

**Questions and Answers from the
Procurement and Property Division Workshop
April 16-18, 2002**

1. **Question:** How long does it take to get an AR or FPDS number?

Answer: The AR or FPDS number is assigned by NFC. Normally, this request takes approximately one week after submission to NFC by the appropriate area computer specialist.

2. **Question:** Address changes on Vendor Table made by others after original Purchase Order (PO) was transmitted to NFC. A lot of errors on Vendor Tables.

Answer: Only NFC can make changes to the Vendor Table. NFC will only make changes when a request is received and the information is verified. If an address change has been made to a Vendor Identification (VID) code that you have been using, and you still need the address to be the way it was originally, have your vendor coordinator contact NFC to find out who requested the change and why. You may have to modify your PO to change the remittance address. You may also add the address as an alternate payee. For guidance on using the alternate payee address, check the FFIS users guide for instructions on the alternate payee address, contact your SUSF manager, or the FFIS Help Desk at 301-504-4429.

Yes, there are many errors in the Vendor Table. The Table is several years old and vendor coordinators through the years have not maintained it properly. Since every USDA agency uses the Vendor Table, ARS cannot be held responsible for the condition of the Vendor Table. ARS has to work with the Vendor Table as it is until the Department makes an effort to clean it up. Until that happens, we must make sure that the VID codes we use are correct.

3. **Question:** In a recent CARE review, I was instructed that for purchases > \$25,000 using the Federal Supply Schedule (FSS), I still had to synopsise in FedBizOpps. Is this correct?

Answer: According to FAR Subpart 8.404, Using schedules, orders placed against FSS Multiple Award Schedules (MAS), using the procedures in FAR Subpart 8.4, are considered to be issued using full and open competition.

Therefore, ordering offices need not seek further competition, synopsise the requirement, make a separate determination of fair and reasonable pricing, or consider small business programs. GSA has already determined the prices of items under FSS contracts to be fair and reasonable. By placing an order against a schedule using the procedures in this section, the ordering office has concluded that the order represents the best value and results in the lowest overall cost alternative (considering price, special features, administrative costs, etc.) to meet the Government's needs.

4. **Question:** If you hire an electrician on Monday to hook up an autoclave at the tune of \$2,240 and on Wednesday, have the same electrician back to perform another job (not related to autoclave), is this considered splitting an order?

Answer: Timing and identification are critical in answering this question. If the laboratory identified both actions at the same time as their "electrical repair requirements," then the repairs are viewed as a single action. However, if the repairs were identified on separate days or came from different fund holders, the calls to the electrician would be unique requirements.

5. **Question:** If you did a PO over \$25,000 and did not code it "22", do you need to do an amendment to the PO to correct it?

Answer: Yes. An amendment is necessary to correct so that the action can be reported in the appropriate FPDS system. After the amendment has been prepared and the PO coded a "22", enter the action in the online version of the SF-279.

6. **Question:** If you order under \$100, do you need to use JWOD?

Answer: FAR Subpart 8.704 states that the JWOD Act requires the Government to purchase supplies or services from JWOD participating nonprofit agencies if they are available within the period required. Additionally, FAR Subpart 8.706 lists specific purchase exceptions for nonuse of JWOD participating nonprofit agencies. These are when:

- a. The participating nonprofit agencies cannot provide the supplies or services within the time required, and commercial sources can provide them significantly sooner in the quantities required; or

- b. The quantity required cannot be produced or provided economically by the JWOD participating nonprofit agencies.

Additional information on JWOD is available in the Field Acquisition Manual, Policy Memorandum 8-03, Mandatory Sources of Supplies and Services. Both documents are available at

<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/divisions/ppd/issuances.htm>.

7. **Question:** When approving PCMS transactions that require a "22" for construction or over \$25,000, where do we enter 22? In the SF-281 slot?

Answer: Yes. Enter the code "22" in the SF-281 slot.

8. **Question:** Does someone entering the 1102 series for the first time (GS-05 thru 12 levels) need a college degree or just the 24 hours? Also include the educational requirements for an 1102 going from a GS-12 to 13 and higher level.

Answer: The Office of Personnel Management Operating Manual Qualification Standards for General Service Positions, Individual Occupational Requirements for GS-1102: Contract Specialist defines the requirements for all 1102 personnel working in Civilian agencies. Also, Departmental Regulation 5001-1, dated September 2001, further clarifies and states USDA policy regarding the educational requirements of 1102 personnel.

All 1102 personnel in GS-5 through GS-12 grades must meet the following requirements:

- 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.

Exceptions:

- Employees in the **GS-1102 positions** will be considered to have met the standard for the 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.
- Employees wishing to be promoted to a GS-1102 **grade 13** must possess the 4-year course of study **in addition to** the 24 semester hours of business-related discipline classes identified above.