



Weekly Report for April 4, 2014

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

The DoD, GSA, and NASA Issue Proposed Rule to Amend FAR Extension of Limitations on Contractor Employee Personal Conflicts of Interest

Department of Defense (DoD), General Services Administration (GSA), and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) issued a proposed rule to amend the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) to implement a section of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2013 to extend the limitations on contractor employee personal conflicts of interest to apply to the performance of all functions that are closely associated with inherently governmental functions and contracts for personal services, [79 Fed. Reg. 18503](#). Comments are due June 2, 2014 to be considered in the formation of the final rule.

The DoD Issues Final Rule to Update Personnel Security Program

Department of Defense (DoD) Personnel Security Program (PSP) issued a final rule to update policies and responsibilities in accordance with the provisions of current U.S. Code, Public Laws, and Executive Orders, [79 Fed. Reg. 18161](#). This rule establishes policy and assigns responsibilities related to the operation of the DoD PSP, including investigative and adjudicative policy for determining eligibility to hold a national security position. This rule also establishes investigative and adjudicative policy for the Department's personal identity verification (PIV) credential. The final rule will be effective May 1, 2014.

The DoD Issues Final Rule to Amend DFARS Clauses With Alternates – Research and Development Contracting (DFARS Case 2013-D026)

The Department of Defense (DoD) issued a final rule to amend the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) to create an overarching prescription for a research and development-related clause with an alternate, [79 Fed. Reg. 17447](#). The rule also includes separate prescriptions for the basic and alternate clause and includes the full text of the alternate clause. The effective date for the final rule will be March 28, 2014.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

VA Issues a Notice Seeking Nominations for Appointment to the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Center for Minority Veterans (CMV), issued a notice seeking nominations of qualified candidates to be considered for appointment as a member of the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans (“the Committee”), [79 Fed. Reg. 18413](#). In accordance with Public Law 103-446, the Committee advises the Secretary on the administration of VA benefits and services to minority Veterans; assesses the needs of minority Veterans; and evaluates whether VA compensation, medical and rehabilitation services, outreach, and other programs are meeting those needs. The Committee makes recommendations to the Secretary regarding such activities. Nominations of qualified candidates are being sought to fill upcoming vacancies on the Committee. Nominations for membership on the Committee are due 5:00 p.m. EST on May 30, 2014.

VA Cut Claims Backlog by 44% Since March 2013

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has cut its backlog of pending benefits claims by 44 percent since March 2013. The latest VA data, released March 31, 2014, shows that the number of claims stuck in the processing system for more than 125 days had dropped to 344,000, compared to a high of about 611,000 a year ago. The VA said in a statement on March 31, 2014 that it has also improved the accuracy of its determinations from 83 percent in 2011 to 91 percent last month and shortened the average wait time for decisions from 282 days to 119 days since March 2013, [Veterans Affairs Cut Claims Backlog by 44 Percent Since Last Year's High](#).

SMALL BUSINESS

SBA Issues a Notice of the April – June Quarter FY 2014 Interest Rate

The Small Business Administration (SBA) issued a notice regarding the optional “peg” rate (13 CFR 120.214) of 3.375 percent for the April-June quarter of FY 2014, [79 Fed. Reg. 18111](#). This rate is a weighted average cost of money to the government for maturities similar to the average SBA direct loan. This rate may be used as a base rate for guaranteed fluctuating interest rate SBA loans.

Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled Issued the Following Notices:

[79 Fed. Reg. 17509](#), March 28, 2014, proposing to add products (Bag, Disposable, Polyethylene, Feminine Hygiene, Pink; Dispenser, Stainless Steel, Feminine Hygiene Disposal Bags) a service (3d Party Logistics Service) and delete products (Binder, Loose-leaf, Presentation, Letter, Blue, 3/8"; Binder, Loose-leaf, Presentation, Letter, Gray, 3/8"; Binder, Loose-leaf, Presentation, Letter, Tan, 3/8") from the Procurement List. Comments on the proposed additions and deletions are due April 28, 2014.

[79 Fed. Reg. 17510](#), March 28, 2014, proposing to add products (Tool Kit, Highway Safety, Compact; CD-R Silver w/Jewel Case, 10pk; Plate, Paper, White, Round, 6 1/2 Diameter; Plate, Paper, White, Round, 9 Diameter; Binder, Round Ring, Rigid Cover, Black, 2 Capacity, 8 1/2 x 11) and service (Base Supply Center, San Diego Naval Base, San Diego, CA.) to the Procurement List. The effective date for the proposed additions will be April 28, 2014.