

# VA FSS Newsletter

Your source for VA Federal Supply Schedule News and Updates

## What's New with FSS?

### Evergreen Contracting under Schedule 66 III

After careful consideration, FSS is moving to evergreen contracting under our 66 III Cost-per-Test Clinical Laboratory Analyzers schedule. This provides a five-year contract base period plus three, five-year options, extending the total potential contract period from ten to twenty years. This effort should help alleviate issues in the field with competing and setting up five-year Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) against our 66 III contracts. Amendment 0011 was issued on September 9<sup>th</sup> to incorporate contract clause I-FSS-163 Option to Extend the Term of the Contract (Evergreen), followed by the release of Mass Modification 0005 to incorporate the clause into current 66 III contracts.

### Request for Modification (RFM) Package Updates

We have recently published new RFM packages for our pharmaceuticals and services schedules with new commodities packages to follow shortly. The new packages include improvements in both the request form and any associated spreadsheets in order to better capture the information necessary to efficiently evaluate and process your requests. Please be sure to always go to our [Modifications](#) web page to download the most recent RFM package prior to submission as we will only accept the most recently published packages.

## Inside FSS



I started my presentation at NAC Industry Days in April with two Icebreaker questions: “Who wants change?”, followed by, “Who wants to change?”. Like it or not, change has been constant this year for FSS. In January all workstations were re-located; then there was a second partial re-location. In June many of us attended the VA Acquisition Workforce Symposium, and we also had major successes like hiring 12 new people. Since July 2018, we’ve hired 15 employees to increase capacity, speed up throughput and improve succession planning. Vendors also have changed by submitting more complete offers with well documented competitive pricing analyses. Enhanced market research enables FSS to hone in

on the main competitive advantages, or lack thereof, which leads to quicker processing of offers that add demonstrated value. I find the willingness of vendors to share marketplace knowledge refreshing, and while every business wants to turn a profit, there is something undeniably special and worthy in practicing integrity and responsibility in serving each other. Self-governance remains an American experiment, and we rely on self-regulation for mutual benefits in our society. Government procurement systems and regulations often look like an experiment due to their complexity. In 1781, General George Washington wrote to John Laurens, an American

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soldier and statesman from South Carolina best known for his criticism of slavery and his efforts to help recruit slaves to fight for their freedom as U.S. soldiers: "The people are discontented, but it is with the feeble and oppressive mode of conducting the war, not with the war itself". In FSS we are facing challenges, renewing from the outside with new hires and renewing from within as our leadership focuses on providing tools, opportunity, and information so that everyone is bringing their best. Throughout this newsletter you should see where FSS is trying new things, streamlining processes, building relationships, and improving the vendor and ordering activity experience by being open and taking action on many aspects of our operations to deliver Speed, Choice, Quality and Value. To me public service is a calling, not just a job, and I ask those who hear the call to be assertive and active in raising the bar in the next fiscal year.

## Around the VA Veterans Legacy Memorial



On August 14<sup>th</sup>, the VA's National Cemetery Administration (NCA) launched the [Veterans Legacy Memorial](#) (VLM) site.

VLM was created as an online space to memorialize the 3.7 million veterans interred in NCA cemeteries through sharing their stories of service and sacrifice. This digital platform, the first in the country of its kind, provides the ability to search for a specific veteran. Each Veteran has a dedicated memorial page containing burial location, headstone information, and basic details regarding the Veteran's life and service. Site capabilities may be expanded in the future to include historical documents and records as well as the ability for the public to write a tribute message and to share a story or even a photo. Expanded content will be controlled by a registered "sentry", or next of kin, who can add and manage content. For more information on this program, visit the [VLM FAQ](#).

While the NCA manages 136 national cemeteries, they do not manage all. To locate a Veteran or servicemember interred at Arlington National Cemetery, please visit <https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil>. To locate those interred in Veterans cemeteries managed by the National Park Service, state governments or tribal governments, please visit <https://gravelocator.cem.va.gov>. Information on Veterans interred with VA provided headstones can be found at the VA's Nationwide Gravesite Locator at <https://gravelocator.cem.va.gov>.



**ESRS Reporting began  
October 1, 2019!!**

*All Small Business Subcontracting Plan holders are required to file their annual socioeconomic spend results online at [eSRS.gov](http://eSRS.gov) no later than October 30, 2019. Spend should be reported based upon the Government's fiscal year (10/1/2018 – 9/30/2019). Visit our [Small Business Subcontracting Plans](#) web page and download the [eSRS Reporting Guide](#).*

## Web Wisdom Navigating with Word Clouds

Need to find information on a specific topic but don't know where to start? Word clouds are your answer to this dilemma. On our [home page](#), there are three main tabs:



Click on each tab to view a "cloud" of words which contain hyperlinks to pages with helpful information on each topic. For example, the Contractors tab includes this word cloud:



## Pharm Facts!

### Public Law Season 2020



[Public Law \(PL\) 102-585](#) requires covered drug manufacturers to update their pricing annually, and we are now entering Public Law season for 2020 covered drug pricing updates. Please be aware that although your company has a permanent Contract Specialist, that individual might not be assigned to process your company's PL pricing update modification. As with previous years, we will continue to operate under a separate and distinct PL Core Team that will process PL related modification requests and facilitate any PL related issues.

Below is the timeline for contractor actions during this process. Please visit our [Public Law](#) web page for more information, and submit any PL related questions to [AMMHIN.PL102585@va.gov](mailto:AMMHIN.PL102585@va.gov).

9/15	• Deadline to submit modifications for any Public Law effected product
10/01	• Receive instruction letter (Dear Manufacturer Letter - DML) from FSS
10/10	• Receive instruction letter (DML) from PBM and Excel workbook
11/15	• Deadline for annual filing and disputes
Oct/Nov/Dec	• Verification of FCP by PBM and forwarded to CO
12/04	• Deadline to submit pricing update modification requests to FSS
12/31	• Deadline to provide updated Pharmaceutical Pricing Agreement (PPA) to CO

## Training Center

### Letters of Commitment

FSS requires a letter of commitment, also known as a letter of supply, from any offeror who is other than the manufacturer (i.e. dealers, distributors, and resellers). This letter protects all parties concerned by ensuring that the manufacturer 1) Has given express permission for the offeror to sell the manufacturer's products on the FSS contract and 2) Will provide a supply of Trade Agreements clause (52.225-5) compliant products sufficient to meet the needs of the Government throughout the contract period.

Below are the required components for an acceptable letter of commitment. These components, along with a sample letter of supply/commitment, are located in the solicitation as notes to contract clause I-FSS-644 Dealers and Suppliers. You can also download this list and the sample letter from our [Contractor Responsibilities](#) web page.

1. *Must be on manufacturer's letterhead and addressed to the offeror.*
2. *Must be dated within 90 days of the date the SF1449 was signed by the company (for offers) or the date of the modification request (for product additions under existing FSS contracts).*
3. *Must not have an expiration date.*
4. *Must be signed by an **officer** of the company. Electronic signatures are not accepted. A scanned copy of a wet signature is required.*
5. *Must reference the solicitation number (new offers) or contract number (for existing contracts).*
6. *Must contain the phrase that the manufacturer is willing to provide "a source of supply sufficient to satisfy the Government's requirements for the contract period".*
7. *Must contain the statement that products are U.S.-made or designated country end products as defined in 52.225-5 Trade Agreements.*
8. *Must specifically list each category of product and/or brand name(s) to which the letter applies.*

# FSS Working for You

## Expanded E-Mail Size Limits

The VA has recently expanded size limits for our e-mails, going from a 5MB limit, including the e-mail and all attachments, to a 10MB limit. This should greatly decrease the need to submit documents and files in multiple e-mails, thus streamlining the offer/modification submission and clarification process. Please be aware that although we previously had the ability to use Safe Access File Exchange (SAFE), that service is no longer available to the VA.



### REMINDER!



#### IFF / Report of Sales Due

4th quarter FY 2019 sales reports and Industrial Funding Fee (IFF) payments are due on October 1, 2019, but no later than November 30, 2019, after which payments are considered delinquent. All VA FSS contractors are required to submit a report via the [VA Sales Reporting System](#) even if no sales occurred under the contract. The 4th Quarter covers sales from Jul 1 – Sep 30.

For more information, visit our [Sales Reports & IFF](#) page online. For assistance from our VA Sales Desk, please contact us by e-mail at [FSSSales.AMMHIN@va.gov](mailto:FSSSales.AMMHIN@va.gov).

## Upcoming Training & Events

### November 6 & 7, 2019

(Two repeated sessions)

[Pharmaceutical Public Law 102-585 Year-End Pricing Updates Webinar](#)

### December 10-11, 2019

[National Veterans Small Business Engagement \(NVSBE\) 2019 Conference](#)  
Nashville, TN

## Useful Links

[FSS Web Portal](#)

[VA Schedule Programs](#)

[FSS Contractors](#)

[FSS Customers](#)

[Training](#)

[Modification Request](#)

[Forms \(RFMs\)](#)

[Contractor Responsibilities](#)

[Small Business Subcontracting](#)

[Sales Reports & IFF](#)



## FSS FAQ: What happens if I don't file my Report of Sales or remit my IFF on time?

Contractors who do not comply with the terms of this clause could receive a bill of collection with possible interest penalties, obtain a negative CPARS rating, or even face contract cancellation. All contract holders are required to file a quarterly Report of Sales and remit IFF per the terms of clause 552.238-80 (formerly 552.238-74) Industrial Funding Fee and Sales Reporting. Please consult the details of clause 552.238-80 and our [Sales Reports & IFF](#) web page for more information on this topic, including reporting and remittance timelines.

## Contact Us!

**FSS Contractors Inquiries:** Please contact your assigned Contract Specialist

**FSS Helpdesk:** Phone (708)786-7737 E-mail: [HelpDesk.ammhinfss@va.gov](mailto:HelpDesk.ammhinfss@va.gov)

**FSS Small Business Liaison, Micole Stephens:** [Micole.Stephens@va.gov](mailto:Micole.Stephens@va.gov), (708)786-5156

**IFF/Report of Sales (VA Sales Portal) Inquiries:** [FSSSales.AMMHIN@va.gov](mailto:FSSSales.AMMHIN@va.gov)

**Pharm A Chief, Trevor Martin:** [Trevor.Martin@va.gov](mailto:Trevor.Martin@va.gov), (708)786-7708

**Pharm B Chief, Diana Lawal:** [Diana.Lawal@va.gov](mailto:Diana.Lawal@va.gov), (708)786-4949

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**Med Surg B Chief, Deborah Zuckswerth:** [Deborah.Zuckswerth@va.gov](mailto:Deborah.Zuckswerth@va.gov), (708)786-5128

**PMRS Chief, Dave Hackett:** [David.Hackett@va.gov](mailto:David.Hackett@va.gov), (708) 786-4936

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How are we doing? Your feedback is important to us! Please complete our [Customer Survey](#).*