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In the News: [GSA Interact...A Virtual Acquisition Community](#)

In an effort to enhance communications and forge stronger relationships with Government acquisition and vendor communities, General Services Administration (GSA) launched [GSA Interact](#), an interactive online community.

Utilizing in-depth articles, audio podcasts, and video presentations, GSA Interact serves to improve education on how to maximize the effective use of GSA and VA Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) contracts.



We want to hear from you, so [set up an account](#) and join in the discussion!!



Audience... The target audience for this platform is government contracting officers that both award and use Schedule contracts, as well as industry partners that are both seeking a MAS contract and those that manage an awarded contract.



Blog... [Blog](#) posts, authored by GSA and VA policy officials, seek to educate users on how to maximize the effective use of MAS contracts. Users are encouraged to share their ideas and concerns on posting and so can post questions and comments to blog articles, which are managed by the MAS Program Division. While not all queries can be answered, GSA offers a one-hour monthly webinar to address specific questions.



Podcasts... Step behind the scenes with the [GSA Podcast series](#). Designed to enhance a listeners understanding of relevant Schedule issues, this series includes interviews with MAS Program Division directors and branch chiefs.



Training Videos... GSA offers an extensive [video library](#) providing training on a variety of topics specific to both Schedule contractors and users.

Visit the [VA FSS Service](#) GSA Interact profile for news and announcements!

Training Center: The Contract Modification Process

Once a VA Schedule contract is awarded, a contractor may request to modify their contract by submitting a request for review and approval by an authorized VA contract specialist. This month's training article provides in-depth information about modifying a VA Schedule contract.

Relevant Solicitation Clauses

[552.243-72 Modifications \(Multiple Award Schedule\)](#) outlines the information that is required when requesting a price reduction or to add/delete items.

[552.216-70 Economic Price Adjustment](#) provides the terms and conditions for requesting a price increase under a Schedule contract in accordance with changes to the contractor's commercial pricing.

[552.238-75 Price Reductions](#) governs the requirements for handling a price reduction that is triggered by a disturbance to the tracking customer ratio established at time of contract award. You are required to notify your assigned CO immediately, but no later than 15 calendar days after the effective date of the decrease.

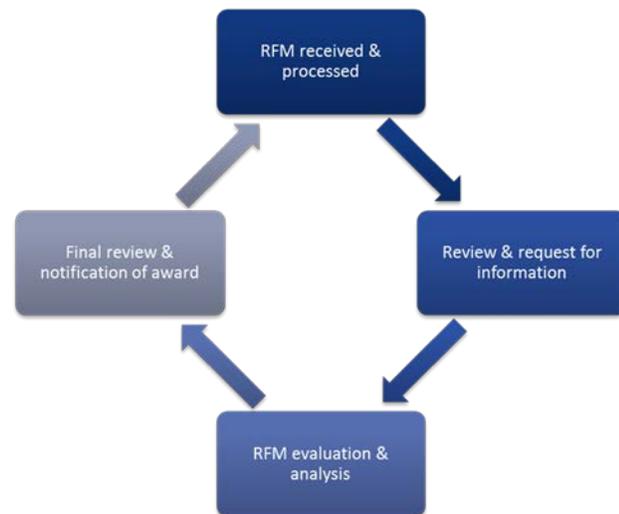
Note: These are links to GSA clauses and are provided for reference only. Refer to your Schedule contract for the specific terms of these clauses.

Modification Process...

The effective date of the modification will be assigned by the approving Contract Officer and will be either the 1st or the 15th of the month (with the exception of 65IB product additions and NDC changes).

1. Contractor submits the RFM to helpdesk.ammhinfss@va.gov. The Subject line must include the following information:
RFM — Contract Number — Schedule ID — Mod Type
2. The FSS Help Desk receives the RFM and assigns the RFM a modification tracking number. The tracking number should be referenced in all communications regarding the RFM.
3. The CO conducts a full review and analysis of the request and discusses it with the contractor, if necessary. *Continued on page 5*

Types of Modifications... Request for Modification types include product additions, product deletions, price increases/decreases, and administrative changes, which include changes of address, Contract Administrator, item/NDC number, item descriptions, etc. Novation/Name Changes must also go through the RFM process.



FSS FAQ: Mass Modifications...What are they and how are they incorporated in to my Schedule contract?

Mass modifications are government issued modifications that occur when a uniform change occurs Schedule-wide. A prime example is when the terms and conditions of a solicitation are refreshed. The mass modification process allows the VA FSS Service to access a Schedule contractor population with ease. When a Mass Mod is issued you are notified via email.

To incorporate a Mass Mod into your firm's contract, an authorized representative of your firm must complete/sign the applicable SF-30. Upon completion, the SF-30 must be emailed to the FSS Help Desk (helpdesk.ammhinfss@va.gov), with the subject line "RFM – Contract# - Mass Modification". The effective date of all Mass Mods will be assigned by the approving Contracting Officer. You will receive the fully executed Mass Mod via email. It is recommended that you retain a copy of the Mass Mod for your records.

All current Mass Modifications are available on the [Modification Forms](#) page.

Web Corner

Modification Forms... Visit the [Modification Forms](#) page to download the most current and up-to-date versions of the modification forms for each Schedule program. These forms are available as a compressed zip file that contains both the RFM form and the associated spreadsheet.



Additionally, you can [download](#) the available Mass Modifications via the [Modification Forms](#) page.

VA FSS Working for You

We have been talking about modifications from your point of view as a VA Schedule contractor. In this month's *VA FSS Working for You* we offer a "behind-the-scenes" view in to what happens when we receive your request for modifications, as well as general statistics on the number of actions our office processes on an annual basis.

Review Process...The CO's first step, after receiving a request for modification, is to conduct a complete review of the request. The purpose of this review is to ensure that the contractor submitted all required information and that the proposal is in the government's best interest. If needed, the CO will ask the contractor for additional information.

Approval Process...Once the CO has determined that the RFM is in the best interest of the government they will submit it for review by their Senior Contract Specialist (SCS) and/or Chief. The SCS/Chief conducts a final review of the RFM to ensure that it is technically correct and that all elements are accurate, current, and complete.

Award Process...If the SCS/Chief approves the RFM, the SF-30 will be forwarded to the contractor for signature and the returned copy will be signed by a warranted contracting officer (the warrant must be commensurate with the estimated value of the modification).

FY2011 Modification Statistics...

5,111 the total number of modification requests we received and assigned to our contract specialists; this is an average of 426 per month

5,080 the total number of modification requests we completed; this is an average of 423 per month.

For more information or to request training contact the FSS Help Desk or Craig Robinson, Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for National Healthcare Acquisitions, (p) (708) 786-5157 or (e) Craig.Robinson@va.gov. Thank you for your continued support.

Modification Forms

As promised, we have been working diligently to consolidate, standardize, and update our request for modification forms. To date, we have:

1. Consolidated all commodity forms, except 65IB;
2. Standardized the format and information requirements for all Schedule programs;
3. Updated the price proposal & price change spreadsheets to be more user-friendly.

All modification forms are available as a compressed zip file that includes the RFM and associated spreadsheets.

As of issuance of this newsletter we will no longer accept outdated modification request forms. It is recommended that you download the forms from the Modification Forms page each time you submit an RFM.

Reminder

Successfully Submitting a RFM



All contract modifications **must** be emailed to helpdesk.ammhinfss@va.gov with the subject line *RFM – Contract Number – Schedule ID – Mod Type*. As this email address is the central portal for the FSS Service, modification requests that do not include this reference may be misdirected and thereby the review and process of your request may be delayed.

Several individuals from the National Acquisition Center (NAC) attended the 2012 National Veterans Conference the week of June 25th in Detroit, Michigan. The conference was well attended by other federal government agency representatives as well as many small veteran and disabled veteran owned businesses. There was great interaction between NAC staff and small business owners regarding possible current and future contracting opportunities. The conference included a VA FSS training session that was tailored toward the veteran owned small business community and the session was well attended and reviewed.



Around the
NAC

Customer Survey

Tell us what you think! Complete the [VA FSS Customer Survey](#) and let us know what we're doing right and how we can do better. Survey responses are anonymous and will be used to better our processes and procedures.



Disaster Recovery: Recent Emergency & Disaster Declarations

Under the Disaster Recovery Purchasing Program, state and local government entities may purchase a variety of products and services from contracts awarded under [VA Federal Supply Schedules](#) to facilitate recovery from a major disaster, terrorism, or nuclear, biological, chemical, or radiological attack.

This Disaster Recovery Purchasing authority is limited to VA & GSA Schedule contracts and does not include any other GSA programs. [GSA eLibrary](#) contains a list of all GSA Schedules subject to Disaster Recovery Purchasing. *VA Schedule contractors are reminded that they must elect to participate in the Disaster Recovery program before they can sell under this authority.*

Major Disaster Declarations			
Number	Date	State	Disaster Type
4064	6/14	OK	Severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds, and flooding
4065	6/15	NH	Severe storm and flooding
4066	6/22	VT	Severe storm, tornado, and flooding
4067	6/28	CO	High Park and Waldo Canyon Fires

Around the VA: VHA Makes Great Strides in Innovative Medical

Research & Development

While the VA's main goal is to provide healthcare and support for our active duty and retired servicemen and women, we also seek to advance the medical community through breakthrough medical research and development.

The [Veterans Health Administration's \(VHA\) Office of Research & Development \(ORD\)](#) is the VA's premier tool for breakthrough discoveries and innovations that advance the healthcare of our veterans and the nation. The ORD is made up of four research arms that, together, form a cohesive body to explore all phases of veteran healthcare needs:

- [Biomedical Laboratory Research & Development \(BLR&D\)](#) – explores biological and physiological principals in humans and animals, including pre-clinical models and investigations of tissues/blood/other specimens;
- [Clinical Science Research & Development \(CSR&D\)](#) – conducts multisite clinical trials and system-wide epidemiological investigations;
- [Health Services Research & Development \(HSR&D\)](#) – focuses on patient care, care delivery, health outcomes, costs, & quality; and
- [Rehabilitation Research & Development \(RR&D\)](#) – seeks to improve the quality of life for impaired and disabled veterans through rehabilitation research and evaluation/technology transfer/clinical application of new rehabilitative technologies.



VA Medical Center Spotlight:

James J. Peters VA Medical Center

Celebrating over 150 years of service to the community and 75 years of direct service to veterans, the [James J. Peters VA Medical Center](#), located in the Bronx, is the oldest VA Medical Center in New York City. With 311 authorized hospital and 120 nursing home beds, the James J. Peters VA Medical Center is the second largest VA facility in the country, reaching out to veterans in VISNs 2, 3, and 4. It provides state-of-the-art medical primary and tertiary care to veterans, serves as a teaching hospital, serves as home to the Network 3 Telephone Triage service, and operates a high tech research facility.

As a tertiary care facility, the James J. Peters VA Medical Center offers a full range of inpatient and outpatient care [services](#) at 4 locations throughout New York. Offered services range from [bariatric surgery](#); [geriatric research, education, & clinical care](#); [hospice and palliative care](#); and a [polytrauma network site](#); to internship programs for [dietitians](#) and [psychologists](#); and resources for [homeless veterans](#), [returning service members](#), and [women veterans](#). Additionally, the James J. Peters VA Medical Center offers a former [POW advocate](#) program designed to provide assistance to veterans who are recognized as former Prisoners of War (POW).



Figure 1 James J. Peters VA Medical Center
130 West Kingsbridge Road, Bronx, NY 10468
(p) (718) 584-9000 | [Directions](#)



Did You Know... America Celebrates her 236th Birthday this Year

4th
of
JULY

We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

*Declaration of Independence,
July 4, 1776*

Holiday Spirit

This year more than...



- 79% of Americans own patriotic merchandise
- 16% will buy more
- 42% of Americans will attend a fireworks display or other celebration
- 62% will go to a cookout or picnic

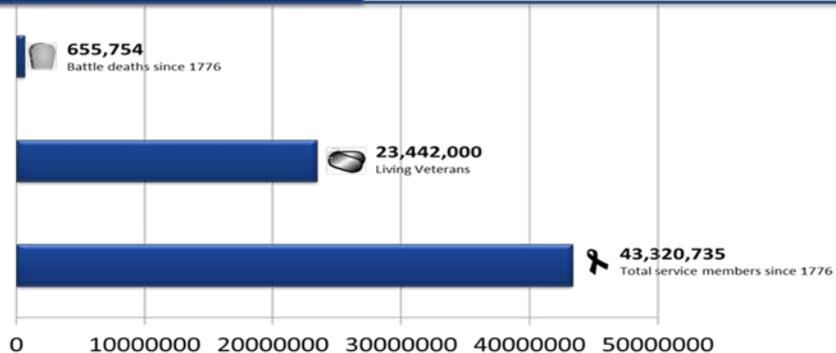
\$54.62 

Average cost of an American cookout. Americans will spend nearly \$2 billion on cookouts alone.

\$600 million 

Total amount spent on local and home firework displays. This year, we will see nearly 14,000 local displays.

Price of Independence



Resources: http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/pdf/cb12ff-12_july4.pdf
<http://www.forbes.com/2010/06/29/fourth-of-july-independence-lifestyle-travel-spending.html>
<http://peterfaur.com/2011/07/04/a-july-4-infographic#axzz1z7GH103f>

Training Center (cont'd from pg. 2)

- If approved, the revision(s) to the Schedule contract will be documented in an SF-30, Modification of Contract, and sent to the contractor for signature. The contractor will send the signed copy of the SF-30 to the CO, who will then execute the modification by signing and distributing a copy to the contractor.

Review Process Time... Our goal is to review all modification requests and make an award/no award decision within 60 calendar days from receipt (30 calendar days for RFMs submitted under the 651B Schedule program). Timely processing is impacted by the quality of the RFM submission; the inclusion of all relevant information; the total number of requests submitted; and the length of time between submissions.

To ensure that your RFM is processed quickly, you should confirm that:

- ✓ Requests to add products/services are within the [scope](#) of your Schedule contract and manufactured in the US or other [designated country](#);
- ✓ You use the currently approved [modification request forms](#);
- ✓ The [information](#) provided in the RFM is accurate, current, and complete;
- ✓ The proposed [pricing](#) is competitive with current market conditions; and
- ✓ Your firm's required [registrations](#) are active and up-to-date.

Visit the [Contract Modifications](#) page or contact the [FSS Help Desk](#) for additional information!

Upcoming Events

July 10, 2012 [FSS/SPH Supplier Show](#) VISN 9 Mountain Home, TN

July 11, 2012 [FSS/SPH Supplier Show](#) VISN 6 Asheville, NC

July 12, 2012 [FSS/SPH Supplier Show](#) VISN 6 Salisbury, NC

July 18, 2012 [FSS/SPH Supplier Show \(Safe Patient Handling\)](#)
VISN 15 Topeka, KS

July 19, 2012 [FSS/SPH Supplier Show \(Safe Patient Handling\)](#)
VISN 15 Leavenworth, KS

July 29 – August 1, 2012 [NCMA World Congress](#) Boston, MA

JULY 2012						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4

For more, check out the [FSS Calendar of Events!](#)

Useful Web Links

[FSS Web Portal](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Customer Survey](#)

[Resource Library](#)

[VA Schedule Programs](#)

[Training](#)

[FSS Contractors](#)

[Sales Reports & IFF](#)

[Modification Request Forms](#)

[FSS Customers](#)

[Priorities of Use](#)



New VA FSS Contracts

To better serve our readers, the *New VA FSS Contracts* section is now available online. Visit [the New VA FSS Contracts](#) page for a complete listing of contracts awarded in June 2012. For a complete listing of all VA Schedules and additional information on the Schedule programs managed by the VA FSS Service, visit the [VA Schedules Programs](#) webpage.

Visit the [NAC Contract Catalog Search Tool \(CCST\)](#) or [GSA eLibrary](#) to obtain pricing information for these and all VA FSS contracts. For questions, comments, or to learn more about the VA FSS program contact the FSS Help Desk

Monday – Friday 7:30am – 3:30pm

(e) helpdesk.ammhinfss@va.gov (p) (708) 786-7737

VA NAC Federal Supply Schedule

Address: PO Box 37, Building 76
1st Ave North of Cermak Ave
Hines, IL 60141

Phone: (708) 786-7737

Fax: (708) 786-5828

E-mail: helpdesk.ammhinfss@va.gov

Web Portal: <http://www.fss.va.gov>

Customer Survey: <http://www.va.gov/nac/customersurvey/>

