

Note: The FAR Council has rescinded this guidance effective May 12, 2023.

September 30, 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF ACQUISITION OFFICERS
SENIOR PROCUREMENT EXECUTIVES
DEFENSE ACQUISITION REGULATIONS COUNCIL
CIVILIAN AGENCY ACQUISITION COUNCIL

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SUBJECT: Issuance of Agency Deviations to Implement Executive Order 14042

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide agencies that award contracts under the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) with initial direction for the incorporation of a clause into their solicitations and contracts to implement guidance issued by the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force (Task Force) pursuant to [Executive Order 14042](#) (“the order”).

Background

The order directs agencies to ensure that the parties that contract with the Federal Government provide adequate COVID-19 safeguards to their workers performing on or in connection with the contract to decrease the spread of COVID-19, reduce worker absence, lower labor costs, and improve the efficiency of contractors and subcontractors at sites where they are performing work.

On September 24, 2021, the Task Force issued guidance to implement the order, [COVID-19 Workplace Safety: Guidance for Federal Contractors and Subcontractors](#). The Task Force guidance requires:

- All covered contractor employees to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 by December 8, 2021, except in limited circumstances where an employee is legally entitled to an accommodation;
- All individuals, including covered contractor employees and visitors, to comply with published Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance for masking and physical distancing at a covered contractor workplace, as discussed in the Task Force guidance; and
- Covered contractors to designate a person or persons to coordinate implementation of and compliance with the Task Force guidance and the required workplace safety protocols at covered contractor workplaces.

Section 3(a) of the order directs the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council (FAR Council) to develop a contract clause requiring contractors and subcontractors at any tier to comply with all guidance for contractor or subcontractor workplace locations published by the Task Force and to provide initial policy direction to acquisition offices for use of the clause by recommending that agencies exercise their authority under FAR subpart 1.4., Deviations from the FAR.

Guidance

The FAR Council has developed the attached clause pursuant to section 3(a) of the order to support agencies in meeting the applicability requirements and deadlines set forth in the order. Contracting officers should follow the direction for use of the clause set forth in the deviations issued by their respective agencies.

Agencies are reminded of the following points as they develop and issue their deviations:

1. Applicability and effective dates. In accordance with section 5 of the order, agencies are required to include an implementing clause in solicitations and contracts for services, including construction, in accordance with the following dates specified in section 6 of the order:
 - new contracts awarded on or after November 14 from solicitations issued before October 15 (this includes new orders awarded on or after November 14 from solicitations issued before October 15 under existing indefinite-delivery contracts);
 - new solicitations issued on or after October 15 and contracts awarded pursuant to those solicitations (this includes new solicitations issued on or after October 15 for orders awarded pursuant to those solicitations under existing indefinite-delivery contracts);
 - extensions or renewals of existing contracts and orders awarded on or after October 15, 2021; and
 - options on existing contracts and orders exercised on or after October 15, 2021.

To maximize the goal of getting more people vaccinated and decrease the spread of COVID-19, the Task Force strongly encourages agencies to apply the requirements of its guidance broadly, consistent with applicable law, by including the clause in:

- contracts that have been or will be awarded prior to November 14 on solicitations issued before October 15; and
- contracts that are not covered or directly addressed by the order because the contract or subcontract is under the simplified acquisition threshold or is a contract or subcontract for the manufacturing of products.

2. Exclusions. The clause shall not be applied to:

- contracts and subcontracts with Indian Tribes under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (the exclusion would not apply to a procurement contract or subcontract under the FAR to an Indian-owned or tribally-owned business entity); or
- solicitations and contracts if performance is outside the United States or its outlying areas (the exclusion is limited to employees who are performing work only outside the U.S. or its outlying areas).

3. Timing of deviations. Agencies should act expeditiously to issue their deviations so that their contracting officers may begin to apply the clause on or before October 15, as explained above. Agencies should review, and update as necessary, any relevant guidance previously provided to contractors to ensure consistency with the deviated FAR text.

4. Civilian agency coordination of deviations. Civilian agencies that adopt the attached clause language without change in their deviations will be presumed to have consulted with the Chair of the Civilian Agency Acquisition Council (CAAC) required by FAR 1.404(a)(1). However, if a civilian agency intends to use clause text different than the deviated clause text provided, the agency must consult with the CAAC Chair, William Clark, who will consult with OMB and the Task Force to ensure consistency with Administration policy. Any such request must be emailed to william.clark@gsa.gov.

Once processed, agencies are requested to share the deviation widely among their workforces to ensure full awareness of, and compliance with, the order.

Civilian agencies should furnish a copy of their approved class deviations (including direction to the workforce, prescription for use of clause, and clause text) to the FAR Secretariat, General Services Administration, by emailing the deviation to GSARegSec@gsa.gov. Agencies must submit their class deviations no later than October 15, 2021.

5. Length of deviation. The FAR Council has opened a case (FAR Case 2021-021, Ensuring Adequate COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Federal Contractors) to make appropriate amendments in the FAR to reflect the requirements of the order. Agencies are encouraged to make their deviations effective until the FAR is amended or the deviation is otherwise rescinded by the agency.

Attachment

FAR Deviation Clause
Executive Order 14042
Ensuring Adequate COVID Safety Protocols for Federal Contractors

Baseline is FAC 2021-07, published in the Federal Register on August 11, 2021.

September 24, 2021

PART 52—SOLICITATION PROVISIONS AND CONTRACT CLAUSES

Subpart 52.2—Text of Provisions and Clauses

[52.223-99 Ensuring Adequate COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Federal Contractors.

ENSURING ADEQUATE COVID-19 SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR FEDERAL CONTRACTORS (OCT 2021) (DEVIATION)

(a) *Definition.* As used in this clause -

***United States or its outlying areas* means—**

- (1) The fifty States;**
- (2) The District of Columbia;**
- (3) The commonwealths of Puerto Rico and the Northern Mariana Islands;**
- (4) The territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the United States Virgin Islands;**
and
- (5) The minor outlying islands of Baker Island, Howland Island, Jarvis Island, Johnston Atoll, Kingman Reef, Midway Islands, Navassa Island, Palmyra Atoll, and Wake Atoll.**

(b) *Authority.* This clause implements Executive Order 14042, Ensuring Adequate COVID Safety Protocols for Federal Contractors, dated September 9, 2021 (published in the Federal Register on September 14, 2021, 86 FR 50985).

(c) *Compliance.* The Contractor shall comply with all guidance, including guidance conveyed through Frequently Asked Questions, as amended during the performance of this contract, for contractor or subcontractor workplace locations published by the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force (Task Force Guidance) at <https://www.saferfederalworkforce.gov/contractors/>

(d) *Subcontracts.* The Contractor shall include the substance of this clause, including this paragraph (d), in subcontracts at any tier that exceed the simplified acquisition threshold, as defined in Federal Acquisition Regulation 2.101 on the date of subcontract award, and are for services, including construction, performed in whole or in part within the United States or its outlying areas.

(End of clause)]
