

VA National Acquisition Center's (NAC)  
**FEDERAL SUPPLY SCHEDULE (FSS)**

*Our mission is to provide world class healthcare products & services to the federal marketplace*

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## VA Mentor-Protégé Program

### VA Starts Mentoring for Veteran Owned Small Businesses

In order to help small businesses owned by veterans become more competitive in the marketplace, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has created a Mentor-Protégé Program (MPP) to assist Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSBs) and Veteran Owned Small Businesses (VOSBs) in enhancing their capabilities to perform prime contracts and subcontracts for the VA. The MPP is also designed to:



- o Improve the performance of VA contractors and subcontractors by providing developmental assistance to protégé entities;
- o Foster the establishment of long-term relationships between VA prime contractors, SDVOSBs and VOSBs;
- o Increase the overall number of SDVOSBs and VOSBs that receive VA contract and subcontract awards.

The program commits participating firms to agreements of up to 36 months, in which [20 mentor-protégé teams](#) have already been selected. The VA plans to select additional mentor-protégé teams in August 2011 and approximately every six months thereafter. Please note that the mentor and protégé firms are responsible for preparing their own agreements and submitting them to the [Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization](#).

In regard to eligibility, a mentoring firm:

- o Does not have to be veteran owned;
- o May be either a large or small business entity, and either a prime or subcontractor;
- o Must be able to provide developmental assistance that will enhance the abilities of the protégé as a prime contractor and/or subcontractor.

To be eligible to participate as a protégé, an entity is required to be classified as a SDVOSB or a VOSB in the [Vet Biz Registry](#) and [Central Contractor Registration \(CCR\)](#). A protégé shall self-represent to a mentor firm that it meets the eligibility requirements. Also, a protégé must maintain their verified status throughout the term of the agreement.

Firms interested in becoming approved mentor-protégé participants must submit a jointly written VA Mentor-Protégé Agreement (MPA) to the VA OSDBU for review and approval. Applicants will submit, via email, a signed MPA in PDF format to [VACOMPP@VA.GOV](mailto:VACOMPP@VA.GOV).

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Veteran Business Status Verification Instructions](#)
- [VA Mentor Protégé FAQs](#)
- [Mentor Protégé Program Guidebook](#)

## Training Topic

### Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA)

#### 1) What is a BPA?

A BPA is an agreement that is used by Government agencies and organizations to pay for supplies and services that are purchased from qualified sources of supply on a repetitive basis. In accordance with [Federal Acquisition Regulation \(FAR\) 8.405-3](#), the agreements simplify the Government purchasing process since a BPA operates similar to a charge card.

#### 2) What are the benefits/advantages of using a BPA?

BPAs established under the [VA FSS Program](#) provide ordering activities with a variety of benefits and advantages. The contractual terms and conditions contained in VA FSS contracts should not be re-negotiated for VA FSS BPAs. Therefore as a purchasing option, BPAs eliminate contracting and open market costs. BPAs also:

- o Reduce administrative efforts by eliminating repetitive, individual orders and payments;
- o Let customers obtain better value by leveraging the Government's buying power through volume purchasing;
- o Enable ordering activities to use streamlined ordering procedures and satisfy recurring requirements;
- o Permit ordering activities to incorporate [Contractor Teaming Arrangements \(CTAs\)](#).

#### 3) What is the difference between FAR 13.303 and FAR 8.405-3?

Although [FAR Parts 13.303](#) and [8.405-3](#) grant the authority to establish BPAs to acquire goods and services, FAR Part 13.303 does not apply to VA FSS BPAs (with the exception of [FAR 13.303-2\(c\)\(3\)](#), which states that "BPAs may be established with Federal Supply Schedule contractors." Instead, ordering activities may establish a BPA under any VA Schedule contract in accordance with FAR 8.405-3. Please note that FAR 13.303 refers to establishing a BPA via open market, while FAR 8.405-3 refers to establishing a BPA under a FSS contract. As a result, FAR 13.303 and 8.405-3 have different monetary limitations, competition and performance period requirements, etc.

#### 4) What is the duration of a BPA established under a VA FSS contract?

A VA FSS BPA should not exceed five years in length, but may do so to meet program requirements ([FAR 8.405-3\(c\)](#)). A Schedule contractor may be awarded a BPA that extends beyond the current term of its VA FSS contract, as long as there are option periods in the contract that, if exercised, will cover the BPA's period of performance.

An ordering activity that establishes a BPA shall conduct an annual review to determine, among other factors, whether the Schedule contract, upon which the BPA was established, is still in effect and whether the BPA still represents the best value.

- [BPA FAQs](#)
- [Documentation Needed When Establishing a BPA](#)

## VA FSS Working For You

### VA Online Sales Reporting System

In partnership with the General Services Administration (GSA), the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) will now collect quarterly sales report figures and Industrial Funding Fee (IFF) quarterly payments through a new GSA/VA Sales Online Portal: <https://vasalesportal.gsa.gov/>. As such, all VA FSS contractors will be required to use this new portal in order to submit their quarterly sales reports from this point forward, which will streamline the sales reporting process and ensure more efficiency in the management of the VA FSS program. Please note that VA FSS contractors will not incur any charges for reporting or submitting payments through the electronic Sales Portal.

At this time, all VA FSS contractors (including contract holders under the 65II Medical Equipment & Supplies schedule) should report their 1<sup>st</sup> quarter sales for FY 2011 (October 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010) through the online portal. Please note that we will no longer send **ANY** VA FSS contractor a pre-populated spreadsheet in order to report their quarterly sales.

#### **Helpful Information for all VA FSS Contractors**

- o In order to gain access to the VA Sales Portal for the first time, a VA FSS contractor must register with the system. Please note that a contractor will not be able to access the online portal unless their firm's registration is approved by our office and a confirmation e-mail is received. Please be sure to review the [Online Sales Reporting User Guide](#) in order to learn how to register and report your firm's 1<sup>st</sup> quarter sales through the online portal.
- o To expedite the registration process and make sure your firm's registration is not rejected, please have an authorized point of contact under the FSS contract register your company (e.g. the FSS contract administrator, the FSS sales point of contact, etc.). Please make sure that the contact information you provide within your registration (e.g. e-mail address, company name, etc.), matches the contact information currently available under your firm's FSS contract. For instance, if your e-mail address under your firm's FSS contract is [James.Smith@hotmail.com](mailto:James.Smith@hotmail.com), please register with that e-mail address; not another e-mail address that you may frequently use (e.g. [JSmith@gmail.com](mailto:JSmith@gmail.com)). If you fail to provide the correct contact information based on your firm's FSS contract, your registration will be rejected.
- o FSS contractors are **NOT** required to remit their firm's IFF payment through the online portal. However, we are no longer accepting checks from VA FSS contractors in order to pay their IFF. Thus, FSS contractors are **required** to remit their IFF with an electronic payment (i.e. payment through the online portal, an ACH payment, wire transfer, etc.). All checks submitted will be returned, which will result in your firm being non-compliant with its FSS contract and could possibly lead to the cancellation of the contract. If you plan to make an electronic payment, outside of the sales portal and you need the Government's banking information, please contact the FSS Sales Helpdesk at [fsssales.amhnh@va.gov](mailto:fsssales.amhnh@va.gov).
- o Beginning on January 1, 2011, VA FSS contractors have sixty days to report their 1<sup>st</sup> quarter sales through the online portal. Therefore, FSS contractors are required to submit their 1<sup>st</sup> quarter sales information no later than March 1, 2011. If you fail to register and submit the required 1<sup>st</sup> quarter sales data by the stated deadline, your firm's will be non-complaint and may be canceled.

Please direct all IFF and sales reporting related questions to the VA Sales Helpdesk at [fsssales.amhnh@va.gov](mailto:fsssales.amhnh@va.gov).

- [View the Online Sales Reporting User Guide and/or Portal Payment User Guide](#)

## National News

### Recent Emergency & Disaster Declarations

Under the [Disaster Recovery Purchasing Program](#), state and local Government entities may purchase products and services off of FSS contracts in order to facilitate the recovery from a major disaster (e.g. hurricane or a nuclear attack). As such, there were [two declarations](#) by President Obama during the month of December 2010, which can be seen below.

**Major Disaster Declarations (December 2010)**

Number	Date	State	Disaster Type	Designated Counties
1950	12/21	AZ	Severe Storms & Flooding	
1951	12/22	VT	Severe Storm	

- [Frequently Asked Questions About the Disaster Recovery Purchasing Program](#)

## Upcoming Events

### VA NAC INDUSTRY DAY



The [National Acquisition Center \(NAC\) Industry Day](#) Conference has been scheduled and will be held on March 15 – 16, 2011 at the [InterContinental Chicago O'Hare](#). Additional information, such as presentation topics, will be forthcoming in the near future, so please be sure to review the NAC's homepage: <http://www1.va.gov/oamm/oa/nac/index.cfm>.

### VA NAC FSS Customer Training

- o [FSS Customer Training Schedule](#):
  - We do not currently have any FSS customer training classes scheduled at this time. However if you would like to attend a training session, schedule a new one, or request additional information, please contact Ms. Veronica Hazen at [Veronica.Hazen@va.gov](mailto:Veronica.Hazen@va.gov). Please note that the FSS Customer Training is **ONLY APPLICABLE TO GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**.
- o [Available Online Training For Any Interested Party](#):
  - [Pathway to Success](#) education seminar
  - The [Center for Acquisition Excellence](#) provides online training and resources about General Services Administration (GSA) and VA acquisition vehicles. You can find training on:
    - How to Become a Contractor – includes supplies and services covered by the Schedules program, Schedule solicitations and proposals, and marketing and administering a Schedule contract
    - Government Wide Acquisition Contract (GWAC)
    - Cooperative Purchase Program
    - Blanket Purchase Agreement
  - The [Vendor Support Center](#)

## News You Can Use

### VA FSS in Action

The Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) Service is continuing to make up ground on all outstanding modification requests, contract extension packages, and offer actions. These efforts continued into December, in addition to the efforts made to ensure a successful [2011 Public Law Season](#). Initially, we had some delays with the Public Law season this year, but we were able to rebound quickly and take care of the issues. This was mainly due to our ability to use a greater number of our Contract Specialist resources than in past years.

As we begin 2011, the FSS team will be looking to formalize a plan to reconnect vendors with specifically assigned Contract Specialists to provide greater continuity and knowledge sharing. We will be moving forward to enhance our new employee training programs and establish training venues for our vendor community. Moreover, one of our main goals will be to continue to make strides in decreasing our overall timelines and looking for greater improvements as the year progresses. If you are experiencing any issues, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Carole O'Brien, Director of the FSS Service, at 708-786-4957 and/or [Carole.Obrien@va.gov](mailto:Carole.Obrien@va.gov) or Mr. Craig Robinson, Executive Director of the VA National Acquisition Center, at 708-786-5157 and/or [Craig.Robinson@va.gov](mailto:Craig.Robinson@va.gov).

Thank you for your continued support and suggestions. Wishing you all a **HAPPY NEW YEAR** from the VA's FSS Service.

### New DAU Website for Acquisition Professionals

Recently, the [Defense Acquisition University \(DAU\)](#) launched a [games website](#) designed to help acquisition professionals develop their core competencies. Of the thirteen mini games currently available, four were created specifically for the site, including:

- o [Select-A-Cell](#), which provides an overview of the logistics life cycle;
- o [Acquisition Proposition](#), which reinforces knowledge of the acquisition life cycle;
- o [Invasion Prevention Corporation's \(IPC's\) CPI](#) Game, which helps players understand when to use continuous process improvement tools.

"The rationale behind the site was to serve as a place where professionals in the acquisition workforce could go to play games that were related to the core competencies that are central to acquisition," explained Dr. Alicia Sanchez, "games czar" at DAU. To encourage players to return to the site, DAU expects to release new games on a monthly basis.

## Recently Awarded FSS Contracts (December 2010)

### Pharmaceutical, Dental, Patient Mobility, & X-Ray:

- Allos Therapeutic, Inc.: V797P-5123B (Small Pharmaceutical Business)
- Niche Pharmaceuticals, Inc.: V797P-5150B (Small Pharmaceutical Business)
- Akorn, Inc.: V797P-5209B (Small Pharmaceutical Business)
- Pedinol Pharmacal, Inc.: V797P-5210B (Small Pharmaceutical Business)
- Salix Pharmaceuticals, Inc.: V797P-5211B (Small Pharmaceutical Business)
- Eurand Pharmaceuticals: V797P-5111B (Small Pharmaceutical Business)
- Emmaus Medical, Inc.: V797P-5208B (Large Pharmaceutical Business)
- Amphastar Pharmaceuticals, Inc.: V797P-5212B (Small Pharmaceutical Business)
- QLT Ophthalmics, Inc.: V797P-5143B (Small Pharmaceutical Business)
- Coats International Inc. DBA Coats Aloe International: V797P-5215B (Small, Veteran Owned Pharmaceutical Business)
- EMD Serono, Inc.: V797P-5207B (Large Pharmaceutical Business)
- Cera Products, Inc.: V797P-5205B (Small, Woman Owned Pharmaceutical Business)
- CONMED Corporation: V797P-5204B (Large Pharmaceutical Business)
- Pacific Pharma, Inc.: V797P-5206B (Large Pharmaceutical Business)
- Sunrise Medical, (US) LLC.: V797P-3220M (Large Patient Mobility Business)
- Mednovus, Inc.: V797P-3222M (Small X-ray Equipment/Supplies Business)
- Bicon, LLC.: V797P-3223M (Small Dental Business)

### Medical/Surgical Equipment:

- CareFusion 209: V797P-4345B (Large Med/Surg Business)
- Mediwatch, Plc.: V797P-4364B (Small, 8(A) Med/Surg Business)
- Alimed, Inc.: V797P-4371B (Small Med/Surg Business)
- Stereotaxis, Inc.: V797P-4354B (Small Med/Surg Business)
- CardioNet, Inc.: V797P-4361B (Large Med/Surg Business)
- Jero Medical Equipment & Supplies: V797P-4369B (Small Disadvantaged, Veteran Owned, Woman Owned, Hubzone Med/Surg Business)
- Ergolet Americas, Inc.: V797P-4365B (Large Med/Surg Business)
- Bracemasters International, LLC.: V797P-4360B (Small Med/Surg Business)
- OnSite Sterilization: V797P-4363B (Small Med/Surg Business)
- BondTech Corporation: V797P-4370B (Small Med/Surg Business)
- Cadwell Labs: V797P-4366B (Small Med/Surg Business)
- Delta Medical Systems DBA Delta Gloves: V797P-4374B (Small, Woman Owned Med/Surg Business)
- Professional Hospital Supply, Inc.: V797P-4367B (Large, Woman Owned Med/Surg Business)
- ROHO, Inc.: V797P-4362B (Small, Hubzone Med/Surg Business)
- Krasity's Medical & Surgical Supply, Inc.: V797P-4372B (Small Med/Surg Business)

### Medical Professional & Laboratory Testing Services & Cost-Per-Test:

- Med-Link Staffing, Inc.: V797P-7304A (Small Professional Medical Healthcare Services Business)
- Medical Staffing Services, Inc.: V797P-7298A (Small Professional Medical Healthcare Services Business)
- PrimeHealth Staffing, LLC.: V797P-7305A (Small, Woman Owned Professional Medical Healthcare Services Business)
- TaleMed, LLC.: V797P-7303A (Small, Woman Owned Professional Medical Healthcare Services Business)
- Integrated Resources, Inc.: V797P-7306A (Small Professional Medical Healthcare Services Business)

***In order to obtain pricing information for all of the companies referenced above or any other FSS contractor, please review the [NAC Contract Catalog Search Tool \(CCST\)](#) or [GSA E-Library](#). If you have any questions/concerns or would like to learn more about a specific topic and/or issue, please feel free to contact the FSS helpdesk by phone at (708)786-7737 and/or by e-mail at [helpdesk.ammhinfss@va.gov](mailto:helpdesk.ammhinfss@va.gov).***