

GSA ORDER

Subject: General Services Administration Acquisition Manual; GSAM Case 2021-G518,
GSA Specific Acquisition Certification Programs

1. Purpose. This order transmits a revision to the General Services Administration Acquisition Manual (GSAM) to incorporate GSA-Specific Acquisition Certification Program procedures under subpart 501.6 Career Development, Contracting Authority, and Responsibilities.
2. Background. GSA established agency specific certification programs to recognize the valuable role that GSA non-1102 Contracting Officers play in federal acquisition. The four agency specific certification programs include: Fleet Acquisition (Fleet-C), Real Property Leasing (LCP), Personal Property Fleet Sales (PPFS-C) and Real Property Disposal (RPD-C). The Senior Procurement Executive (SPE) issued five memorandums (SPE-2015-09-30a, SPE 2015-09-30b, SPE-2015-09-30c, SPE-2016-09-23 and SPE-2021-06) to implement the GSA Specific Acquisition Certification Programs and provide guidance for the members of the acquisition workforce (AWF). These agency-specific acquisition certification programs establish consistent competencies and standards for members of the GSA AWF. In addition, the agency specific acquisition certification programs improve the management of certifications, warrants and training for the GSA AWF. While the GSAM has guidance on Federal Acquisition Certification Programs, it does not include guidance on the GSA-Specific Acquisition Certification Programs.

In addition to the agency specific certification programs, GSA established GSA-specific requirements for employees that obtain Federal Acquisition Certifications (FAC). These requirements include additional training courses required for mandatory continuous learning. This policy updates how GSA will administer these GSA-specific requirements for FAC.

This GSAM change incorporates guidance on GSA-specific acquisition certification requirements to reflect the new business processes and organizational structures that support acquisition career management at GSA.

3. Effective date. February 2, 2021
4. Explanation of changes. This amendment includes non-regulatory changes. For full text changes of the amendment see Attachment A, GSAM Text Line-In/Line-Out.

This amendment revises the language in GSAM subpart 501.6, as summarized below:

501.601 (General)

- Added paragraph (d) to note that GSA has additional training requirements for certification and warrants for the acquisition workforce. Failure to meet these training requirements can result in revocation of a certification or warrant.

501.604 (Contracting Officer's Representative):

- Revised paragraph (b) to provide information on how to obtain and maintain an active Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting Officer's Representative (FAC-COR).
- Added language to paragraph (b) to require that an employee is certified at the proper FAC-COR level and that the CO shall designate a replacement COR within 30 calendar days if the employee is not certified at the appropriate FAC-COR level.
- Added a new paragraph (c) that requires supervisors to include the mandatory standard (acquisition-related) critical element in performance plans for GSA employees who hold a FAC-COR certification and active COR delegation. This requirement does not apply to contracting officers and leasing contracting officers because they already have acquisition-related critical elements in their performance plans.

501.671 (Program and Project Managers):

- Revised paragraph (b) to provide information on how to obtain and maintain an active Federal Acquisition Certification for Program and Project Managers (FAC-P/PM).
- Added language to paragraph (b) to require confirmation that employees hold an active FAC-P/PM certification at the appropriate level.
- Revised paragraphs (b) and (c) to require certification within a 12-month timeframe from project assignment. Removed paragraph (e) since this guidance is duplicative to 501.601(c), which already requires the acquisition workforce to use the career management system of record to manage acquisition certifications.
- Revised paragraph (f) on waivers to be consistent with waiver guidance for FAC-C and FAC-COR.

501.672 (Acquisition Certification Programs):

- Added new section 501.672. This new section codifies the SPE memorandums and includes implementation guidance on the GSA-Specific Acquisition Certification Programs.
- Added paragraph (a) to provide information on the FAC and GSA-Specific Acquisition Certifications, including GSA-required training that will be mandatory for GSA employees that obtain federal-wide certifications.
- Added paragraph (b) to provide an overview of each of the GSA-specific acquisition certification programs.
- Added paragraph (c) to describe the process for surrendering a FAC or agency-specific certification.

- Added paragraph (d) to outline the waiver process for the certification programs.
 - Added paragraph (e) to describe the GSA's reciprocity policy with DOD Certification Programs and FAC Programs.
5. Cancellations. SPE-2015-09-30a, SPE-2015-09-30b, SPE-2015-09-30c, SPE-2016-09-23 and SPE-2021-06 are hereby cancelled.
 6. Point of Contact. Any questions regarding this GSA Order may be directed to Clarence Harrison Jr or Nicole Acevedo at gsarpolicy@gsa.gov.

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GSAM Case 2021-G518
“GSA Specific Acquisition Certification Programs”

GSAM Text, Line-In/Line-Out

GSAM Baseline: Change 146 effective 02/01/2022

- Additions to baseline are indicated by **[bold text in brackets]**
- Deletions to baseline made by final rule are indicated by ~~strikethroughs~~
- Five asterisks (* * * * *) indicate that there are no revisions between the preceding and following sections
- Three asterisks (* * *) indicate that there are no revisions between the material shown within a subsection

Part 501 - General Services Administration Acquisition Regulation System

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Subpart 501.6 - Career Development, Contracting Authority, and Responsibilities

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501.601 General.

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[(d) Required Continuous Learning.

(1) GSA-required training within the curricula of a certification or warrant may be assigned, upon issuance of a certification or warrant, as mandatory continuous learning with a specified deadline for completion.

(2) Failure to complete any required training within the specified time may result in the expiration or revocation of the certification or warrant.]

[(e)] ~~(d)~~ For additional information on any of the topics covered in GSAM [subpart 501.6](#), refer to the Acquisition Career Management page on the GSA Acquisition Portal at <https://insite.gsa.gov/acquisitionportal>.

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501.604 Contracting Officer's Representative (COR).

(a) The COR's role is to develop proper requirements and ensure during contract administration the contractors meet the commitments of their contracts, including the timeliness and delivery of quality goods and services as required by the contract.

(b) *FAC-COR Certification.* ~~Any GSA employee assigned to perform COR duties, regardless of series~~**[When required and regardless of series, employees]**, must **[complete the GSA certification and training requirements to]** obtain and maintain an active Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting Officer's Representative (FAC-COR) at the appropriate level in the career management system of record ~~through the entire contract period of performance.~~ COs determine the certification level required for ~~an acquisition~~**[each delegation of contract administration as described in the COR appointment letter.]**

[(1) *Timeframe.*] CORs must be certified at the appropriate level no later than **[6]** ~~six~~ months from the date of their appointment;**[: an approved SPE waiver is not required to exercise this flexibility].**

[(2) If an employee has been appointed to serve as a COR, but does not hold an active FAC-COR certification at the appropriate level within 6 months from the date of the appointment, a waiver request must be submitted and approved by the SPE (see paragraph (d)). The CO shall remove the employee from the appointment until the certification has been obtained. COs must confirm that an employee holds an active FAC-COR certification in the career management system of record. The CO must confirm throughout the period of performance that the COR certification remains active.

(3) If a CO and/or the employee's supervisor is notified that an employee serving on a COR delegation is not certified at the appropriate FAC-COR level, the CO shall designate a replacement COR within 30 calendar days.

[(c) *COR Critical Elements.* Every fiscal year, supervisors are required to include the mandatory standard (acquisition-related) critical element in all performance plans for GSA employees who hold a FAC-COR certification and are under an active delegation. Once the standard element is included, supervisors may add additional duties and performance metrics specific to the responsibilities of the employee.

(1) This requirement applies to all GSA FAC-COR holders, regardless of the dollar threshold and/or scope of the contract(s) that they are assigned to support as a COR.

(2) *Exclusions.*

(i) This requirement does not apply to Contracting Officers who also serve as CORs.

(ii) This requirement does not apply to GS-1170s or Leasing Contracting Officers, of any job series.

(3) Additional information and guidance can be found on the Acquisition Career Management pages on the GSA Acquisition Portal at <https://insite.gsa.gov/acquisitionportal>.]

[(d)](e) *Waivers.* The SPE may waive the requirement[s] for ~~obtaining the~~ FAC-COR

certifications prior to appointment as a COR. Waivers will only be considered in compelling and well documented circumstances **[for a period not to exceed 6 months]**. This authority is non-delegable. FAC-COR waivers are not transferable to other agencies. **[Waiver requests shall be submitted by the ACM POC for the requesting organization to the OGP Acquisition Workforce Division for review and routing to the SPE.]**

~~[(e)]~~ *Contracting officer's responsibilities.*

(1) In appointing CORs under GSAM [542.2](#), the contracting officer must take into consideration the appropriate FAC-COR level needed to protect the government's interest. The contracting officer must consider the risk[s] associated with the acquisition, including contract type, in order to determine the appropriate level of FAC-COR coverage.

(2) Contracting officers must provide appointment letters in writing to the contractor, outlining the COR's responsibilities under the contract and the limits of the COR's authority to the contractor. The contracting officer must also provide a copy to the COR and the COR[s] supervisor, and maintain a copy in the official contract file, or a central file referenced in the contract file.

(3) The contracting officer is authorized to revoke a COR appointment. Any revoked COR appointment must be documented in writing; **[and maintained in the official contract file or a central location referenced in the contract file. The CO must notify]** notifying the COR, the COR's supervisor, the contractor and the designated Acquisition Career Management Point of Contact **[(ACM POC) within 7 calendar days of the revocation]**.

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501.671 Program and Project Managers (P/PM).

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(b) *FAC-P/PM Certification.* ~~[] All employees, regardless of their series, must be certified (FAC P/PM) at the appropriate level (Level I, II or III) in order to be assigned as a program manager, project lead or integrated project team (IPT) lead. HCAs determine the certification level required for an acquisition.~~ **[When required and regardless of series, employees must complete the GSA certification and training requirements to obtain and maintain an active Federal Acquisition Certification for Program and Project Managers (FAC-P/PM) at the appropriate level in the career management system of record. Depending on the project, the FAC-P/PM IT Core-Plus specialty certification may also be required.]**

(1) *Timeframe.* The employee's supervisor must confirm that an employee holds an active FAC-P/PM certification or specialization at the appropriate level when assigning the employee as a program manager, project lead or integrated

project team (IPT) lead; if not, PMs must be certified at the appropriate level no later than 12 months from the date of their assignment to a program, project or IPT; a waiver from the SPE is not required to exercise this flexibility.

(2) If an employee has been assigned to serve as a program manager, project lead or IPT, but does not hold an active FAC-P/PM certification at the appropriate level within 12 months from the date of their assignment, a waiver request must be submitted and approved by the SPE (see paragraph (d)).]

[(3)] Any program manager for a major acquisition, including major programs as defined by OMB Circular A-11, must be FAC-P/PM Level III certified.

(c) FAC-P/PM-IT Specialization.

(1) Applicability. The FAC-P/PM-IT Specialization is required for all GSA P/PMs and IPT leads who support the following covered projects and programs:

(i) IT projects or programs included in the GSA IT Dashboard <https://itdashboard.gov/drupal/summary/023>, meaning they have been designated as major IT investments by the GSA Chief Information Officer;

(ii) IT projects or programs identified by GSA's IT Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC) team as a major investment and shared with the Acquisition Career Manager; or

(iii) IT projects or programs designated by HCA as major or mission critical.

(2) Certification requirements. Any GSA employee pursuing the FAC-P/PM-IT must first hold a mid or senior level FAC-P/PM Certification (Levels II or III).

[(3)] ~~(d) Timeframe.~~ Any GSA employee assigned to perform P/PM or P/PM-IT duties are required to [required to have a FAC-P/PM-IT Specialization must] obtain a [the] certification within 12 months of project assignment. [If an employee has been assigned to serve as a PM for a major program, but does not hold an active FAC-P/PM-IT Specialization within 12 months from the date of their assignment, a waiver request must be submitted and approved by the SPE (see paragraph (d)).]

~~*(e) Application process.*~~

~~(1) Applicants are responsible for preparing an application package for submission electronically through GSA's Career Management System, including the application form and copies of relevant training certificates.~~

~~(2) The supervisor is responsible for verifying the accuracy and completeness of the application package in GSA's Career Management System.~~

[(d)] ~~(f) Waivers.~~ [The SPE may waive the requirements for FAC-P/PM and FAC-P/PM-IT certification. Waivers will only be considered in compelling and well documented circumstances for a period not to exceed 12 months. This authority is

non-delegable. FAC-P/PM-IT waivers are not transferable to other agencies. Waiver requests shall be submitted by the ACM POC for the requesting organization to the OGP Acquisition Workforce Division for review and routing to the SPE.]

~~(1) Waivers to extend the timeframe in paragraph (d) of this section will only be granted for exceptional and compelling circumstances for a period not to exceed 12 months.~~

~~(2) FAC P/PM-IT waivers are not transferable to other agencies.~~

~~(3) Waiver requests shall be submitted by the HCA to the OGP Acquisition Workforce Division for review and routing to the SPE.~~

~~(4) The waiver request must address, at minimum all of the following—~~

~~(i) the reason(s) for and proposed conditions of the waiver;~~

~~(ii) the amount of time needed for the individual to obtain the certification;~~

~~and~~

~~(iii) the plan to complete the training requirements.~~

[501.672 Acquisition Certification Programs.

[(a) All GSA employees are required to obtain and maintain Federal Acquisition Certifications (FAC) and GSA-Specific Acquisition Certifications as determined by the business needs of their organization with emphasis upon the type of work they will perform. To obtain and maintain such certifications, GSA employees shall comply with the certification and training requirements established by the OMB, OFPP, FAI and GSA. Information about the certification and training requirements is available at <http://www.fai.gov> and GSA's Acquisition Portal at <https://insite.gsa.gov/acquisitionportal>.

(b) *GSA-Specific Acquisition Certification Programs.*

The SPE has established agency-specific certification programs as specializations for Acquisition Workforce (AWF) members who perform under acquisition and contracting authorities that are unique to GSA. The AWF member shall obtain such credentials and complete specialty training relevant to the needs of their current job assignment, and will engage in relevant continuous learning to maintain the certification pursuant to the requirements of the program.

(1) *GSA Fleet Acquisition Certification Program (Fleet-C).* GSA Fleet Acquisition employees working in the Accident Management Center (AMC) and Maintenance Control Center (MCC), when required by business and operational need and regardless of series will be required to obtain and maintain the Fleet-C certification, pursuant to GSA policy and guidance.

(i) The Fleet-C, in good standing, shall be required for warrant

eligibility of Fleet personnel.

(ii) All Fleet Acquisition COs with warrants issued prior to October 1, 2015 shall be excepted from the education requirement for this certification program. Training and experience requirements shall not be excepted.

(2) *GSA Real Property Leasing Certification Program (LCP)*. GSA Leasing, Outleasing, and Site Acquisition Contracting Officers regardless of series, are required to obtain and maintain this certification, pursuant to GSA policy and guidance.

(i) This certification shall be required for warrant eligibility for Leasing, Outleasing, and Site Acquisition professionals.

(ii) All Leasing, Outleasing, and Site Acquisition COs with warrants issued prior to October 1, 2015 shall be excepted from the education requirement for this certification program. Training and experience requirements shall not be excepted.

(3) *GSA Personal Property Disposal-Fleet Sales Certification Program (PPFS-C)*. GSA Personal Property Disposal and/or Fleet Sales employees when required by business and operational need and regardless of series, are required to obtain and maintain the PPFS-C certification, pursuant to the policy and guidance.

(i) The PPFS-C shall be required for warrant eligibility by all personal property disposal and fleet sales personnel.

(ii) All Personal Property Disposal-Fleet Sales COs (SCOs) with warrants issued prior to October 1, 2015 shall be excepted from the education requirement for this certification program. Training and experience requirements shall not be excepted.

(4) *GSA Real Property Disposal Certification Program (RPD-C)*. GSA Real Property Disposal Contracting Officers (Disposal COs), regardless of series, are required to obtain and maintain this certification, pursuant to GSA policy and guidance.

(i) The RPD-C shall be required for warrant eligibility for real property disposal personnel.

(ii) All Disposal COs with warrants issued prior to October 1, 2015 shall be excepted from the education requirement for this certification program. Training and experience requirements shall not be excepted.

(c) *Surrender*. If an AWF member wishes to surrender their FAC or agency-specific certification, their ACM POC must submit the request to AWD stating that the employee has:

(1) Attained approval for the termination from their supervisor,

(2) Confirmed that the certification is no longer needed within the next two fiscal years,

(3) Understood that, in order to obtain a new certification after the surrender, they will be required to complete the certification requirements in effect at that time, and

(4) Agreed that any warrant associated with their FAC-C or agency-specific certification will be terminated.

(d) *Waivers.* The SPE may waive the requirements for a certification program. Waivers will only be considered in compelling and well documented circumstances. This authority is non-delegable. Waivers are not transferable to other agencies. Waiver requests shall be submitted by the ACM POC for the requesting organization to the OGP Acquisition Workforce Division for review and routing to the SPE.

(e) *Reciprocity of Certification Programs.* Pursuant to the policies and guidance established by GSA, the applicant shall present evidence of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) or FAC certification for consideration to obtain a FAC or agency-specific certification through reciprocity.

(1) *Reciprocity with DOD Certification Programs.* GSA may recognize DAWIA certifications (Public Law 101-510) issued by DOD activities.

(2) *Reciprocity with FAC Programs.*

(i) *FAC-C to FAC-COR.* Individuals certified as FAC-C are considered to have met FAC-COR requirements per OMB Memo “Revisions to the FAC-COR” dated September 6, 2011 (see <http://www.fai.gov>). Individuals certified as FAC-C at Level I or higher are considered to have met the FAC-COR requirements for Level II or higher.

(ii) *FAC-P/PM to FAC-COR.* Individuals certified as FAC-P/PM are considered to have met FAC-COR requirements per OMB Memo “Revisions to the FAC-COR” dated September 6, 2011 (see <https://www.fai.gov/>). Individuals certified as FAC-P/PM Level II or higher are considered to have met the FAC-COR requirements for that same level.]

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