regulations within this 210-day period shall be considered issuance "in a timely manner" as prescribed in 41 U.S.C. § 405(b).

8. Judicial Review. This Policy Letter is not intended to provide a constitutional or statutory interpretation of any kind, and it is not intended, and should not be construed, to create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any person. It is intended only to provide policy guidance to agencies in the exercise of their discretion concerning Federal contracting. Thus, this Policy Letter is not intended, and should not be construed, to create any substantive or procedural basis on which to challenge any agency action or inaction on the ground that such action or inaction was not in accordance with this Policy Letter.

9. Effective Date. This Policy Letter is effective 30 days after the date of issuance.

10. Information. Questions or inquiries about this Policy Letter should be directed to Mr. Wayne Wittig, Deputy Associate Administrator, OFPP, 725 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20503, telephone (202) 395-6803.

Allan V. Burman
Administrator

Appendix H

OFPP POLICY LETTER 97-01, "Procurement System, Education, Training, and Experience Requirements for Acquisition Personnel"

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

Office of Federal Procurement Policy
September 12, 1997

POLICY LETTER NO. 97-01

TO THE HEADS OF CIVILIAN EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Procurement System Education, Training and Experience Requirements for Acquisition Personnel

1. Purpose. The purpose of this Letter is to implement Section 37 of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act, as amended (hereafter referred to as the Act).
2. Authority. These policies and procedures are issued pursuant to Section 37(b)(3) of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) Act, as amended, (41 U.S.C. 401 et seq.), which directs the Administrator, Office of Federal Procurement Policy, to issue policies to promote uniform implementation of Section 37 of the Act by executive agencies, with due regard for differences in program requirements among agencies that may be appropriate and warranted in view of the agency mission.
3. Background. Beginning with the report of the Commission on Government Procurement in 1972, every major study of the Federal acquisition process has recommended improvements in the management of the acquisition workforce, because "people are the most critical part of any effective procurement process". Subsequently, Congress directed every Federal department and agency to develop and maintain a procurement career management program to ensure an adequate professional workforce (section 16(4) of the Act). In Section 6(d)(5) of the Act, Congress further directed the OFPP Administrator, through the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI), to foster and promote the development of a professional acquisition workforce Government-wide. Pursuant to these statutory mandates, OFPP Policy Letter 92-3 (implemented in section 1.603-1 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation) establishes Government-wide policies and standards for skill-based training in performing contracting duties and tasks. In 1990 Congress passed the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) which established education, training and experience requirements for entry and advancement in the acquisition career field within the Department of Defense (DOD). In 1996, Congress amended the OFPP Act to establish comparable education, training, and experience requirements for civilian agencies.
4. Applicability. This Letter applies to all executive agencies, except those subject to the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (chapter 87 of title 10, United States Code).
5. Responsibility for Acquisition Career Management Programs. Subject to the authority, direction, and control of the head of an executive agency, the Senior Procurement Executive of the agency

shall carry out all powers, functions, and duties of the head of the agency with respect to implementation of this Letter. The Senior Procurement Executive shall ensure that the policies of the head of the agency, established in accordance with this Letter, are implemented throughout the agency.

6. Establishment of Agency-wide Policies and Procedures. Agency heads, after consultation with the OFPP Administrator, shall establish department or agency-wide policies and procedures pursuant to the provisions of the Act. The Senior Procurement Executive of each affected agency shall advise the Administrator, within 180 days from the date of this Letter, on agency plans for issuing such policies and procedures for the effective management (including accessions, education, training and career development) of the acquisition workforce. Agency heads, unless otherwise advised by the OFPP Administrator within thirty (30) days after such notification, shall proceed with planned implementation activities. To the maximum extent practicable, these acquisition workforce policies and procedures shall be uniform in their implementation throughout the agency. The head of each department and agency shall issue such policies and procedures by May 1, 1998.

7. Workforce Coverage. For purposes of this Letter, the acquisition workforce of an agency includes:

- a. All positions in the General Schedule (GS-1102) Contracting Series and non-DOD uniformed personnel in comparable positions.
- b. All Contracting Officers regardless of General Schedule series with authority to obligate funds above the micropurchase threshold.
- c. All positions in GS-1105 Purchasing Series.
- d. All Contracting Officer Representatives/Contracting Officer Technical Representatives, or equivalent positions.

The Administrator of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy will consult with the agencies in the identification of other acquisition related positions.

8. Management Information System. Agencies are required to collect and maintain standardized information on implementation of the provisions of section 37 of the Act. The Federal Acquisition Institute will work with the agencies and the Office of Personnel Management to establish and prescribe standard data elements for the purposes of this statutory requirement. To the maximum extent practicable, such management information systems will conform to the standards established by the Office of Personnel Management for the Central Personnel Data File. These systems shall include a data element on waivers under paragraph 9.g. of this Letter.

9. Career Development.

- a. Career Paths - Agencies shall identify and publish model career paths or "road maps" to ensure that contracting and other personnel interested in pursuing careers in contracting are knowledgeable of the education, training, and experience requirements for employment, progression and advancement to the most senior positions in the contracting field within the agency.
- b. Critical Skills - For each career path, the critical acquisition-related duties and tasks employees must be competent to perform at the full performance and senior levels shall be established by the agencies and shall include coverage of duties and tasks as identified by the Director of the Federal Acquisition Institute. OFPP Policy Letter 92-3 established Government-wide standards for these purposes.
- c. Mandatory Education - The education requirements for acquisition positions are established by the OFPP Administrator, in coordination with the Office of Personnel Management, as prescribed by section 37(g) of the Act. The education requirements for GS-1102 positions have been established in coordination with the Office of Personnel Management.

d. Mandatory Training and Experience - Experience requirements for GS-1102 positions are identified in the OPM Contract Specialist (GS-1102) Qualification Standard. In addition to the following mandatory training, agencies may require assignment-specific training for personnel in selected positions, as appropriate:

(1) All personnel in the GS-1102 Contracting Series and Contracting Officers (regardless of General Schedule Series) with authority to obligate funds above the micropurchase threshold shall complete the mandatory and related on-the-job training, as prescribed in OFPP Policy Letter 92-3.

(2) All Personnel in the Purchasing occupational series (General Schedule Series 1105), other civilian and uniformed personnel performing purchasing duties, and individuals with contracting authority at or below the simplified acquisition threshold, or with authority to place delivery orders at any dollar level, shall complete training in acquiring goods and services under FAR Part 13 and placing delivery orders.

(3) Contracting Officer Representatives/Contracting Officer Technical Representatives (CORs/COTRs) - The core training for CORs/COTRs must cover the competencies as contained in the FAI COR/COTR Workbook. Agencies may consider any training methodology to satisfy this requirement, i.e., classroom, correspondence, computer-based instruction, etc.

(4) Other acquisition related occupations - Training for these participants in the procurement process will be established as such occupations are identified by the OFPP Administrator.

e. Skills Currency - Agencies shall establish policies that require an equivalent of at least 40 hours of continuing education/training every two years for contract specialists (GS-1102 series) and Contracting Officers who have satisfied the mandatory and agency/assignment-specific training for the purpose of maintaining currency of acquisition knowledge and skills. This may include, but is not limited to, agency sponsored training and management/executive seminars, special job and/or professional association related projects and/or participation in seminars/workshops, or other appropriated developmental activities.

f. Tuition Assistance - The head of an executive agency may provide tuition reimbursement in education (including a full-time course of study leading to a degree) in accordance with section 4107 of title 5, United States Code, for personnel serving in acquisition positions in the agency.

g. Waiver Authority for GS-1102 Education Requirements. The agency Senior Procurement Executive may, based on demonstrated analytical and decision making capabilities, job performance, and qualifying experience, waive one of the two sets of education requirements for an applicant for a GS-13 and above position based on a certification (see Contract Specialist (GS-1102) Qualification Standard) that the applicant possesses significant potential for advancement to levels of greater responsibility and authority. This waiver should be utilized only in rare and unusual circumstances, i.e., when there are no qualified candidates readily available. The use of this authority should be adequately documented and exercised on a case-by-case basis.

h. Funding Levels - The head of an executive agency shall set forth separately the funding levels requested for education/training of the acquisition workforce in the budget justification documents submitted in support of the President's budget submitted to Congress under section 1105 of title 31, United States Code. Funds appropriated for education/training under this section may not be obligated for any other purpose.

i. Program Evaluation - The OFPP Administrator shall evaluate the implementation of these provisions by executive agencies.

10. FAI Responsibilities. The OFPP Administrator is responsible for providing for and directing the activities of the FAI. The FAI is in turn responsible for a wide range of career management support activities associated with maintaining the inventory of acquisition personnel competencies for use by Federal and private sector

education/training communities and providing specific and general technical assistance to Federal agencies in improving the quality of the acquisition workforce.

As courseware (including Workbooks) are developed and/or updated, these products will be made available through the FAI Homepage. The FAI Homepage address is: <http://www.gsa.gov/staff/v/trng.htm>. The FAI specific responsibilities relating to the provisions of this Letter are to:

- a. foster and promote the development of a professional acquisition workforce;
- b. promote and coordinate Government-wide research and studies to improve the procurement process and the laws, policies, methods, regulations, procedures, and forms relating to acquisition by the executive agencies;
- c. collect and analyze acquisition workforce data from the Office of Personnel Management, the heads of executive agencies and, through periodic surveys of individual employees;
- d. periodically analyze acquisition career fields to identify critical competencies, duties, tasks, and related academic prerequisites, skills, and knowledge;
- e. Coordinate and assist agencies in identifying and recruiting highly qualified candidates for acquisition fields;
- f. develop instructional material for acquisition personnel in coordination with private and public acquisition colleges and training facilities;
- g. evaluate the effectiveness of training and career development programs for acquisition personnel;
- h. promote the establishment and utilization of academic programs by colleges and universities in acquisition fields;
- i. facilitate, to the extent requested by agencies, interagency intern and training programs; and
- j. perform other career management and research functions as directed by the Administrator.

11. Information Contact. Questions regarding this Policy Letter should be directed to Richard C. Loeb, Executive Secretary, Office of Federal Procurement Policy, 202-395-3254, facsimile, 202-395-5105. The address is Office of Federal Procurement Policy, 725 17th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20503.

12. Judicial Review. This Policy Letter is not intended to provide a constitutional or statutory interpretation of any kind and it is not intended, and should not be construed, to create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any persons. It is intended only to provide policy guidance to agencies in the exercise of their discretion concerning Federal contracting. Thus, this Policy Letter is not intended, and should not be construed, to create any substantive or procedural basis on which to challenge any agency action or inaction on the ground that such action or inaction was not in accordance with this Policy Letter.

13. Effective Date. This Policy Letter is effective 30 days after the date of issuance.

Steven Kelman
Administrator

Appendix I

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP)

The purpose of the HHS Acquisition Workforce Career Management Program is to provide increased opportunity for career advancement for HHS acquisition workforce members and to enhance employees' qualifications and skills. Completion of an IDP by an employee and approval of an IDP by the employee's supervisor does not guarantee that an opening will be available nor does it guarantee that an employee will be promoted. The IDP will not be used as a means to formally assess the employee's performance. The IDP is a tool that will be used for career development purposes. The supervisor's signature on the IDP does not constitute the supervisor's official approval of individual course requests. The employee should include realistic time frames for completing actions.

Supervisors should consider the employee's performance from the following perspective and determine which of the areas listed below may need development:

1. New skills, competencies, education/training that will be needed in the upcoming evaluation period.
2. Areas of performance/skills that need to be improved.
3. Strengths that, if enhanced, may contribute to the overall mission of the organization and increased productivity.

Supervisors are encouraged to support the employee's development by:

- Acting as a resource for the employee's career development by providing training opportunities and allowing employees to pursue professional development activities.
- Providing feedback on the employee's performance in his/her current job and identifying the employee's strengths and areas that need improvement.
- Helping the employee to assess his/her advancement potential.

To assist in completion of this IDP, reference Appendix K-1 for a listing of course and work-related technical competencies and Appendix J of this handbook for a listing of general competencies. The FAI's "Report on General Competencies for the Federal Acquisition Workforce", dated May 2003, is available at the following website: <http://www.fai.gov/pubres/pdfs/compRpt-General0519.pdf>. This report explains FAI's efforts to initiate a competency-based career management program. FAI realized that contract specialists must have not only technical competencies, but general competencies, such as effective interpersonal and communication skills, customer service skills, problem solving, and the ability to both lead and be a team player, so that agencies can recruit and select high-performing applicants who function as business managers. For additional information on competencies, see Section F of Chapter 4.

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR MEMBERS OF THE ACQUISITION WORKFORCE

Instructions: Please complete all questions and information and work with and obtain approval of your immediate supervisor(s). (see Section D of Chapter 1 for supervisor's responsibilities in the IDP process). Completion of the IDP is not required but is highly encouraged. If needed, please attach additional sheets.

- A. Employee's Name:

- B. Current Position, Series and Grade:

- C. OPDIV/Agency:

- D. Current Certification Level: Current Warrant Level and date issued:
(specify any restrictions in the warrant)

- E. Career goals and objectives (include positions and classifications):
 - 1. Short Range (within the next year)
(Describe positions and/or classifications, education/training, etc.
that are your goal(s) or objective(s))

 - 2. Long Range (within 3-5 years)
(Describe positions and/or job classifications, education/training, etc.
that are your goal(s) or objective(s))

- F. What developmental goals or objectives are you specifically seeking?
 - 1. Personal development (Describe)

2. Describe subject matter development. List courses to be taken.

3. What are my strengths for pursuing these goals and objectives?

4. What areas do I need to improve upon or develop to achieve these goals and objectives?

G. What methods are proposed to meet the goal(s) and objective(s) described above?

1. Formal training: (Describe training programs/plans).

2. Developmental assignments: (Describe any special assignments, training within a department or special area, rotational/developmental opportunities, obtain an acquisition role model or mentor, be a mentor/coach, etc.) that would assist you in reaching your goals or objectives (include dates and times).

3. What is the purpose of pursuing these developmental activities/assignments?

H. Skill Development: (For example, my goal(s) or objective(s) involve developing the following competencies...). (What knowledge, skills or developmental activities or competencies would help me prepare for opportunities or roles that I may have or would like to have in the future)?

- I. Results expected from achievement of goal(s) and objective(s)
- J. What interests me most about my organization and my field?
- K. Goals/objectives I have achieved since my previous IDP dated _____.
- L. What obstacles might prevent me from achieving my goals in the time frame specified? What can I or my organization do to help me overcome these obstacles?
- M. Please include any other information that would assist in explaining your proposed IDP.
- N. Resources I will need:
- O. Supervisor's comments on the employee's IDP and the feasibility of the plan.
- P. Additional Remarks:
- Q. Employee's signature and date: _____
- Immediate supervisor's signature and date: _____
- Second level supervisor's signature and date (optional): _____

Appendix J

ASSESSMENT OF GENERAL COMPETENCIES

(To be filled out by the supervisor assessing the employee's general competencies (for the employee's current evaluation period)).

Instructions: Please fill out only those competencies that are applicable. If a competency does not apply to the employee, please indicate N/A. The competencies in this assessment were developed by the Federal Acquisition Institute and are based on the May 2003 Federal Acquisition Institute's "Report on General Competencies for the Federal Acquisition Workforce." The full report is available at the following website:
<http://www.fai.gov/pubres/pdfs/CompRpt-General0519.pdf>.

Note: The completion of this form is optional. The data gathered from the assessment of general competencies may be used in closing the gap in competencies and determining what skills need to be improved. The data gathered from completion of this appendix will not be used in the employee's formal performance evaluation.

	To what extent does the employee exhibit this competency in his/her work-related duties? ((1) not at all...(5) to a great extent)					
Competencies	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Reading – understands and interprets written material, rules, regulations, instructions, reports; applies what is learned from written material.						
Writing – recognizes or uses correct English grammar, punctuation, and spelling; communicates information in a succinct and organized manner, produces written information that is appropriate for the intended audience.						
Arithmetic – performs computations using whole numbers, fractions, decimals, percentages.						
Learning – uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills, uses training, feedback, etc., for self-learning and development.						
Memory – recalls information that has been presented previously.						
Oral Communication – expresses information to individuals or groups effectively, taking into account the audience and nature of the information; makes clear and convincing presentations, listens to others; attends to nonverbal cues.						
Interpersonal Skills – shows understanding, courtesy, tact, empathy; develops and maintains relationships; deals with difficult people; relates well to people from varied backgrounds; is sensitive to individual differences.						
Customer Service – works with customers to assess needs, provide assistance, resolve problems, satisfy expectations; knows products and services.						
Teamwork – encourages and facilitates cooperation, pride, trust; fosters commitment; works with others to achieve goals.						
Reasoning – identifies rules, principles, or relationships that explain facts, data or other information; analyzes information and makes correct inferences or accurate conclusions.						

Problem Solving – identifies problems; determines accuracy and relevance of information; uses sound judgment to generate and evaluate alternatives, and make recommendations.						
Attention to Detail – is thorough when performing work and conscientious about attending to detail.						
Decision-Making – makes sound, well informed, and objective decisions; perceives the impact and implications of decisions; commits to action, even in uncertain situations, to accomplish organizational goals; causes change.						
Math Reasoning – solves practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical and statistical techniques.						
Planning and Evaluating – organizes work, sets priorities, determines resource requirements, determines goals and strategies; coordinates with other organizations, monitors progress; evaluates outcomes.						
Integrity/Honesty – contributes to maintaining the integrity of the organization; displays high standards of ethical conduct and understands the impact of violating these standards on an organization, self, and others; is trustworthy.						
Self-Management/Initiative – sets well-defined and realistic personal goals; displays a high level of initiative, effort, and commitment towards completing assignments in a timely manner; works with minimal supervision; is motivated to achieve; demonstrate responsible behavior.						
Flexibility – is open to change and new information; adapts behavior or work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacle; effectively deals with ambiguity.						
Creative Thinking – uses imagination to develop new insights into situations and applies innovative solutions to problems; design new methods where established methods and procedures are not applicable or are unavailable.						
Information Management – identifies a need for and knows where or how to gather information; organizes and maintains information or information management systems.						
Contracting/Procurement – exhibits knowledge of various types of contracts, techniques for contracting or procurement, and contract negotiation and administration.						
Influencing/Negotiating – persuades other to accept recommendations, cooperate, or change their behavior; works with others towards an agreement; negotiates to find mutually acceptable solutions.						

Appendix K-1

ASSESSMENT OF CONTRACTING TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

Instructions: Appendix K-1 is used as a worksheet and is not required for submission in the acquisition certification application process. The employee, employee's supervisor, and a reviewing official are required to complete Appendix K-2 as part of application process for acquisition certification. Appendix K-2 is a certification form indicating that the employee has successfully achieved the applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies for certification at a particular level. The information obtained from completion of these appendices may be useful in determining gaps in employee's skills.

HHS Acquisition Certification Level I(a)

Basic Simplified Acquisition Procedures and Advanced Simplified Acquisition Procedures

Competency	Achieved competency through education/training?		Achieved competency through work experience?
	Yes	No (If no, when do you expect to achieve competency?)	Work Description/Justification (If no, when do you expect to achieve competency?)
Correctly demonstrate the ability to choose applicable regulatory guidance.			
Identify the authority and responsibility of the contracting officer and/or buyer and the environment in which they operate.			
Identify and correctly state the policies for standards of conduct and/or fraud.			
Determine whether a simplified acquisition package is accurate and complete.			
Correctly choose the required source for an acquisition.			
Correctly distinguish the requirements for establishing, maintaining, and retaining a contract file.			
Identify sources of supply and determine small business and competition requirements.			
Identify the different simplified acquisition procedures and contract			

types for a requirement within the simplified acquisition threshold.			
Identify presolicitation considerations, determine method of publication and price related factors for a requirement.			
Prepare a solicitation for a simplified acquisition requirement.			
Explain the procedures for handling quotes, amending or canceling solicitations, and responding to inquiries concerning solicitations.			
Correctly research and document a determination of responsibility/nonresponsibility.			
Apply the correct evaluation criteria and select a contractor for award.			
Summarize the methods of award and prepare calls against BPAs.			
Distinguish between personal and nonpersonal services, identify whether the Service Contract Act applies, and recognize when to incorporate wage determinations in the solicitation.			
Correctly identify unique A&E or construction acquisition policies and procedures.			
Recognize the proper policies and procedures for acquiring information technology resources.			
Identify the appropriate administrative action and response to changing post-award circumstances.			
Apply appropriate action in response to quality assurance functions.			
Correctly choose acceptable contractual remedy.			
Correctly identify the necessary actions for contract close-out.			
Determine whether competition is required for a small purchase and identify and establish sources of supplies and services to conduct market			

research.			
Select the most appropriate method of purchasing.			
Determine the most appropriate method of solicitation, e.g., oral versus written requests for quotation.			
Apply the procedures for small business/small purchase set asides.			
Describe how to publicize proposed small purchases.			
Evaluate and respond to pre-award inquiries concerning RFQs or oral solicitations.			
Advise and assist requiring activities in formulating purchase requests for small purchases and determine the need for Government furnished property or material.			
Advise and assist requiring activities in verifying that sufficient funds are available prior to a small purchase.			
Conduct oral solicitations and prepare RFQs.			
Evaluate quotations including such aspects as considering late quotations and determining the lowest total price quotation.			
Determine the need for discussions on small purchases.			
Recommend contractor for award of a small purchase.			
Apply procedures for placing orders and/or making awards under small purchase thresholds.			
Possess general knowledge of the small purchase mission, system, process, organization, management, statutory, and regulatory foundation, roles and responsibilities, and standards of conduct and skill in amending RFQs and extending the solicitation period.			
Explain how to issue orders against			

existing contracts/agreements.			
Determine whether the contractor is progressing with the schedule and complying with other small purchase clauses; understand inspection/acceptance procedures, requirements, and practices.			
Modify purchase orders and other small purchase awards through administrative changes, change orders, or supplemental agreements.			
Provide post-award assistance to vendors on small purchases.			
Maintain small purchase files.			
Initiate adverse actions for fraud, collusion, etc., involving small purchases.			
Determine whether delays are excusable and grant performance time extensions for excusable delays in small purchases.			
Apply techniques and instruments for dealing with a contractor's failure to perform.			
Cancel or terminate small purchase awards.			
Develop the Government's position on protests of small purchases.			
Identify and correctly apply the policies of ethical behavior.			
Identify the procedures for processing unsolicited proposals.			
Identify and establish sources of supplies or services, conduct market research and determine competition requirements for simplified acquisitions.			
Determine which solicitation considerations apply for simplified acquisitions.			
Analyze responses in sufficient detail to prepare a price reasonableness determination or recommend further			

action by the buyer.			
Demonstrate the ability to prepare for and complete the negotiation action; identify and resolve mistakes and formulate the final price in an economic price adjustment situation.			
Demonstrate the correct procedure for handling post-award mistakes and conducting debriefings and/or post-award orientations.			
Perform contract administration functions to resolve post award problems.			
Distinguish when contract modifications are necessary.			
Identify the procedures for pursuing government remedies.			
Understand the correct procedures for handling pre- and post-award protests and review the process of analyzing claims and recommending settlement positions.			
List the procedures necessary to collect contractor debts and pay the contractor.			

HHS Acquisition Certification Level I(b)

Introduction to Contracting and Acquisition Planning I

Competency	Achieved competency through education/training?		Achieved competency through work experience?
	Yes	No (If no, when do you expect to achieve competency?)	Work Description/Justification: (If no, when do you expect to achieve competency?)
Recognize the roles, procedures, and principles of contracting. Define business relationships.			
Market Research - Review acquisition histories. Obtain data from acquisition histories and other sources. Identify and collect market data related to: (1) analyzing the requirement, determining the extent of competition; (2) planning source selection; (3) selecting terms and conditions for the solicitation; (4) soliciting offers; (5) evaluating offers with special attention to price-related data.			
Apply the elements of forecasting. Collect data from requirements managers on future acquisitions. Plan and organize to meet the anticipated requirements.			
Services - Screen purchase request for personal services or advisory and assistance services. Determine whether there is sufficient justification, approvals, and legal authority to make			

acquisitions. Where applicable, request and critique wage determinations for incorporation into the solicitation.			
Purchase Requests - Review the purchase request (PR) to ensure completeness and accuracy, obtain additional information to complete the PR, notify the program of any corrections, accept the PR and assure funding, review the Independent Government Cost Estimate, establish the contract file and collect data through the use of market research.			
Select the appropriate method of procurement (SAP, sealed bidding, or RFPs).			
Discuss the three types of competition requirements (full and open, full and open after exclusion of sources, and other than full and open). Determine the extent of competition.			
Prepare and obtain signatures on a JOFOC, if necessary.			
Identify elements of a protest.			
Determine debriefing requirement so that an applicable debriefing can be conducted.			
Determine the responsibility or nonresponsibility of a prospective contractor.			
Review and critique requirements documents and related elements of the purchase request so that			

applicability of FAR Part 12 can be determined.			
Determine the type of funding, the date by which funds must be available, and whether the amount of funding is realistic. Verify that adequate funds have been committed.			
Distinguish among types of services.			
Source Lists - Describe and document steps for selection of sources. Screen purchase requests against required sources of supply, or develop and maintain an open market source list. Choose sources and types of market information needed for the acquisition.			
Identify the need to furnish Government property or to authorize use of Government sources of supply by the contractor.			
Competition Requirements - Determine the proper level of competition and prepare documentation as required.			
Procurement Plans - Identify the procurement plan requirements. Distinguish when, why, and how a procurement plan is implemented. Determine the appropriate method of procurement and what and how evaluation factors should be applied. Establish milestones for solicitation, evaluation, and award tasks. Identify responsible parties and assign tasks. As applicable, assist managers			

in preparing a written formal acquisition plan.			
Select the Contract Type (to solicit) - Identify the type of contract that will best mitigate expected risks.			
Select the appropriate method of procurement (SAP, RFP, IFB, etc.).			
Publicizing Proposed Procurement - Prepare CBD notice or other electronic publication method.			
Describe the basic types of contracts and agreements.			
Determine whether to solicit for lease, purchase, or both.			
Determine the need to conduct a pre-proposal conference and/or amend/cancel the solicitation.			
Electronic commerce - Apply available technology to enhance the quality of work products/services.			
Amending/Canceling Quotes - Prepare and issue any required amendments.			
Processing IFBs - Receive and control bids submitted against an Invitation for Bid. Open and abstract bids.			
Processing RFPs - Prepare and issue solicitations, resolve late proposals, evaluate proposals, and make determination of best value.			
Processing RFQs - Prepare and issue RFQ, resolve late quotes, and determine best			

value. Make determination of price reasonableness.			
Apply Past Performance, Technical, and other Nonprice Factors - Review proposed evaluation factors and determine whether to award on lowest price or greatest value.			
Unpriced Contracts (letter contracts & unpriced purchase orders) - Determine when it is necessary to use a letter contract or an unpriced order; draft letter contract or unpriced order.			
Contract Financing for Commercial Contracts - Analyze financing options for incorporation into the solicitation.			
Noncommercial Contract Financing - Analyze financing options for incorporation into the solicitation.			
Bonds - Determine whether bonds are required or necessary to protect the Government from market risks.			
Documenting Past Performance - Obtain performance information from the requiring activity and other Government sources. Reconcile discrepancies between the contractor's past performance data with reported past performance information. Document the file.			
Monitoring, Inspection, and Acceptance (Commercial			

Contracts) - Monitor performance of contractor and Government personnel against the contract schedule.			
Performance-Based Payments - Review requests for payments and substantiate performance. Where necessary, reduce or suspend payments, adjust the payment schedule or require repayment.			
Remedies (Noncommercial Contracts) - Identify and apply any contractual remedies.			
Commercial/Simplified Acquisition Remedies - Identify and apply any contractual remedies.			
Set-Asides - Determine whether the procurement is to be set-aside in part or in whole for small business concerns, concerns in labor surplus areas, or under the 8(a) program.			
Unsolicited Proposals - Process unsolicited proposals and determine whether to noncompetitively acquire the offered service/product.			

HHS Acquisition Certification Level II

Contract Formation I, Cost Analysis, Price Analysis, and Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques,
Contract Administration I

Competency	Yes	No (If no, when do you expect to achieve competency?)	Work Description/Justification (If no, when do you expect to achieve competency?)
Determine application of the Service Contract Act.			
Identify contract financing options and methods of payment.			
Payment - Review requests for payments from contractors and monitor liquidation.			
Select and apply non-price evaluation factors so that the most advantageous offer will be selected.			
Given market data and the nature of the marketplace, describe the key elements necessary to determine the price objective and approaches that are fair and reasonable.			
Price Related Factors - Identify applicable factors e.g., multiple award, Buy American, energy efficiency, transportation, life cycle costs) for the solicitation.			

Delays - Determine whether a delay is excusable and negotiate consideration.			
Advance Payments - Review requests for payments, establish special bank account and negotiate suitable covenants. Monitor withdrawals from the bank account and interest owed the Government.			
Price-Related Certificates - Determine whether certified cost and price data are required, request the data, and obtain the certificate. Determine the need for information other than cost and pricing data from offerors.			
Termination for Cause - Determine the need and adequacy of the case for termination, and issue the termination notice.			
Contract Modifications - Determine if proposed modification is within scope of contract and ensure adequate funds are available. Execute the modification.			
Close-out - Demonstrate correct procedures for closeout of a contract. Verify that the contract is physically complete and that other terms and conditions have been satisfied. Obtain appropriate forms, reports, and clearances. Verify that there are no outstanding claims or disputes. Obtain final			

invoice. Prepare contract completion statement. Prepare the close out file.			
Modifications and Options - Review proposed modifications, to include reasonableness of option prices. Determine availability of funds. Select type of modification and implement. Verify reasonableness of option price and exercise the option.			
Quality Assurance - Monitor contractor compliance to identify, document and resolve potential or actual problems. Determine which contractual remedy, if any, applies and employ that remedy.			
Stop Work - Determine whether to stop work, and issue the stop work order. Initiate resumption of work and modify the contract as necessary.			
Prepare an appropriate award so that a legal agreement is created.			
Process the quote/proposal so that selection of the most advantageous to the Government will be made.			
Prepare for and conduct debriefings.			
Initiate Work Under the Contract - Review the contract to determine criticality and develop post-award orientations as necessary.			

Protests - Research and prepare positions on protests of the award. Respond to the protests as provided in the procedures for the forum(s) in which the protest has been filed - the agency, GAO, GSBCA, SBA (protests re: eligibility for set asides), Labor or SBA (protests re: eligibility under Walsh-Healy) or the courts.			
Recognize the information covered in a contract administration plan and post-award conference.			
Recognize the reasons, procedures, and roles or responsibilities for application in the termination process.			
Identify the various aspects of socioeconomic requirements.			
Recognize clauses relating to Government and intellectual property for use in Government contracts.			
Recognize payment or accounting terms.			
Fact-finding - Identify and collect information from the offeror necessary to complete the Government's analysis of the proposal and prepare a prenegotiation plan which establishes objectives, priorities, and potential trade-offs for discussions with the offeror.			

Conducting Negotiations - Discuss proposals with offerors. After concluding competitive discussions, request and evaluate final proposal revisions. Demonstrate effective negotiation skills.			
Responsibility - Determine whether the offeror meets the general and special standards of responsibility.			
Execute Awards - Prepare and obtain approvals for award, execute the contract and make required notifications/debriefings.			
Determine the validity of a claim so that the contractor will be treated fairly and equitably.			
Select remedies available for commercial or noncommercial contracts.			
Contract Administration Planning - Review the contract and related acquisition histories and identify milestones and delegate authority.			
Identify various aspects of environmental contract management			

requirements.			
Responsiveness - Determine whether the lowest bid is responsive to the terms and conditions of the IFB. Resolve minor informalities and irregularities. Reject nonresponsive bids or effect cancellation if all bid prices are unacceptable.			
Evaluate Proposals - Receive and evaluate proposals. This includes technical evaluations, cost and price analysis, audits, and the evaluation of other proposed terms and conditions. Determine the necessity for competitive range determinations and discussions.			
Solicit Offers - Recognize the required components of all solicitations. Select and employ the proper method for publicizing requirement. Respond to inquiries and based on these inquiries determine if amendment or cancellation is in order.			
Bid Prices - Apply the price related factors in the IFB, identify the low bid for each potential award against the IFB. Determine the reasonableness of the lowest price bid. Select the appropriate option if the lowest price is unreasonably high or unreasonably low.			

Processing Bids - Receive and control bids submitted against an invitation for bid. Determine whether to postpone the bid opening. Open and abstract bids. Determine acceptability of a "late" bid.			
Solicitation Preparation - Identify and incorporate provisions and clauses that apply to the acquisition. Assemble an Invitation for Bid (IFB), Request for Proposal (RFP), Request for Quote (RFQ).			
Contract Financing - Determine whether to provide for the availability of Government financing and the type of financing to make available.			
Review the Statement of work. Ensure performance-based to the maximum extent possible. (see if Statement of Work is based on the expected results rather than how the work is to be performed).			
Determine whether to modify a contract or exercise an option.			
Determine appropriate quality assurance measures.			
Specifications - Review and critique specifications, statements of work, and related aspects of the requirement.			

Determine whether to award without discussion or establish competitive range, if necessary, so that the most highly rated offerors/quoters will be selected for discussions. Outline the steps in award without discussion.			
Defective Pricing - Identify and report indicators of defective pricing. Arrange audit of the data. Determine whether the data is defective, the degree relied upon, and the downward adjustment.			
Given market research, proposed information from offerors, and input from acquisition team, select the information that supports cost analysis.			
Given market research and the offeror's work design, determine price reasonableness so that it supports cost analysis.			
Given proposed costs, classify those costs as allowable, unallowable, or allowable with restrictions, in accordance with the factors affecting cost allowability.			

Bid Prices - Applying the price-related factors in the IFB, identify the low bid for each potential award against the IFB, identify the low bid for each potential award against the IFB. Determine the reasonableness of the lowest price bid. Select the appropriate option if the lowest price is unreasonably high (e.g., cancellation) or unreasonably low (e.g., verification of the bid).			
Price Objectives - Apply price related factors in the solicitation (RFQ/RFP) or offeror proposals, evaluate and compare prices. Determine the reasonableness of proposed prices and develop price-related prenegotiation objectives for discussions with vendors.			
Audits - Determine whether to audit the submitted cost and pricing data. Obtain and review audit reports and analyze results.			
Given a purchase request containing the Independent Cost Estimate, use market research to estimate a proper price level that is fair and reasonable.			
Using the solicitation and several offers, apply price-related factors to determine the lowest evaluated price.			

Given the requirement and proposal(s) received, determine the need for additional price-related information so that only the minimum amount of information is requested.			
Given a reasonable price objective, determine the difference(s) between the price and the offeror's proposed price, so that a fair and reasonable price can be determined.			
Given acquisition histories, market research data, and the requirement, determine actions that increase price competition.			
Given the situation, describe actions required for documentation.			
Given market research and the solicitation requirements, determine the need for cost or pricing data, or information other than cost or pricing data, so that you have sufficient information to establish reasonableness of cost/price.			
Given the contractor's market conditions, relate definitions and terms applicable to costs so that a cost analysis can be performed.			
Given evaluated prices, apply the price-related decisions to make an award determination.			

Given bids, determine the decision that can be made so that a fair and reasonable price can be determined.			
Given the evaluated prices, use the appropriate type(s) of information and quantitative techniques (indexing, cost-volume-profit (CVP) analysis, cost estimating relationships (CER), regression, and improvement curves) to develop a reasonable price objective.			
Given the environment of a buyer and seller, describe general negotiation concepts necessary to negotiate a fair and reasonable price.			
Using a proposal, input from technical and audit experts (if applicable), a cost/price analysis, and a competitive range determination, conduct exchanges to establish a pre-negotiation position.			
Given a negotiation situation, apply win/win bargaining tactics to negotiate a fair and reasonable price.			
Given a proposal, technical and audit reports, and the negotiation plan for a noncompetitive situation, apply tactics to accomplish the Government's negotiation of a fair and reasonable price.			

Given a solicitation, proposal, technical and audit reports, evaluation criteria, and the negotiation plan for discussions, apply results of the discussion so that the Source Selection Authority (SSA) can determine the best value for the Government.			
Given a negotiation situation, use appropriate nonverbal communication and interpret nonverbal cues used by others in negotiating a fair and reasonable price.			
Given a negotiation situation, apply negotiation techniques to negotiate a fair and reasonable price.			
Using a proposal, input from technical and audit experts (if applicable), a cost/price analysis, and a competitive range determination, prepare for negotiations.			
Given market research and proposed information from the offeror(s), develop a prenegotiation position on direct material costs, direct labor, other direct costs, indirect costs, facilities cost of money, and profit or fee that is fair and reasonable.			
Negotiation Strategy - which establishes objectives, priorities, and potential trade-offs for discussions with the offeror.			

Conducting Negotiations - Discuss proposals with offerors. After concluding competitive discussions, request and evaluate best and final offers.			
Cost Accounting Standards - Determine whether CAS applies to the entity and the type of coverage Review Disclosure Statements. Notify contractor of noncompliance. Review proposed accounting changes. Negotiate any necessary cost impact adjustments.			
Cost analysis- Develop prenegotiation positions on proposed elements of cost and fee.			
Indirect Costs - Adjust billing rates as necessary. Select either the quick close-out procedure and negotiate final indirect cost rates or obtain final indirect rates from the cognizant agency.			
Fact Finding - Identify and collect information from the offeror necessary to complete the Government's analysis of the proposal.			

HHS ACQUISITION CERTIFICATION LEVEL III

Acquisition Planning II, Contract Formation II, Contract Administration II, Intermediate Contract Pricing, Government Contract Law

Competency	Achieved competency through education/training?		Achieved competency through work experience?
	Yes	No (If no, when do you expect to achieve competency?)	Work Description/Justification (If no, when do you expect to achieve competency?)
Understand the various sources of government contract law, including their limitations and their relationships to each other.			
Discuss the classes of contracts, the elements of a contract, statutes, regulations, case law, and administrative law that define the Federal acquisition system. Research the FAR and other documents. Identify the typical legal issues relating to each element of a contract in the context of government contract formation.			
Compare the differences between private (commercial) contracts and government contracts, and the significance of those differences.			
Understand the law of Agency as it applies to both			

the government and its contractors in the context of contract formation and rescission, and apply it to identify the legal limitations on the authority of a contracting officer (and other government officials), in the context of government or contractor liability.			
Describe the legal issues associated with government contract formation in the context of award by means of sealed bidding or competitive negotiation.			
Identify the alternative means and channels for offerors to file a protest in connection with contract award.			
Compare the different types of government contracts and their application.			
Describe the government budget process, types of funding, and the funding cycle.			
Describe the statutory limitations on the spending of public funds and the contractual safeguards against cost overruns.			
Discuss the types of government participation in the financing of contractor performance, including issues relating to the assignment of claims.			
Understand the critical importance of the statement of work as a			

contract management tool.			
Use the rules of contract interpretation as a means of avoiding or resolving contract performance disputes.			
Explain the government's legal rights with respect to a contractors performance, including inspections and warranties.			
Discuss the government's ability to order contract changes unilaterally (and the actions of government employees which effect such changes constructively), including liability for equitable adjustments and the principles and techniques of making such adjustments.			
Understand the operation and describe the impact of the Truth in Negotiations Act on the rights and responsibilities of government and contractor.			
State the remedies available to the government in the event of civil or criminal fraud, and understand the difficulty in proving fraud.			
Identify the various socioeconomic policies implemented through government contracting.			
Distinguish between the government's legal relationship with prime contractors and its legal relationship with			

subcontractors, including the concept of privity.			
Illustrate the ethical principles involved in contractual situations posing actual, potential, or apparent conflicts of interest.			
Understand the law of Bailment and its relationship to Government Property concepts.			
Explain how and why government contracts allocate the risk of damage or loss of government property.			
Discuss the different types of interests the government may acquire in intellectual property created or owned by a contractor; applicable statutory or regulatory policy concerning the interests which the government should acquire; and the advantages and disadvantages of the different types of legal protection accorded intellectual property.			
Describe the contract disputes process as provided in the Contract Disputes Act of 1978 and the contractual disputes clause, including the roles of the contracting officer and other government officials in the process.			
Illustrate the proper use of termination for default or convenience, including their consequences and limitations and other			

contractual remedies (including liquidated damages) commonly available to the government.			
Discriminate between statutory, regulatory, and ethical restrictions applicable to Government contracts.			
Compare historical acquisition processes and demonstrate changes in how the Government acquires goods and services.			
Determine the authority of the contracting officer, how that authority can be delegated, and the impact of that delegation.			
Analyze and determine the manner in which the various pieces of Federal legislation and judicial and administrative decisions impact the formation of Government contracts.			
Compare and contrast the different procedures and remedies available to an adversely affected bidder or offeror in the forums available in which to protest a Government acquisition.			
Given different types and forms of property, summarize the Government's contractual rights in such property and the remedies available to both the Government and the contractor resulting from the improper use of such property.			

Given various contracting situations, identify those in which the Government has properly obligated Federal monies.			
Identify the social and economic concerns which have resulted in use of Government contracting as a means of furthering national goals of improving the environment and the quality of life.			
Given factual situations involving Government contracts, identify whether actionable fraud is present and recommend any possible options for remedying such conduct.			
Given different types of contracts, identify and select the Government's right with respect to delivery, and/or any expressed or implied warranties, and make a determination about when acceptance takes place.			
Given a various situation in which a contractor has performed additional work not required by the original contract, (1) differentiate those situations in which the contractor is entitled to an equitable adjustment from those in which the contractor is not, and (2) if so entitled, determine the elements of the equitable adjustment.			

Provided the facts underlying pending disputes, propose the probable course of litigation, to include the nature of Government employees' participation in such litigation.			
Determine the availability of and the circumstances necessary to terminate a Government contract, given different factual situations.			
Protests - Identify the different procedures and remedies available to bidders or offerors and the forums available in which to protest a Government acquisition.			
Fraud & Exclusion - Refer indications of fraud or other civil or criminal offenses to responsible officials.			

Competency	Yes	No (If no, when do you expect to achieve competency?)	Work Description/Justification (If no, when do you expect to achieve competency?)
Forecasting Requirements - Collect data from requirements managers on future acquisition requirements and advise on long range strategies for enhancing competition,			

minimizing costs, and reducing lead-times. Plan and organize to meet the anticipated, aggregate requirements.			
Assist managers in preparing written, formal acquisition plans and give feedback on draft plans.			
Determine whether to solicit for currently unfunded, prospective requirements, through such means as multi year clauses, options, or Indefinite Quantity or Requirements contracts.			
Identify requests to acquire "advisory and assistance" services and determine whether to procure the requested services.			
Determine whether to obtain the supply or service through SBA under the 8(a) program and, where appropriate, award an 8(a) contract.			
Determine whether to meet the requirement through "other than full and open competition" or after the exclusion of sources.			
Determine whether to solicit for lease, purchase or both. If the decision is to solicit for both, evaluate offers and decide whether purchase or lease represents the lowest total discounted cost to the Government.			
Identify applicable factors (e.g., multiple award, Buy American, energy efficiency, transportation, life cycle costs) for the solicitation.			

Review proposed business management and technical evaluation factors; determine how the factors will be applied in evaluating offers (i.e., as go/no-go or ranking factors). Determine whether to award on "lowest price technically acceptable" or "best value."			
Identify the Source Selection Authority (SSA). Assist the SSA in organizing, staffing, and managing a source selection board and subcommittees.			
Identify and solicit the type of contract that will best mitigate and apportion expected risks.			
Develop terms for soliciting time and material or labor hour contracts.			
Develop terms for agreements and basic ordering agreements.			
Prepare provisions and/or clauses to solicit proposals for Fixed Price Incentive, Fixed Price Award Fee, Fixed Price Redeterminable, and Fixed Price Level of Effort contracts.			
Prepare provisions and/or clauses to solicit proposals for Cost Plus Incentive Fee, Cost Plus Award Fee, Cost Plus Fixed Fee, and Cost Sharing contracts.			
Determine whether to use a letter contract, draft and issue letter contracts, and definitize the contracts.			
Review the findings and recommendations of technical personnel on (a) technical			

deficiencies in the offer, (b) reasonableness of the proposed tasks, schedule, labor hours, material mix and quantities, etc., and (c) the ranking of proposals based on the RFP's technical and business management factors.			
Determine whether to award without discussions. Review proposals for award without discussion. If discussions are necessary, define the competitive range and notify offerors outside the range.			
Discuss proposals with offerors. After concluding competitive discussions, request and evaluate final proposal revisions.			
Where required, obtain a subcontracting plan from the offeror and negotiate improvements to it. Negotiate make or buy programs.			
Recognize indicators of fraud and other misconduct. Report such indicators to the IG, debarring officials, and/or other proper authority.			
Review the contract and related acquisition histories. Determine the criticality of the contract. Identify key milestones. Delegate authority to CORs, COTRs, and/or ACOs.			
Determine whether a proposed contract is exempt from the application of Cost Accounting Standard (CAS) related provisions and clauses. Select CAS related provisions and clauses for the			

solicitation/contract.			
Identify standards of ethics that apply to procurement decisions and provide accurate examples of activities that are prohibited under each standard.			
Given a specific acquisition package, identify and incorporate the appropriate provisions and clauses in a Request for Proposal.			
Given a Pre-Award Survey request and the results of the Survey, determine whether the offeror is responsible.			
When fraud, waste or abuse is suspected, list the appropriate reporting points to institute the investigation.			
Given a contract and related acquisition history, determine the criticality of the contract, identify when delegations are necessary, and write letters of delegation.			
Given a contract to review, identify when a consent to subcontract is required.			
Given a contract to review, describe how both the contractor and the government will monitor compliance with the schedule.			
Given a contractor that has not performed to schedule, list the contractual remedies that can be used, determine which is the appropriate remedy, and implement that remedy.			
Identify the criteria for implementing a Termination			

for Default (TFD) and describe the process by which the TFD is implemented.			
Describe the process used to review requests for progress payments and monitor liquidation, when appropriate. When necessary, reduce or suspend payments, adjust liquidation rates, or grant unusual progress payments.			
Given a cost reimbursement contract, determine the limitation of costs. Determine if the contractor has exceeded the ceiling listed in the contract. Recommend an appropriate alternative if the contractor will not be able to complete the work within the amount obligated.			
Given a contractor who owes the government money, describe the alternatives available for collecting that debt.			
Given a contractor's invoice, identify when withholdings and deductions should be applied and instruct payment office.			
Given a contract, determine whether there is a need to audit a contractor's accounting or estimating system and describe the process including the measures to protect the Government if the accounting or estimating system is deficient.			
Given a contract, determine whether Cost Accounting Standards need to be applied and describe the process for			

applying Cost Accounting Standards. Review Disclosure Statements and notify contractor of noncompliance. Review proposed accounting changes and negotiate any necessary cost impact adjustments.			
Given a contract situation where the government has not protected its rights, determine whether a Termination for Convenience is appropriate and describe the process.			
Given a contract situation where the government has not protected its rights, determine whether to furnish Government property, authorize contractor acquisition of Government property, or authorize contractors to use Government supply sources.			
Given a contract, describe the process used to monitor performance against subcontracting plans and other clauses (e.g., regarding the placement of subcontracts with small business, women-owned businesses, labor surplus area concerns, and the like) and when and how to invoke applicable remedies.			
Given a contractor claim, prepare a finding or facts and describe the stages of the appeals process.			
Given a contract file to review, verify that the contract is physically complete and that other terms and conditions have been satisfied.			

Given acquisition forecasts, histories, market research, and acquisition plans for similar items, formulate a management plan and an acquisition plan in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given a purchase request for any complex requirement and market research data, analyze market research data to determine its adequacy and impact on an acquisition in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given requirements documents prepared by technical representatives, assess the documents and recommend acquisition through commercial or noncommercial means in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given a scenario, identify patent and data rights problems and appropriate actions in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given various sample requirements for specialized services, distinguish which contracts should be for inherently Governmental functions or advisory and assistance services, and determine if there are potential conflicts of interest in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			

Given a purchase request and existing Government property that might be available for use by the contractor, determine whether to furnish Government property in accordance with regulations, statutes, or authorize use of Government supply sources by the contractor.			
Given a contract situation and the statutory requirement to utilize competition, select an appropriate level of competition and explain all resulting competition related actions necessary in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given a variety of acquisitions that need to be made, determine the appropriate type of contract agreement, as well as association pricing arrangements, that will best mitigate and apportion expected risk in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given a purchase request and market research data, apply Government financing methods and complete the appropriate provisions and clauses for inclusion in the solicitation in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given regulatory guidance on bonds, distinguish the types of situations, including market risks, that require bonds and the acceptance/rejection requirements in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			

Given acquisition histories, market data, purchase requests, requirements documents, and/or the statement of work, analyze non-cost factors for award and determine how to apply them in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given purchase requests, acquisition histories, market data, and decisions made in all previous steps of the procurement planning phase, develop a source selection plan in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given purchase requests for complex acquisitions above the simplified acquisition threshold, acquisition history, market research data, and pre-solicitation business decisions, explain the procedures and prepare instructions for an oral presentation and written solicitation (Request for Proposals)(RFPs)) in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given sample proposals, quotes, and cost/price information, identify the steps in determining a fair and reasonable price in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			

Given the solicitation, proposals, and information from the offeror, and other sources such as past and current customers of the offeror, analyze non-price evaluations, including a past performance evaluation, and other terms and conditions for ability to satisfy Government requirements in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given the solicitation, proposals/quotes, technical reports, and cost/price analysis reports, justify the decisions regarding discussions and the composition of the competitive range in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given a solicitation, quotation/proposal, analysis report, a decision to conduct discussions, pre-negotiation plan, pre-negotiation strategy, and price negotiation memorandum, analyze the steps in discussing proposals in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given a solicitation and proposal information, evaluate the proposed subcontracting plan, including make or by program, in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			

Given a solicitation, several offers, and a pre-award survey, critique a responsibility determination in a complex acquisition in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given an evaluated proposal and supporting documentation, prepare an award decision for a competitive negotiated acquisition and analyze a proposed debriefing in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given a sample protest, a recommended resolution of the protest, offers, solicitation, and supporting documents, analyze a recommended resolution of a protest in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given the key elements of a contract, formulate a contract administration plan and post-award orientation agenda in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment. Review the contract and related acquisition histories. Identify key milestones. Delegate authorities.			
Given a noncommercial contract situation and a request to modify, identify the circumstances prohibiting modification and apply procedures for completing a modification in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			

Given a contract situation, discuss various labor and environmental laws used in Government contracts in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given various financial management contract scenarios, applicable references, and input from the contractor, formulate the Government's reaction/position in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given various contract situations involving monetary limitations or adjustments, apply the available alternatives and the procedures for each in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given contract situation not exempt from the cost accounting standards, determine the procedures for obtaining a disclosure statement and for ensuring compliance with the standards in accordance with the regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			

Given multiple contract administration problems involving contract performance involving contract performance, analyze potential contract remedies, select and apply the appropriate remedies, and evaluate the contractor's resulting overall contract performance in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given a contract scenario, determine whether to consent to subcontracts, providing support for your determination and illustrate procedures for making contract adjustments based on a contractor's performance in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given a contract situation relevant to Government property, apply procedures for monitoring the acquisition, control, and disposition of Government property by Government and contractor personnel in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given a potential contract termination situation, consider whether a termination action is in the Government's best interest, and develop a plan to resolve the situation in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			

Given a contract scenario with an issue of controversy, analyze the issue and correctly apply the various procedures for resolving the issue in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment.			
Given a contract situation, analyze pertinent factors and conclude necessary actions for contract closeout in accordance with regulations, statutes, and sound business judgment. Verify that the contract is physically complete and other terms and conditions have been satisfied. Verify that there are no outstanding claims or disputes. Obtain final invoice and follow prescribed close out procedures.			
Funding - Verify that adequate funds have been committed.			
Market Research - Obtain data from acquisition histories and other sources. Coordinate and participate in early exchanges.			
Services - Screen requisitions for requests to acquire personal services or advisory and assistance services. Request wage determinations.			
Unsolicited Proposals - Process unsolicited proposals and determine whether to noncompetitively acquire the offered services.			

Non-Price Factors (FAR Parts 12 and 13 Solicitations) - Select Non-price evaluation factors for award and their applicability.			
Contract Types (Commercial Contracts) - Select contract type that will minimize risks.			
Recurring Requirements - Select appropriate methods to solicit for currently unfunded, prospective requirements.			
Unpriced Contracts (letter contracts & unpriced purchase orders) - Draft letter contracts and unpriced orders as required.			
Contract Financing for Commercial Contracts - Analyze financing options for incorporation into the solicitation.			
Noncommercial Contract Financing - Analyze financing options for incorporation into the solicitation.			
Bonds - Determine whether bonds are required or necessary to protect the Government from market risks.			
Method of Payment - Select method of payment.			
Applying Past Performance, Technical & Other Non-Price Factors (Under FAR Part 15 for Non-Commercial Items) - Review proposed evaluation factors and determine whether to award on lowest price or greatest value.			
Mistakes (Postaward) - Investigate and resolve mistakes alleged after award.			

Later Offers - Determine whether a late offer or quotation may be considered for award.			
Price Analysis (Sealed Bidding) - Apply the price related factors in the IFB, identify the low bid for each potential award, and analyze the reasonableness for the lowest priced bid.			
Responsiveness - Determine whether the lowest bid is responsive to the terms and conditions of the IFB. Resolve minor informalities and irregularities. Reject nonresponsive bids.			
Preaward Mistakes in Bids - Identify potential mistakes, verify bids and resolve alleged mistakes.			
Monitoring, Inspection, and Acceptance - Monitor performance by contractor and Government personnel against the contract schedule.			
Delays - Determine whether a delay is excusable and negotiate consideration.			
Stop Work - Determine whether to stop work and issue the stop work order. Unless the contract is terminated, initiate resumption of work and modify the contract as necessary.			
Unallowable Costs - Review invoiced costs for allowability and prepare notice of intent to disallow or actual disallowance. Determine whether to withdraw or sustain the notice and/or allow part of the costs.			

Payment of Indirect Costs - Adjust billing rates as necessary to prevent substantial overpayment or underpayment of indirect costs. Select either the quick closeout procedure and negotiate final indirect cost rates or obtain final indirect cost rates from the cognizant agency.			
Price and Fee Adjustment - Monitor payments and adjust billing prices. Given the economic price adjustment, incentive or award formula in the contract, establish the final fee or price.			
Unpriced Purchase Orders - Determine reasonableness of invoiced price.			
Task and Delivery Order Contracting - Place orders against task and delivery order contracts.			
Invoices - Identify withholdings and deductions, and instruct the payment office and the contractor of any changes.			
Collecting Contract Debts - Determine indebtedness. Identify and obtain repayment and respond to requests for deferment.			
Assignment of Claims - Review requests for assignment of claims. Execute receipt of Notice of Assignment.			

Property Administration - Establishing reporting requirements, monitor delivery of Government property and review contractor property control systems. Determine liability for damage or misuse and negotiate consideration. Recover or dispose of the property.			
Intellectual Property - Monitor compliance with the intellectual property sections of FAR 52.212-4, Contract Terms and Conditions - Commercial Items. Identify, investigate, and resolve problems with patents and/or data rights.			
Administering Socio-economic and Other Miscellaneous Terms - Enforce compliance with socio-economic contractual requirements.			
Claims - Research and process the claim. Participate in appeals process or ADR.			
Termination for Default (Non-Commercial Contracts) - Determine the need for Termination for Default. Issue the termination notice. If bonded, obtain performance or payment form surety. Reprocure and require payment for the excess costs of reprocurement.			
Defective Pricing - Identify and report indicators of defective pricing. Arrange audit of the data. Determine whether the data is defective, and degree relied upon, and negotiate any necessary cost impact adjustments.			

Extraordinary Relief - Determine whether relief is called for and what type is merited. Execute the contract action.			
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Competency	Yes	No (If no, when do you expect to achieve competency?)	Work Description/Justification (If no, when do you expect to achieve competency?)
Price Objectives - Apply Price related factors in the RFP or offeror proposals, evaluate and compare offers. Determine the reasonableness of proposed prices and develop price-related prenegotiation objectives.			
Cost and Pricing Data - Determine whether certified cost and price data are required, request the data, and obtain the certificate.			
Progress Payments - Review requests for progress payments. Monitor liquidation. Where necessary, reduce or suspend payments, adjust liquidation rates, or grant unusual progress payments.			
Limitation of Costs - If a cost reimbursement contract, determine if the contractor has exceeded 75 % of the estimated cost in the Schedule. If a Time and Material or Labor Hour contract, determine if the contractor has exceeded 85 % of the ceiling price. Recommend an appropriate option if the contractor will not be able to complete the work within the amount obligated.			

Indirect Costs - Adjust billing rates as necessary to prevent substantial overpayment or underpayment of indirect costs. Determine applicability of the quick close-out procedure and negotiate final indirect cost rates. Otherwise, obtain final indirect rates from the cognizant agency.			
Accounting and Estimating Systems - Determine the need to audit a contractor's accounting or estimating system. Negotiate improvements and monitor implementation.			
Accounting and Estimating Systems - Determine the need to audit a contractor's accounting or estimating system. Negotiate improvements and monitor implementation. Take measures to protect the Government if the accounting or estimating system is deficient.			
Cost Accounting Standards Determine whether CAS applies to the entity and the type of coverage Review Disclosure Statements. Notify contractor of noncompliance. Review proposed accounting changes. Negotiate any necessary Cost Impact Adjustments.			
Property - Establish reporting requirements. Monitor delivery of Government property. Monitor contractor property control systems and use of Government furnished property. Determine liability for damage or misuse and negotiate consideration.			

Recover or dispose of the property.			
Develop and defend a Price Negotiation Memorandum and a Price Competition Memorandum			
Use computer programs for statistical analysis, regression, and learning curves.			
Use market research to determine commerciality.			
Price Objectives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine the reasonableness of proposed prices and develop price-related pre-negotiation objectives. 			
Use price indexing for adjusting price/cost for further analysis.			
Audits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine whether to audit the submitted cost and pricing data. ● Obtain and review audit reports. 			
Cost Analysis. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop pre-negotiation positions on proposed elements of cost and fee 			
Evaluate other terms and conditions (e.g., lease versus purchase or financing).			

<p>Subcontracting Requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Where required, obtain a subcontracting plan from the offeror and negotiate improvements to it. 			
<p>Delays.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine whether delay is excusable and negotiate consideration. 			
<p>Stop Work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine whether to stop work; prepare and issue the stop work order. ● Unless the contract is terminated, initiate resumption of work and modify the contract as necessary. 			
<p>Termination for Default.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine the need and adequacy of the case for default. ● Prepare and issue the termination notice. 			

<p>Unallowable Costs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine the allowability of invoiced costs. ● Prepare notice of intent to disallow. ● Based on discussions with contractor, determine whether to withdraw or sustain the notice and/or allow part of the costs. 			
<p>Limitation of Costs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If a cost reimbursement contract, determine if the contractor has exceeded 75% of the estimated cost in the Schedule. ● If a Time and Material for Labor Hour contract, determine if the contractor has exceeded 85% of the ceiling price. ● Recommended an appropriate option if the contractor will not be able to complete the work within the amount obligated. 			
<p>Indirect Costs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adjust billing rates as necessary to prevent substantial overpayment or underpayment of indirect costs. ● Determine applicability of the quick closeout procedure and negotiate final indirect cost rates. 			

<p>Contract Modifications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review proposed modifications against the scope of work and availability of funds. ● Determine whether to modify the contract and the type of modification to employ. ● Determine the need for supplemental agreements and whether it is within the scope of the contract. ● Implement the modification. 			
<p>Termination for Convenience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine the necessity for termination. ● Prepare the notice. ● Negotiate settlement of outstanding costs or, where settlement is not possible, prepare a unilateral settlement by determination. ● On fixed price contracts, determine the equitable adjustment for the remaining portion of the contract. 			

HHS ACQUISITION CERTIFICATION LEVEL IV

CON 301 (Executive Acquisition Seminar)

Competency	Achieved competency through education/training?		Achieved competency through work experience?
	Yes	No (If no, when do you expect to achieve competency?)	Work Description/Justification (If no, when do you expect to achieve competency?)
Contracting Policy - Evaluate emerging contracting policy in FAR, agency regulations such as HHSAR, or other agency guidance. Interpret guidance and transform it from a theoretical approach to a practical application of contracting processes. Examine the structure and processes of the Civilian Agency Acquisition Council (CAAC) and the FAR Council to determine their roles in contracting policy. Contrast and compare policies and regulations. Apply the implementation guidance associated with new/emerging policies. Appraise the impact of new government-wide and departmental policies on HHS contracting organizations as well as contractors.			
External Forces - Analyze the relationship between the public policy process and the duties and responsibilities of individuals charged with implementing contracting processes. Appraise the role			

of Congress and evaluate the impact of legislative statutes on the contracting process. Analyze the function and interrelationship of external organizations to include the GAO, IG, SBA, the courts and others on procurement policy. Evaluate the impact of streamlining measures such as Acquisition Reform on the contracting process.			
Policy Turbulence - Evaluate initiatives developed by other contracting organizations to solve internal problems. Judge the appropriateness of those innovations for possible applications, conceptually or specifically, to the respondent's organization. Analyze a variety of issue statements relating to contracting problem areas. Evaluate the impact of selected issues to determine the need for senior management involvement.			
Changing Environment - Assess the various methods which can be used by contracting professionals in coping with and adapting to constantly changing government policies and procedures. Evaluate current and emerging information related to career development and the implications of change for the contracting workforce.			
Ethical Climate - Recognize the nuances and ramifications of existing and emerging laws, regulations, and notoriety as they pertain to ethical practice in the contracting process. Evaluate			

the relevancy of ethical standards to the day-to-day business situations between Government contracting officials and private contractors. Analyze and distinguish the gray areas in ethical regulations and apply appropriate interpretation as practiced in the work site.			
Policy Perspective: Identify the most current actual and proposed changes to acquisition/contracting policy regulations			
Policy Perspective: Present and evaluate approaches for effectively implementing new policies.			
Assess Congressional processes and legislative objectives in policy development.			
Identify the responsibilities of key Federal policy organizations (e.g. Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP), General Accounting Office (GAO), Small Business Administration (SBA))			
Describe the relationships of organizations within the HHS contracting system.			
Analyze the impacts of internal and external forces on HHS acquisition and contracting policy.			
Organizational Issues. Identify the skills required for effective operations in a team-based acquisition environment.			

Organizational Issues. Assess organizational impacts of topical issues (e-government, consolidation, etc.)			
Technology Impacts. Identify the policy requirements for implementing electronic commerce and paper free acquisition.			
Technology Impacts. Identify skills and processes required for effectively using new technology applications to improve organizational productivity (e.g. distance learning, telecommuting, internet-based commerce).			
Technology Impacts. Identify and evaluate technology-based sources of information for maintaining currency of the contracting workforce. Review basic concepts of technology and its implementation that could impact contracting organizations.			
Occupational Professionalism. Understand the contracting profession's "Guiding Principles" from FAR Part 1.			

Occupational Professionalism. Evaluate processes for implementing leadership philosophies such as risk taking, teaming, and developing innovative/entrepreneurial cultures within the contracting community.			
Occupational Professionalism. Identify effective techniques for assisting the contracting community in managing change.			
Occupational Professionalism. Establish contacts and a vital network of professional peers for benchmarking and problem solving.			
Occupational Professionalism. Identify methods for establish a continuing learning culture in the contracting community.			

Appendix K-2

CERTIFICATION OF ACHIEVEMENT OF APPLICABLE EDUCATION/TRAINING AND WORK-RELATED TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

(This form must be submitted as part of the request for HHS Acquisition Certification)

1) Employee:

I certify that I have successfully achieved the applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies for acquisition certification at Level ____.

Employee's signature and date:

2) Supervisor:

I have reviewed the applicant's documentation and I certify that the applicant has ____ has not ____ successfully achieved the applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies for acquisition certification at Level ____.

Supervisor's signature and date: _____

3) Reviewing Official:

I have reviewed the applicant's documentation and I certify that the applicant has ____ has not ____ successfully achieved the applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies for acquisition certification at Level ____.

Reviewing Official's signature and date: _____

Appendix L

DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Definitions

Acquisition Career Management Information System (ACMIS): ACMIS is a web-based system developed in the late 1990's under the oversight of the Federal Acquisition Institute that is currently available for use by Government agencies on a voluntary basis. ACMIS is web-accessible database that manages training, education, and contracting officer certification warrant levels, and other information on an agency's acquisition workforce. Most of the data from ACMIS will come from the Office of Personnel Management's Central Data Personnel File. The employee will enter his or her own data, and the employee will designate (at his or her discretion) a supervisor to verify accuracy of the data. For more information on ACMIS, see Section F of Chapter 7 of this handbook.

Acquisition Manager: The highest level of certification, Level IV. It signifies a level commensurate with supervisory contract management responsibilities, and preaward review and approval authority. Examples of positions include supervisory contracting officer, contracting officer responsible for a major acquisition program, senior procurement analyst, and team leader. The HHS Certification/Review Board is responsible for certifying employees at Level IV.

Acquisition Official: Level II of certification for the GS-1102 series. It represents the experience and training equating to the journeyman level in acquisition.

Acquisition Workforce: In Policy Letter 97-01, the Office of Federal Procurement Policy defines the acquisition workforce of federal agencies as follows:

- a. All positions in the General Schedule (GS-1102) Contracting Series and non-DOD uniformed personnel in comparable positions.
- b. All Contracting Officers regardless of General Schedule series with authority to obligate funds above the micropurchase threshold.
- c. All positions in the GS-1105 Purchasing Series.
- d. All Contracting Officer Representatives/Contracting Officer Technical Representatives, or equivalent positions.

Acquisition Training Certification: Formal acknowledgment and recognition of an employee attaining a designated level of achievement, i.e., training, education, and experience as specified under the HHS acquisition certification program. It is not related to grade, nor does it mean that an employee is entitled to promotions, delegations, special assignments, or to any other action that is clearly a management prerogative. Persons may become certified at a particular level if they have met all mandatory training, education and experience standards for a particular certification level.

Appointing Official: A person authorized to grant individual Contracting Officer warrant authority consistent with the applicable regulations of the FAR and HHSAR.

Business leader: According to FAI, a member of the acquisition workforce within the Federal Government is considered a business leader if he/she has the following skills: ability to develop, negotiate and manage business deals; communicate effectively; solve problems; manage and lead change; analyze and understand the marketplace; possess outstanding interpersonal skills and customer service skills; and develop and implement outcome-oriented solutions; and execute.

Career Development: Career development is the process of assessing the needs, capabilities, aptitudes, and interests of an employee with training and developmental opportunities. Examples of career development include training, education, variety of work assignments, job rotations/details, etc.

Career ladder: A series of positions in the same line of work that provides career development through increasingly challenging assignments and other developmental opportunities.

Career Levels: Categories of training, education, and experience standards that provide the basis for possible progression in a career field. In the HHS Acquisition Certification Program, there are four career levels: Level I(a) and (b), Purchasing Agent; Level II, Acquisition Official; Level III, Senior Acquisition Official; Level IV, Acquisition Manager.

Career Planning: Career planning is a process whereby an individual chooses and sets his/her career goals and identifies the methods to achieve them. Career planning involves the employee, supervisor, and (if appropriate) the human resources specialist working together to set attainable goals for the employee that are identified through training, special assignments, rotational/developmental opportunities, and other career development activities.

Certification: The result of the completion of education/training courses and work experience and achievement of applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies, as well as other factors listed in Section D of Chapter 4 of this handbook.

Certifying Official: The person designated to implement decisions of the Certification Board and sign certificates. The Certifying Official for OPDIV/Agency Boards must occupy a position no lower than the Head of Contracting Activity (HCA). The Director of the Office of Acquisition Management and Policy serves as the Certifying Official for the HHS Certification and Review Board.

Chief Acquisition Officer (CAO): Under Section 1421 of Title XIV - Services Acquisition Reform Act (which became the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2004), requires each agency (other than DoD) to appoint a Chief Acquisition Officer (CAO) to manage the agency's acquisition policies. The CAOs are to be political appointees, and their required duties reflect recent trends in acquisition policy. CAOs are to increase full and open competition and performance-based contracting, and develop a professional acquisition workforce, among

other duties. Under Section (b) 1422, the new CAOs, a DoD Under Secretary, and an OMB Deputy Director will comprise a Chief Acquisition Officers Council, led by the Administrator for OFPP. This law describes this new council as “the principal interagency forum for monitoring and improvement in the federal acquisition system.”

Chief of the Contracting Office: According to the HHSAR Section 302.101, the Chief of the Contracting Office (CCO) is a mid-level management official in charge of a contracting office who controls and oversees the daily contracting operation of an OPDIV/Agency or major component of an OPDIV. The CCO is subordinate to the head of the contracting activity and is located at a management level above other contracting personnel, usually as a branch chief or division director.

Competencies: The Federal Acquisition Institute defines competencies as “observable, measurable patterns of skills, knowledge, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics that an individual needs to perform in occupational functions.” FAI identified technical and general competencies that are specific to the acquisition workforce. Technical competencies are more specific to the job functions of the acquisition workforce. Many of the technical competencies describe specific knowledge, skills, and abilities, and some of these technical competencies may not apply to certain aspects of contract specialists’ work. FAI also identified and validated professional business (or general) competencies. General competencies apply to many situations that members of the acquisition workforce experience while performing acquisition tasks. Examples of general competencies include effective communication skills, customer service skills, and problem solving skills.

Competency-Based Training: Refers to education/training and work-related experience in contracting duties that provide an opportunity for individuals to develop and demonstrate an appropriate level of skill at performing acquisition duties.

Contracting Activity: An organization with HHS with a written Departmental delegation from the Senior Procurement Executive establishing a contracting activity’s authority and responsibility to oversee and manage its contracting function and those other organizations in which it provides contracting support (as applicable).

Contract: A contract is promise or set of promises, for breach of which the law gives a remedy, or the performance of which the law in some way recognizes as a duty. To be a legal and binding contract, it must contain the following elements: (1) offer; (2) acceptance; (3) consideration; (4) competent parties; (5) legality of purpose; (6) clear terms and conditions.
(see definition in FAR Part 2.101)

Contracting Officer: An individual representing the U.S. Government through the exercise of his/her delegated authority to enter into, administer, and/or terminate contracts and make related determinations and findings (FAR 2.101).

Contracting Officer’s Representative/Contracting Officer’s Technical Representative: The Contracting Officer’s Representative (COR) and the Contracting Office’s Technical Representative (COTR) are federal employees that monitor performance and provide technical guidance to the contracting officer. Both ensure that the contractor complies with the contract and satisfies the Federal Government’s needs. The COR acts as the contracting officer’s authorized representative to monitor specific aspects of the contract ensuring that the contractor’s

performance meets the standards set forth in the contract, the technical requirements under the contract are met by the delivery date or within the period of performance, and at the price or within the estimated cost stated in the contract. COR/COTR's are required to comply with the requirements under the HHS Project Management Certification Program (see Chapter 4 of this handbook). Before making a COTR/COR delegation, the contracting officer shall verify that the COTR/COR has received the mandatory training. The COR/COTR may be the same individual.

Course Equivalency: Course equivalency has been determined by the OPDIV/Agency Board to contain the level of knowledge that would allow individuals who take the equivalent course to perform as if they had completed the comparable designated mandatory course. They may be courses presented by other Government agencies, courses offered by organizations experienced in teaching Government acquisition, or institutions of higher learning. The acceptability of courses viewed by the applicant as equivalents will be determined by the OPDIV/Agency Certification Board. The Board may ask for additional information concerning equivalent course work, e.g., course outline, course prerequisites, the name and address of the sponsoring organization, as well as the name and qualifications of the instructor, proof of attendance, etc. HHS follows the course equivalency matrix established by DAU (listed in Appendix C). This matrix can be accessed at the following website: <http://www.dau.mil/learning/appg.asp>. If a course is not listed in this handbook as being equivalent, then it is at the OPDIV/Agency's discretion to accept a course as equivalent. If the course is not listed in Appendix C, then the course is not DAU equivalent. If the OPDIV/Agency determines that a course is equivalent, this course will be acceptable for purposes of certification in the HHS Acquisition Certification Program but may not be accepted by DoD.

Critical skills: The business and technical skills that are needed by a member of the acquisition workforce to sufficiently perform his/her duties.

Defense Acquisition University (DAU) equivalent courses: Courses offered by training providers that correspond to the mandatory DAWIA contracting courses.

Delegation of Procurement Authority: The obligation of Government funds is allowed by a written individual or blanket authority to employees. Procurement authority must be conveyed through a memorandum specifying the delegation and limitations of authority.

Department of Health and Human Services Acquisition Regulation (HHSAR): A directive that is issued to establish uniform acquisition policies and procedures for the Department of Health and Human Services that conforms to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) system. The HHSAR is codified at 48 CFR Chapter 3 and can be accessed at the following website: <http://knownet.hhs.gov/acquisition/hhsar/>.

Fulfillment Process: The Office of Acquisition Management and Policy has established procedures to support the fulfillment process for acquisition certification at HHS. The fulfillment program for acquisition certification is a program based on accepting courses taken from other federal agencies, through other training providers, or through institutions of higher learning, to satisfy the mandatory training requirements under the HHS Acquisition Certification Program. The fulfillment program also applies to accepting related work experience obtained through other organizations to satisfy the requirements under the HHS Acquisition Certification Program. HHS

does not accept work-related experience in lieu of the required courses in the HHS Acquisition Certification Program. The reviewing official (OPDIV/Agency Board) makes the final determination of fulfillment.

General Acquisition Experience: Although not strictly limited to personnel in the GS-1102 series, it is experience in the award and administration of Government contracts performed by someone in such a position. Such experience includes, but is not limited to, reviewing the request for contract, preparing and issuing an Invitation for Bid/ Request for Proposal/Request for Quotation, evaluating bids/offers, technical and cost/price reviews, negotiating, contract award, and post-award administration, as well as experience in developing and publishing regulatory materials, policies, and procedures. General acquisition experience includes experience in HHS acquisition positions and comparable positions outside of HHS.

"Grandfathering": The process through which HHS determines that an employee is given credit for specific requirements based on grade, years of procurement experience, and training. The process by which an acquisition workforce member who does not meet the education requirements by January 1, 2000, may stay in his or her acquisition position. Employees hired before October 1, 2004 are "grandfathered", or exempt from the requirement to attain applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies for the level at which they are currently certified and all previous certification levels. However, by the end of Fiscal Year 2005, employees in the GS-1102, GS-1105, and GS-1106 series are required to attain applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies to become certified at the next level.

Head of Contracting Activity (HCA): See definition at HHSAR 302.101. The Head of Contracting Activity is responsible for managing the contracting office within each OPDIV/Agency. The roles and responsibilities of the HCA are listed in Chapter 1 of this handbook. The Director of the Office of Acquisition and Management and Policy is designated as an HCA (HHSAR Section 301.602). According to the HHSAR Section 302.101, "Each HCA shall be certified, or be certifiable at Level IV in the HHS Acquisition Certification Program. Individuals appointed as HCA's who do not meet the Level IV requirements shall have one year from the date of appointment to obtain Level IV certification. The heads of contracting activities may redelegate their HCA authorities to the extent that redelegation is not prohibited by the terms of their respective delegations of authority, by law, by the Federal Acquisition Regulation, by the HHS Acquisition Regulation, or by other regulations. However, HCA and other contracting approvals and authorities shall not be redelegated below the levels specified in the HHS Acquisition Regulation or, in the absence of coverage in the HHS Acquisition Regulation, the Federal Acquisition Regulation."

Individual Development Plan: A document that includes an assessment of an employee's current skills for progression in the acquisition field and an outline of the way in which the employee will develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to achieve future career goals. Development of an IDP is a joint effort of the employee, supervisor, and perhaps other knowledgeable individuals in the training and/or acquisition fields.

Employees may use the IDP to plan their course scheduling and to document completion of rotations/details or other developmental opportunities.

Interim appointment: An interim appointment is issued if an individual does not fully meet the certification requirements under the HHS Contracting Officer Warrant Program for the contracting officer authority sought.

Interim appointments at HHS may not exceed one year in total and shall not be granted unless the individual can meet the certification requirements within one year. When the HCA determines it is appropriate, interim appointments may be extended by granting additional time to complete the requirements of a waiver to the warrant standards.

Mandatory HHS Acquisition Course: A course that is approved by HHS and meets the HHS' acquisition education/training requirement for a career level. At HHS mandatory courses are as follows:

Level I(a): Basic Simplified Acquisition Procedures, Advanced Simplified Acquisition Procedures

Level I(b): Introduction to Contracting, Acquisition Planning I

Level II: Contract Formation I, Contract Administration I, Price Analysis, Cost Analysis,
Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques

Level III: Acquisition Planning II, Contract Formation II, Contract Administration II, Intermediate Contract Pricing, Government Contract Law

Level IV: CON 301 (Executive Acquisition Seminar)

Permanent appointment: A permanent appointment is issued to a candidate who meets all requirements for experience, training and education at the time the appointment is made.

Permanent waiver to the HHS Contracting Officer's Warrant Program: A request asking for deviations from the requirements and policies of the HHS Acquisition Workforce Training and Certification Program. Permanent waiver requests shall be sent in writing to the SPE for approval, and the SPE will either approve or disapprove the request in writing. The SPE may grant waivers on a case-by-case basis in rare and unique situations only.

Program: A program is an organized set of activities directed toward common purpose. Acquisition programs are programs whose purpose is to deliver capability in response to a certain mission need.

Program funding: The HCA is responsible for determining the funding needs to provide for the education/training of the acquisition workforce within his/her OPDIV/Agency and requesting such training in the annual budget process.

Program Manager: The program manager is a person who has overall responsibility for program plans, budgets, schedules, and developing acquisition strategies.

Project - A project is a unique effort that provides a service or produces a product according to specific requirements within a fixed time frame and within budget. A project is a specific undertaking that supports a program mission and has a defined beginning and end point. The Office of Management and Budget's

Interpretive Guidance for Project Manager Positions, dated August 23, 2003, defines “project” as a “temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result.”

Project Manager: The project manager is the individual responsible for the day-to-day management and progress of the entire project development and implementation. The project manager ensures that all features of the system are delivered in time, within budget, with appropriate resources, and monitors product quality. For the purposes of the HHS Project Management Certification Program, the term “Project Officer” is hereby referred to as “Project Manager”.

Purchasing Agent: Personnel engaged in the simplified acquisition method of acquisition. Certification is designated as Level I(a) and 1(b), and is generally identified with personnel in the GS-1105 and GS-1106 series.

Reviewing Official: An individual responsible for conducting an independent review of certification records to assess compliance with guidance, regulations, and law.

Senior Acquisition Official: The intermediate level (Level III) of certification under the HHS Acquisition Certification Program. It recognizes a level of training and experience commensurate with senior-level performance of acquisition functions. Duties are clearly more complex than those performed for Level II certification.

Senior Procurement Executive (SPE): The Senior Procurement Executive is the agency senior official appointed under the Office of Federal Procurement Policy who is responsible for managing the direction of the federal agency's procurement system. The SPE is responsible for implementing policies, regulations, and standards related to procurement. Section 1421 of Title XIV of the Services Acquisition Reform Act of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2004 requires each agency (other than DoD) to appoint a Chief Acquisition Officer (CAO) to manage the agency's acquisition policies and a Senior Procurement Executive to manage implementation of those policies. The Senior Procurement Executive's responsibilities include, but are not limited to, enhancing system performance; overseeing the development of the agency procurement system; managing the agency's contract activities; and enhancing career management of the acquisition workforce.

Simplified Acquisition Procedures: The methods mentioned in FAR Part 13 to make purchases of services or supplies up to \$100,000 (the simplified acquisition threshold).

Skills Currency: OFPP Policy Letter 97-01 states that contract specialists and contracting officers in the GS-1102 series who have satisfied the mandatory and agency/assignment-specific training shall have an equivalent of at least 40 hours of continuing education/training every two years. This type of training may include, but is not limited to, agency-sponsored training and management/executive seminars, special job and/or professional association-related projects and/or participation in seminars /workshops, or other developmental activities. At

HHS, GS-1105's and GS-1106's are required to have a minimum of 24 hours of continuing education/training every two years (after mandatory training has been completed).

Specialized Experience: The Department follows the Office of Personnel Management's "Individual Occupational Requirements for GS-1102 Contract Specialist" guidelines (reference the following website: <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/sec-iv/b/gs1100/1102.htm>). Specialized experience includes experience in the contract processes of soliciting, awarding, and administering Government contracts, and the interpretation and formulation of acquisition policies and procedures having knowledge of federal procurement regulations, policies, techniques, and procedures. The OPM GS-1102 Qualification Standard lists specialized experience as a year of experience equivalent to at least the next lower grade level. Specialized experience is experience (typically work in or related to the position being filled) related to the work to be performed. Duties are typically those expected of contracting officers, senior contract specialists, and procurement analysts.

Unauthorized commitment: FAR 1.602-3(a) defines an unauthorized commitment as "an agreement that is not binding solely because the Government representative who made it lacked the authority to enter into that agreement on behalf of the Government." Warranted contracting officers and purchase cardholders acting within the limits of their delegated authority are the only individuals who can bind the Government. Unauthorized commitments violate Federal law, Federal regulations, the Government-wide Standards of Conduct for Federal Employees, and HHS Acquisition Regulations.

Waiver to the GS-1102 Qualification Standard: A provision that allows the SPE at HHS to waive the education requirements for an individual who wishes to progress to the Grade 13 and above positions. **Waivers to the GS-1102 Qualification Standard at HHS are granted only in rare cases.** (see Chapter 2 of this handbook for additional information on waivers of the GS-1102 Qualification Standard).

Waiver to requirements for a permanent appointment (warrant): An exception to the qualification standards for delegating contracting officer authority that is granted by the Senior Procurement Executive on **a case-by-case basis and is issued in rare cases only**. All waiver requests must be submitted to the Senior Procurement Executive in writing. (see Section D of Chapter 3 of this handbook for more information).

Warrant: In accordance with FAR 1.603, the delegation of Contracting Officer authority is issued by execution of Standard Form 1402. The Standard Form 1402 allows the employee to commit the Government to the buying of goods and services and to obligate funds subject to any limitations as stated in the warrant. Authority delegated to a member of the acquisition workforce who is certified at a particular level to bind the government.

Acronyms

ACMIS - Acquisition Career Management Information System
OAMP - Office of Acquisition Management and Policy
CAO - Chief Acquisition Officer
CO - Contracting Officer
COR/COTR - Contracting Officer's Representative/Contracting Officer's Technical Representative
COWP- Contracting Officer Warrant Program
DAU - Defense Acquisition University
DAWIA - Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act
DoD - Department of Defense
EO - Executive Order
FPDS - Federal Procurement Data System
FSS - Federal Supply Schedule
GSA - General Services Administration
HHS - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
HHSAR - U.S. Department of Health and Human Service Acquisition Regulation
IDP - Individual Development Plan
IT - Information Technology
FAI - Federal Acquisition Institute
FAR - Federal Acquisition Regulation
FARA - Federal Acquisition Reform Act
GS - General Schedule
HCA - Head of Contracting Activity
NCMA - National Contract Management Association
OAMP - Office of Acquisition Management and Policy at HHS
OFPP - Office of Federal Procurement Policy
OJT - On-the-Job Training
PM - Project Manager
PMBOK - Project Management Body of Knowledge
SPE - Senior Procurement Executive
U.S.C. - United States Code

Appendix M

ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF TRAINING

- DAU - DAU offers more than 50 continuous learning opportunities including online, self-paced modules with assessments and certificates. Examples of classes include Earned Value Management System, Reverse Auctioning, Affirmative Procurement Training (Green Procurement), Commercial Item Determination, and Performance-Based Services Acquisition. Access DAU's Continuous Learning Center at the following website: <http://clc.dau.mil/>
- FAI - FAI offers various web-based courses. <http://www.fai.gov/>.
- FAI Guide to Acquisition-Related Academic Programs and Courses - <http://www.fai.gov/prodev/guide.pdf>
- Federal Energy Management Program - <http://www.energystar.gov/>
- GoLearn.gov - A Federal website that has many training opportunities, such as project management, leadership, communication skills, and customer service.
- Green Purchasing - Web-based course on green procurement sponsored by Gov Online Learning Center. Directions: 1) (go to www.golearn.gov); 2) Register for the Green Purchasing Course - To register for the Green Purchasing course, log on with your email and password (located at the top banner of the GoLearn site). Next, click on the *Full Catalog* button on the top navigation bar, and you will see the first page of the Catalog. Click on the *Free Catalog* category and select the *Legislatively Mandated and Agency Required Topics* category.; 3) Then choose the following by clicking on its title: What is "Green Purchasing, Anyway?" (Course ID OPM008) - After you have clicked on the course title, hit register button. You will then see 2 multiple choice questions on the purpose and type of training. For the 1st question, you should select the last choice on the bottom of the page 'Legislatively Mandated or Agency Required' and hit the continue button. Answer the 2nd question as appropriate and hit the submit button; 4) To Begin the Course - After you have registered for the course, click on the *My Courses* button on the top navigation bar. Courses for which you are registered are displayed. Select the *What is Green Purchasing, Anyway?* course and begin; 5) Course Completion - Once you have successfully completed course, you will be able to print a completion certificate. To get your certificate, click on the *My Courses* button again. When you have completed a course, a green link that will take you to a certificate. Each course will have a status, such as complete, incomplete, or not attempted).

Also, a website on buying green with a purchase card:

<http://www.statebuy.state.gov/pcard/documents/greenproducts.pdf>

- HHS' Green Procurement/Environmentally Preferable Products website:
<http://intranet.hhs.gov/environmental/>
 - Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) Center for Acquisition Excellence - A virtual campus that provides Multiple Award Schedules training. The virtual campus provides acquisition and training resources, expertise on GSA Schedule and links to other training sites. The website is: <http://www.fsstraining.gsa.gov>
 - For a listing of vendors providing acquisition-related courses, reference GSA Schedule 69 at the following website: http://www.gsaadvantage.gov/advgsa/main_pages/start_page.jsp
 - GSA web-based purchase card training -
http://www.don-ebusiness.navsup.navy.mil/portal/page?_pageid=36,56884,48_56922&_dad=pebiz&_schema=PEBIZ
- <http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/channelView.do?pageTypeld=8199&channelPage=%2Fep%2Fchannel%2FgsaOverview.jsp&channelId=-13497>
- HHS Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU): For resources on small business, including small business training resources, access the following website: <http://www.knownet.hhs.gov/smallbus/>.
 - The STAR Program - The STAR Program is an interdisciplinary study, including IT and project management leadership. This course is sponsored by the Federal CIO Council and GSA. The website is:
<http://www.star.gsa.gov>
 - Treasury Acquisition Institute (TAI) - The Treasury Acquisition Institute is a division with the Department of Treasury that offers many acquisition and project management courses. The website is:
<http://www.procurement.irs.treas.gov/tai/>

Appendix N

DEVELOPMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES

Developmental opportunities provide individuals with the opportunity to attain skills and competencies. The following are examples of developmental opportunities:

- Taking specialized courses, such as: GSA - Federal Supply Schedules; Performance Based Service Acquisition; Acquisition of Commercial Items; Construction Contracting; Small Business Courses; Government-wide Commercial Purchase Card; Negotiation Skills; Alternate Dispute Resolution; Ethics; Evaluating Construction Performance; Project Management; Earned Value Analysis; Implementing the Government Performance and Results Act; Personnel Management for Supervisors; Organizational Leadership for Managers; Supervisor Development Course; Leadership Skills course
- Taking general courses, such as: Writing Skills; Customer Service Skills; Interpersonal Communication Skills; Teambuilding; Presentation Skills; Computer Skills; Managing Change; Problem Solving; Decision Making; Analytical Skills.
- Examples of developmental activities: Become a member of a professional organization, such as the National Contracts Management Association (<http://www.ncmahq.org/publications/cm/default.asp>), Institute for Supply Management (<http://www.napm.org/>), or the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (<http://www.nigp.org/>); Toastmasters Club (<http://www.toastmasters.org/>); review professional magazines; serve as a mentor to others; attend conferences, seminars, etc.
- Other examples of developmental activities: Conduct special projects or reports; serve on inter-office, inter-agency, or departmental teams or workgroups; serve as a participant or advisor on acquisition teams or teams in other functional areas; serve on source selection boards or panels; speak at conferences; write and publish articles for publications.

Appendix O

PROJECT MANAGEMENT RESOURCES

- Examples of continuing education/training for purposes of achieving skills currency requirement: Managing Projects; Quality for Project Managers; Scheduling and Cost Control; Project Leadership; Management and Communications; Risk Management; Project Management Application; Project Management Simulation; Mastering Project Requirements; Advanced Techniques for Enterprise Project Management; Construction/A&E Project Management; Developing a Federal Business Case under OMB A-11 Exhibit 300: Capital Programming and Budgeting; IT Project Risk Management; Mastering IT Projects; Leadership and Communication Skills for Project Managers; Problem Solving; Cost Estimating for IT Projects; Writing Statements of Work for Research and Development.

Appendix P

OPDIV/AGENCY ACQUISITION AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT TRAINING COORDINATORS

Acquisition and Project Management Program Manager:
 Nova Smith
 HHS University
 6010 Executive Boulevard, 4th Floor
 Rockville, MD 20852; Phone: (301) 443-1858; Fax: (301) 480-0159
 E-mail: Nsmith@psc.gov

Questions concerning acquisition and project management training policy issues should be directed to:

Linda A. Stivaletti-Petty, Procurement Analyst, Office of Acquisition Management and Policy
 Hubert H. Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 336E
 Washington, D.C. 20201' Phone: (202) 720-1906; Fax: (202) 690-8772
 E-mail: Linda.Stivaletti@hhs.gov

OPDIV/ AGENCY	PROCUREMENT TRAINING	PROJECT MANAGEMENT TRAINING	PHONE NUMBER/FAX	ADDRESS
OS	Linda Stivaletti-Petty linda.stivaletti@hhs.gov	SAME	(P)(202) 720-1906; (F)(202) 690-8772	HHH, 336E
OSEO	Dana Hill; Dana.Hill@hhs.gov	SAME	(P)(202)690-6863; (F)(202)205-3558	HHH, Rm 801
PSC	Sheri Kretschmaier skretschmaier@psc.gov	SAME	(P)(301)443-6557; (F)(301)594-0736	5600 Fishers Lane, Parklawn Bldg Rm. 5C-18, Rockville, MD 20857
CDC	Jessi Stevens (zsc0@cdc.gov)	SAME	(P)(770)488-2804; (F)(770)488-2828 (P)(770)488- 1026;(F)(770)488- 1025	2900 Brandywine Rd., Rm. 2609, Atlanta, GA 30341-4146, HRMB Mail Stop K04, 4770 Buford Highway, Atlanta, GA 30341
FDA	Lauren Waller LWaller@oc.fda.gov	SAME	(P)(301)827-7032; (F)(301)827-7163	5630 Fishers Lane, Rm 2038 Rockville, MD 20857
HRSA	Donnie O'Brien DO'Brien@hrsa.gov	SAME	(P)(301)443-3486; (F)(301)443-6038	5600 Fisher LaneParklawn Bldg, 13A - 19 Rockville MD 20857
IHS	Deborah Crite Dcrite@hqe.ihs.gov	SAME	Deborah: (P)(301) 443-4937; (F)(301)- 443-1329	12300 Twinbrook Parkway, Suite 450-A Rockville, MD 20852
NIH	Kelly Jackson/Carl Henn jacksonk@od6100m1.od.nih.gov HennC@od.nih.gov	SAME	Kelly: (P)(301)496- 7092; Carl: (P)(301) 496-7110; (F)(301) 480-0945	6100 Executive Blvd.Rm. 6D - 01 Bethesda, MD 20892
SAMHSA	Patricia Bransford Pbransfo@SAMHSA.gov AND Rebecca Ruiz (Rruiz@samhsa.gov)	SAME	Pat Bransford (P)(301) 443-3408; (F)(301) 443-5866 Rebecca's Telephone (301)	Rm. 14C-24 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD

			443-5409 Fax (301) 443-3408	
ACF	Gabrielle Mitchell Gmitchell@acf.hhs.gov; Kari Kesel Kkesel@acf.hhs.gov	SAME	Gabrielle (202) 401- 5201; (P)Kari (202)205-4340; (F)(202)401-5701	370 L'Enfant Promenade S.W. Aerospace Bldg. Room 702 Washington, D.C. 20447
CMS	Carole Newton Cnewton@cms.hhs.gov	SAME	(P)(410)786-7429; (F)(410)786-9922	7500 Security Blvd., Central Bldg. C-2-22-15, Baltimore, MD 21244
AHRQ	Jessica Alderton Jalderton@AHRQ.gov	SAME	(P)(301)427-1783; (F)(301)427-1740	Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 540 Gaither Road, Rockville, MD 20850
SSA	Janet Lisowsky Janet.Lisowsky@ssa.gov	Debbie Hamm Debbi.Hamm@ssa.gov	(P)(410)965-6166; (F)(410)966-7435 (P)(410)965-8423; (F)(410)965-2965	6401 Security Blvd, Suite 100 East High Rise Baltimore, MD 21235 1710 Gynn Oak Ave Baltimore, MD 21207
OS-PHS	Olga Nelson Onelson@OSOPHS.DHHS.gov	SAME	(P)(202)690-5205; (F)(202)401-2222	HHH Bldg. Rm. 709-H
OIG	Renee McNeil Rmcneil@oig.hhs.gov	SAME	(P)(202)619-0678; (F)(202)619-1487	Cohen Bldg. Rm. 5235-A
AOA	Gail Fleming Gail.fleming@AOA.gov	SAME	(P)(202)357- 3411;(F)(202)357- 3471	1 Massachusetts Ave NW Room 4706 Washington DC

Appendix Q

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES REQUEST FOR WAIVER TO THE GS-1102 QUALIFICATION STANDARD APPLICATION FORM

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senior Procurement Executive (*Name and Title*)

FROM: Head of Contracting Activity (*Name and Title*)

THROUGH: Selecting Official (*Name and Title*)

SUBJECT: Request for Waiver to GS-1102 Qualification Standard

(To be filled out by the employee)

1) Name of employee submitting the request for waiver, Title, Series, Grade, HHS Acquisition Certification Level:

2) Employee's work location (organization, division, city, state):

3) Employee's phone number, fax number, e-mail address:

I have ____ do not have ____ a 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree with a major in any field.

I have ____ do not have ____ the 24 semester hours in a combination of the following fields: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organizational management. (Please provide a list of courses and the number of semester hours for each course if you do not have a Bachelors or Masters Degree in one of the previously listed fields). Please attach a copy of your resume/OF 612/SF 171.

(To be filled out by the employee)

4) Waiver to the GS-1102 Qualification Standard

(Please reference Chapter 2, Section B in the HHS Acquisition Workforce Training and Certification Handbook). At HHS, if an employee does not meet the minimum educational requirements as set forth in the GS-1102 Qualification Standard, a waiver may be issued, which allows the employee to be promoted into a position, so long as the employee can justify that he/she is still currently enrolled in a degree program and is working on meeting the requirements.

"I am currently enrolled in the following degree program (*name program*) at the following college/university (*name college/university*). My planned date of graduation/completion of education requirements is (*give date*). I have been enrolled in this college/university since (*give date*).

(Signature of Employee and Date)

(To be filled out by the selecting official and Head of Contracting Activity)

5) Request for waiver to the GS-1102 Qualification Standard

This request is to waive the ____ 24 semester hours of business-related courses, or ____ four years of college leading to a college degree for the following employee or candidate (fill in name). (Please identify the requirement(s) to be waived. For example, lacks 24 credit hours, but not the college degree, etc.)

Please provide justification for requesting the waiver. For example, explain that a unique staffing situation exists, such as a difficult to fill position or duty location where it is difficult to attract qualified candidates that meet all of the standard requirements; a description of why the individual was selected in place of a candidate who meets the qualification standard (if applicable); and the impact of the waiver disapproval on the organization; a description of the position, location, grade and anticipated warrant level; and the candidate's efforts to meet the standard and the estimated time frame for completion of the standard. Also include a description of recruiting efforts and results of those efforts and a copy of the previously approved vacancy announcement (if applicable). Please see Chapter 2, Section B of this handbook for further guidance.

Also, include in the justification the following statement: "I certify (*insert employee's or candidate's name*) has significant potential for advancement to levels of greater responsibility and authority, based on demonstrated analytical and decision making capabilities, job performance, and qualifying experience and background to the requirements of the position to be filled." Include copies of documentation such as employee's/candidate's resume and/or application. Include a statement that the employee/candidate intends to complete the education and/or experience requirements and specify the time frame for completion of those requirements.

Selecting Official Endorsement:
"I hereby endorse this request for a waiver."

(Signature and Date)

Head of Contracting Activity Endorsement:
"I hereby endorse this request for a waiver."

(Signature and Date)

(To be filled out by the Procurement Executive)

6) Procurement Executive Decision:

_____ Approved

_____ Disapproved

(Signature and Date)

Attachments: (as applicable):

Justification for requesting the waiver

Vacancy Announcement

Position Description

Description of recruiting efforts

Employee's application/resume/OF 612/SF 171

Plan for meeting the GS-1102 Qualification Standard

Appendix R

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ACQUISITION CERTIFICATION APPLICATION FORM

MEMORANDUM

TO: (Reviewing Official's name and title)

FROM: (Employee's name and title)

THROUGH: (Employee's supervisor's name and title)

SUBJECT: Request for Acquisition Certification at Level (Insert I(a), I(b), II, III, or IV)

I am submitting this form and the attached *supporting documentation as my application for acquisition certification at Level (insert I(a), I(b), II, III, or IV) under the HHS Acquisition Training and Certification Program.

* supporting documentation consists of completed Appendix Form C-2, education/training certificates (if available), OF 612/resume/SF 171, and Appendix Form K-2.

(To be filled out by the employee)

1) Employee's signature, title, and date:

Employee's series/grade/current HHS Acquisition Certification Level:

Employee's organization/division/office address:

Employee's telephone number/fax number/e-mail address:

Are you a warranted Contracting Officer? No _____ Yes _____
(If yes, provide Warrant Level _____ and Approval Date _____)

I have _____ do not have _____ a 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree with a major in any field.

I have _____ do not have _____ the 24 semester hours in a combination of the following fields: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organizational management. (Please provide a list of courses and the number of semester hours for each course if you do not have a Bachelors or Masters Degree in one of the previously listed fields). Please attach a copy of your resume/OF 612/SF 171.

(To be filled out by the employee's supervisor)

2) Employee's supervisor:

_____ Recommend Approval

_____ Recommend Disapproval

(Signature, Title and Date)

(To be filled out by the reviewing official)

3) Reviewing Official:

_____ Approve

_____ Disapprove

(Signature, Title and Date)

Appendix S

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION APPLICATION FORM

MEMORANDUM

TO: (Reviewing Official's name and title)

FROM: (Employee's name and title)

THROUGH: (Employee's supervisor's name and title)

SUBJECT: Request for Project Management Certification at Level ____ (insert appropriate level)

I am submitting this form and the attached *supporting documentation as my application for project management certification at Level *(insert appropriate level)* under the HHS Project Management Training and Certification Program.

* supporting documentation consists of completed Appendix C-2 (Course Fulfillment Request Form), Education/training certificates (if available), OF 612/resume/SF 171, and Appendix K-3 (Certification of Applicable Education/Training and Work-Related Technical Competencies for Project Managers Form) (this appendix will be added at a later date).

(To be filled out by the employee)

1) Employee's signature, title, and date:

Employee's series/grade/current HHS Project Management Certification Level:

Employee's organization/division/office address:

Employee's telephone number, fax number, e-mail address:

(To be filled out by the employee's supervisor)

2) Employee's Supervisor:

_____ Recommend Approval

_____ Recommend Disapproval

(Signature, Title and Date)

(To be filled out by the reviewing official)

3) Reviewing Official:

_____ Approve

_____ Disapprove

(Signature, Title and Date)

Appendix T

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES CONTRACTING OFFICER'S WARRANT APPLICATION FORM

I. General Information

A. Employee is:

(Name, Title, Series, and Grade)

B. Employee's Work Location:

(Organization/Division/City/State)

C. Employee's phone number, fax number, e-mail address:

D. Current or Previous Warrant Number (if applicable):

E. Current HHS Acquisition Certification Level: (please place and "x" in the appropriate block)

Level I(a) _____ Level I(b) _____ Level II _____

Level III _____ Level IV _____

F. HHS Acquisition Certification Level for which you are applying:

II. Transaction Type (Please specify the type of warrant requested by placing an "x" in the appropriate block)

A. _____ Initial warrant application. Warrant level and authority requested _____.

B. _____ Increase existing warrant level/authority from _____ to _____.

C. There is a clear and convincing need to appoint (name of nominee) as a Level _____ (warrant level) contracting officer. Please justify the need for appointment at warrant level/authority requested:

D. _____ Special Project/Interim warrant application. Warrant level/authority requested _____.

E. _____ Change in warrant status (from an interim appointment to permanent appointment).

F. _____ Termination of Warrant.

(Please check the reason for termination of warrant authority)

_____ The need for the individual to have a warrant no longer exists.

_____ Transfer/reassignment of the individual to another office or to another federal government agency.

_____ Resignation, retirement, or termination of the individual's employment.

_____ Termination for cause. Attach a written description of the circumstances.

_____ Other. Please describe: _____

G. Administrative change to existing warrant. Please indicate change requested (for example, name change):

III. Supporting documentation

(For initial warrant application, increasing existing warrant authority, and conversion of interim warrant to permanent status)

When it has been determined that the appointment is in the best interests of the agency and there is a need for a warrant, nominations for appointment of contracting officers shall be submitted to the Head of Contracting Activity in writing through appropriate organizational channels for review. The nomination package shall include the following: a completed Appendix T of the HHS Acquisition Workforce Training and Certification Handbook, a recommendation from the employee's immediate supervisor providing justification for the appointment of an HHS Contracting Officer; current resume/OF 612/SF 171, and/or other documentation describing the employee's experience, education, and training relevant to the position for which warrant authority is being sought; a copy of the employee's most recent performance appraisal; documents supporting fulfillment (see Chapter 6 of the HHS Acquisition Workforce Training and Certification Handbook); Appendix K-2 (proof of achievement of applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies); type of work to be performed under the warrant, i.e., Agreement Officer, Contracting Officer; a copy of the certificate issued under the HHS Acquisition Certification Program indicating the employee's current certification level; copy of previous warrant certificate, if applicable. The request for appointment and supporting documentation shall be forwarded to the employee's supervisor who reviews it and determines it is accurate and complete. If the employee's application package is approved by the supervisor, it is then forwarded to the Head of Contracting Activity for approval.

(To be filled out by the employee)

IV. Certification

A. Employee

I certify that I have achieved all the warrant level qualifications and training for the warrant level requested and understand the ethical and legal implications and am competent to have the authority to procure on behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services. I understand that my authority to procure under my warrant is limited to my delegation of authority. I understand that I will be required to maintain my skills currency as a requirement to keep my warrant.

(Employee's Name)

(Employee's Signature and Date)

B. Interim Appointment Applicant:

I certify that I will meet all the warrant level qualifications and training for the warrant level requested within one (1) year of the warrant issue date and understand the legal and ethical implications and am competent to have the authority to procure on behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services. I understand that I will be required to maintain my skills currency as a requirement to keep my warrant. I understand that my authority to procure under my warrant is limited to my delegation of authority.

(Employee's Name)

(Employee's Signature and Date)

C. All Employees:

I certify that all of the statements made by me are true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and are made in good faith.

(Employee's Signature and Date)

(To be completed by the recommending official)

IV. Recommendation

The recommending official (employee's immediate supervisor) is required to check the appropriate block and sign in the space provided in this section. A second signature is required from the Head of Contracting Activity for final approval.

_____ The employee's performance of acquisition duties, business acumen,
judgment, character, and ethics are sound and his/her performance is

satisfactory. All of the required warrant level qualifications and education/ training (or equivalencies), and experience requirements have been met. The need for the warrant authority is documented, and appointment to the level/status is recommended. The warrant level requested is commensurate with the employee's qualifications.

_____ The employee's request is not recommended for approval at this time. Therefore, the attached documentation is returned to the applicant.

_____ The employee's request for an interim appointment has been reviewed and is recommended for approval.

_____ The employee's request for a warrant record correction/edit(s) has been reviewed, and the requested changes are authorized.

_____ An administrative termination of the warrant is recommended.

_____ Based on the attached supporting data, it is recommended that the warrant be terminated for cause.

(Employee's immediate supervisor's name)

(Signature and Date)

(To be completed by the Head of Contracting Activity)

VI. Approval

Approved: _____
(Head of Contracting Activity's Name) (Signature and Date)

Disapproved: _____
(Head of Contracting Activity's Name) (Signature and Date)

VII. Warrant Information:

Warrant number: _____

Warrant date: _____

Warrant signed by: _____

Appendix U

MEMORANDUM REGARDING GUIDANCE ON REQUESTING WAIVERS OF THE REVISED GS-1102 QUALIFICATION STANDARD

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 19, 2000

FROM: Deputy Assistant Secretary for Grants and Acquisition Management

SUBJECT: Guidance on Requesting Waivers of the Revised GS-1102 Qualification Standard

TO: Members of the Executive Committee for Acquisition

Attached for your information and use is the final version of the "Department of Health and Human Services Guidance on Implementation of Revised Qualification Standard for the GS-1102 Series," along with a copy of the revised Qualification Standard and "Questions and Answers Concerning Revised 1102 Qualification Standard" that were prepared by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy.

The guidelines were circulated in draft form to OpDiv and StaffDiv procurement and human resources offices, and the national offices of Federal employee unions. All comments received were discussed, and appropriate ones incorporated in this final version.

I want to reiterate that waivers will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be granted in rare, exceptional cases where the best candidate for the job does not meet some requirement of the qualification standard. The ability of an employee to demonstrate good-faith progress toward meeting the standard will be weighed heavily in the decision to grant a waiver.

If you have any questions concerning the waiver guidance, please contact Kathy Hughes at telephone number (202) 690-7079, or by e-mail at KHuhges1@os.dhhs.gov.

Terrence J. Tychan

Attachments

cc: Ms. Evelyn White, OHR

Appendix U (continued)

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES GUIDANCE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF REVISED QUALIFICATION STANDARD FOR THE GS-1102 SERIES

Background

The Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) issued a revised qualification standard for the GS-1102 Contract Specialist Series, effective January 1, 2000 which applies to all new hires and to existing employees selected to fill GS-1102 positions in civilian agencies. This revised standard does not change the minimum education levels defined by the former standard. In addition to replacing the January 1, 1998 date with a January 1, 2000 date, and removing language that permitted examinations to substitute for the 24-hour requirement, the revised standard expands the qualification waiver authority related to filling GS-13 and above positions. A copy of the revised standard, along with a set of "Questions and Answers Concerning Revised Qualification Standard," prepared by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP), is attached.

The previous standard allowed an agency's senior procurement executive to only waive one of the two education requirements contained therein. The revised version permits waivers of any or all of the requirements of Paragraphs A. and B. of the standard. Paragraph A. requires completion of all mandatory training prescribed by the agency head, and at least four years experience in contracting or related positions. Paragraph B. imposes the requirement for a four-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree that included or was supplemented by at least 24 semester hours of business or business-related courses.

The "senior procurement executive" referred to in the standard is the highest career civil servant having responsibility for the procurement function within an agency. This individual may be different from the person designated as a "senior procurement executive" pursuant to OFPP Act (41 U.S.C. 414(3)) and as defined in the Federal Acquisition Regulation, who is a political appointee in some agencies. In the Department of Health and Human Services, the Senior Procurement Executive (SPE) is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Grants and Acquisition Management. The waiver authority is not delegable to Operating Division (OPDIV) or Staff Division (STAFFDIV) Heads, Heads of Contracting Activity, or Principal Officials Responsible for Acquisition (PORA).

The expanded waiver authority was created to provide agencies flexibility in accommodating unique situations, but OFPP has indicated that it expects waivers to be the exception rather than the rule. Accordingly, the HHS SPE will consider waivers on a case-by-case basis. Waivers will be granted in rare, exceptional cases where the best candidate for a specific job does not meet some requirement of the standard. The employee's ability to demonstrate good-faith progress toward meeting the standard will be weighed heavily in the waiver decision. In addition, only requests for waivers of the educational requirements in Paragraph B. of the standard will be considered. It is the Department's policy that no waivers will be granted for the training and experience requirements set forth in Paragraph A.

Procedure for Requesting a Waiver to the Standard

If an OPDIV or STAFFDIV determines when recruiting for a GS-1102 vacancy for a Grade 13 or higher that it will consider applicants for a waiver, the OPDIV or STAFFDIV should work with human resource specialists to ensure that the vacancy announcement incorporates language to this effect. One example of a situation where waiver authority might be needed is when hiring for hard-to-fill positions or duty locations where it is difficult to attract qualified candidates. Another case may be where a strong performer is on a career ladder but fails to meet the requirements for promotion. At the OPDIV's or STAFFDIV's option, the waiver may be applied to any of the Part B. educational requirements as specified in the vacancy announcement. This will allow individuals who do not meet the qualification standard to apply for the vacancy and be considered for the position. If an individual who does not meet the standard is tentatively selected for the position, the selecting official will then need to send a waiver request, through the OPDIV PORA, to the HHS SPE. Along with a cover memorandum, the waiver request shall contain the following information:

1. A position description;
2. A copy of the vacancy announcement (not applicable to career-ladder promotions);
3. A description of the recruiting efforts undertaken by the organization and the results of those efforts including the sources used for recruiting (not applicable to career-ladder promotions);
4. The tentatively selected individual's application or resume, with a narrative from the selecting official describing the potential of the applicant for advancement to levels of greater responsibility and authority based on demonstrated analytical and decision making capabilities, job performance, and qualifying experience;
5. A copy of the employee's individual development or career development plan. (Individual development plans for GS-1102s were mandated by the Federal Acquisition Reform Act (Clinger-Cohen), and implemented by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy in Policy Letter No. 97-01, dated September 12, 1997). The individual development plan shall be accompanied by a plan signed by the selecting official and the tentative selectee showing a time line for achieving the educational requirements of Part B., and;
6. A justification for the waiver, including a description of why the individual was selected in lieu of a candidate who fully met the educational qualification standard, and the impact of waiver disapproval on the organization.

Requests for waivers received without the documentation listed in items 1. through 6. above will be returned to the initiating OPDIV or STAFFDIV without further action. If a waiver is granted, it is based on the unique circumstances of a specific hiring action. It is not a "blanket" waiver for an individual or an organization. Waiver requests will be reviewed by a panel consisting of one HHS procurement

analyst and one HHS personnel management specialist who will make a recommendation to the SPE. However, the decision on whether to grant the waiver is the SPE's, and that decision is final.

Please mail the waiver request package to:

Mr. Terrence J. Tychan
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Grants
and Acquisition Management
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Mail Stop 517-D
Washington, D.C. 20201

Questions or requests for additional information should be directed to Ms. Kathy Hughes, Procurement Analyst, at telephone number (202) 690-7079; e-mail address Katherine.Hughes@hhs.gov, or Mr. Marc Weisman, Director, Office of Acquisition Management, telephone number (202) 401-6103; e-mail address Marc.Weisman@hhs.gov.

Appendix V

"CROSSWALK" OF ACQUISITION CERTIFICATION/WARRANT LEVELS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS (As of October 1, 2004)

Note: The HHS Acquisition Certification levels directly correlate with the warrant levels. At HHS, certification/warrants levels are not linked to promotions or eligibility for a job assignment. Mandatory skills currency, satisfactory performance rating, and attainment of applicable education/training and work-related technical competencies are also determining factors in qualifying applicants for acquisition certification/warrant levels (see Chapter 4 of this handbook).

Level	Experience	Mandatory Training	Warrant Level
Level I(a) (Purchasing Agent)	One (1) year of experience in the GS-1102, 1105, 1106, or other series having signature authority for simplified acquisitions, six (6) months of which includes hands on experience in small purchases/simplified acquisition procedures.	Successful completion of eighty (80) hours of basic-level training which includes the following courses or their equivalent: Basic Simplified Acquisition Procedures (40 hours) Advanced Simplified Acquisition Procedures (40 hours)	Required for all personnel in the GS-1102, 1105, 1106 series, or other series having signature authority for simplified acquisitions, including orders from GSA sources over the micropurchase threshold. Also includes people with purchase card authority above \$2,500 and up to \$25,000 per transaction, as well as DELPRO and card approving officials. Sufficient for delegation of contracting officer authority up to \$25,000 per transaction, or up to the maximum threshold on Federal Supply Schedule Blanket Purchase Agreements, not to exceed \$1,000,000.

Level I(b) (Purchasing Agent)	One (1) year of general acquisition experience (experience in the GS-1102, GS-1105, GS-1106 series, or other series having authority for simplified acquisitions), which may include experience in small purchases/simplified acquisition procedures.	<p>Satisfies the requirements for a Level I(a) in the HHS Acquisition Certification Program. Successful completion of eighty (80) hours of basic-level training which includes the following courses or their equivalent:</p> <p>Introduction to Contracting (40 hours)</p> <p>Acquisition Planning I (40 hours)</p>	<p>Required for all personnel in the GS-1102, 1105, 1106 series, or series having signature authority for simplified acquisitions, including orders from GSA sources over the micropurchase threshold. Also includes individuals with purchase card authority above \$25,000 and up to \$100,000 per transaction as well as card approving officials. Purchase card authority over \$25,000 and up to \$100,000 per transaction is only granted to purchasing agents in the centralized/decentralized acquisition offices. Sufficient for delegation of contracting officer authority up to \$100,000, or up to the maximum ordering threshold on Federal Supply Schedule Blanket Purchase Agreements, not to exceed \$1,000,000, as well as use of commercial purchasing up to \$5,000,000 per transaction on contracting established price line items. (commercial items are described in FAR Subpart 13.5).</p> <p><i>Individuals who were granted a Level I certification prior to adoption of this version of the handbook will retain the authorities granted under the previous handbook, i.e., Level I Certification sufficient for delegation of authority up to \$100,000. Contract Formation I and Acquisition Planning II taken prior to October 1, 2004 will be considered equivalent to any of the courses now required for Level I(a) and I(b) on an equivalent hour basis. Individuals approved for Level I under the previous version of this handbook can be upgraded to Level I(b) (which would allow delegation of authority to acquire commercial products and services up to \$5,000,000) by completing the required courses and requesting a new certificate.</i></p>
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Level II	Two (2) years of general acquisition experience.	<p>Successful completion of two-hundred and eighty (280) hours of basic-level training, which includes the following courses:</p> <p>Introduction to Contracting (40 hours)</p> <p>Acquisition Planning I (40 hours)</p> <p>Contract Formation I (40 hours)</p> <p>Cost Analysis (40 hours)</p> <p>Price Analysis (40 hours)</p> <p>Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques (40 hours)</p> <p>Contract Administration I (40 hours)</p>	Required for all personnel in the GS-1102 series to be delegated a warrant up to \$500,000 and commercial purchases up to \$5,000,000 per transaction.
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Level III	Two (2) years of specialized experience (in addition to the two (2) years of general acquisition experience required for Level II certification) in a senior acquisition position (see Appendix L for a definition of "Senior Acquisition Official") .	<p>Satisfies the requirements for a Level II in the HHS Acquisition Certification Program.</p> <p>Successful completion of two-hundred and eighty (280) hours of advanced-level training, which includes the following courses or their equivalent:</p> <p>Contract Formation II (40 hours)</p> <p>Intermediate Contract Pricing (80 hours)</p> <p>Contract Administration II (40 hours)</p> <p>Government Contract Law (80 hours)</p> <p>Acquisition Planning II (40 hours)</p>	Required for all personnel in the GS-1102 series for delegation of contracting officer authority with unlimited purchasing authority and commercial purchases at any level.
Level IV	Minimum of (4) years of experience in an acquisition position. Examples of positions include supervisory contracting officer, contracting officer responsible for a major acquisition program, senior procurement analyst, and team leader; minimum of one (1) year in an acquisition management position; or a minimum of one (1) year as a contracting officer with an unlimited warrant.	<p>Satisfies the requirements for a Level III in the HHS Acquisition Certification Program.</p> <p>Successful completion of CON 301 (Executive Acquisition Seminar).</p>	Required for delegation of preaward review and approval authority as specified in HHSAR Subpart 304.71.

APPENDIX V (continued)

(under the October 2002 version of the HHS Acquisition Training and Certification Handbook)

"CROSSWALK" OF ACQUISITION CERTIFICATION/WARRANT LEVELS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

Level	Experience	Mandatory Training	Warrant Level
Level I (Purchasing Agent)	One (1) year of experience in the GS-1102, 1105, 1106, or other series having signature authority for simplified acquisitions, six (6) months of which provided experience in using simplified acquisition procedures.	Eighty (80) hours of basic-level training which includes the following courses or their equivalent: Contract Formation I (40 hours) Acquisition Planning II (40 hours)	Required for all personnel in the GS-1102, 1105, 1106 series, or series having signature authority for simplified acquisitions, including orders from GSA sources over the micropurchase threshold. Also includes DELPRO approving and ordering officers. <u>Sufficient</u> for delegation of contracting officer authority up to \$100,000.

Level II (Acquisition Official)	Three (3) years of general acquisition experience.	Two-hundred and eighty (280) hours of basic-level training which includes the following courses or their equivalent: Acquisition Planning I (80 hours) Contract Formation I (40 hours) Cost Analysis (40 hours) Price Analysis (40 hours) Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques (40 hours) Contract Administration I (40 hours)	Required for all personnel in the GS- 1102 series. Sufficient for delegation of contracting officer authority up to \$500,000.
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Level III (Senior Acquisition Official)	Two (2) years specialized experience (in addition to the three (3) years general experience required for Level II certification) in a senior acquisition position.	<p>Satisfies the requirements for Level II certification.</p> <p>Two-hundred and forth (240) hours of advanced-level training which includes the following courses or their equivalent:</p> <p>Contract Formation II (40 hours) Intermediate Contract Pricing (80 hours) Contract Administration II (40 hours) Contract Law (80 hours)</p> <p><i>Individuals who have COMPLETED the requirements for Level III certification are considered to have satisfied mandatory and agency assignment-specific training. Those individuals in the GS-1102 series who have COMPLETED such training are required by OFPP Policy Letter 97-01, dated September 12, 1997, to have 40 hours of continuing education or training every two years for the purpose of maintaining currency of acquisition knowledge and skills. Forty (40) hours of continuing education or training every two years is NOT a requirement to obtain Level III certification. According to the Policy Letter, this type of training may include, but is not limited to, agency-sponsored training and management/executive seminars, special job and/or professional association-related projects and/or participation in seminars/workshops, or other appropriate developmental activities.</i></p>	Required for all personnel in the GS-1102 series for delegation of contracting officer authority above \$500,000.
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Level IV (Acquisition Manager)	A minimum of one (1) year in an acquisition management position.	Satisfies the requirements for Level III certification. No mandatory training requirement.	Required for delegation of preaward review and approval authority as specified in HHSAR Subpart 304.71
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Appendix W

REFERENCES

Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (1990).

Department of Defense Acquisition University. *Appendix D - Course Equivalencies*. Available: <http://www.dau.mil/catalog/cat2004/Appendix%20D.pdf>.

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Federal Acquisition Reform Act (1996).

Office of Federal Procurement Policy Letter No. 92-3, "Procurement Professionalism Program Policy - Training for Contracting Personnel," dated June 24, 1992.

Office of Federal Procurement Policy Letter No. 97-01, "Procurement Systems Education, Training, and Experience Requirements for Acquisition Personnel," dated September 12, 1997.

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Acquisition Regulation (HHSAR).

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