

**Terms and Conditions**  
**AmeriCorps\*VISTA Support Grant**  
**Revised January 4, 2011**

Grantees shall prepare a Project Progress Report (CNS 1035) for part C grants; CNS 1433 for AmeriCorps\*VISTA grants) at the end of each fiscal quarter (Dec 31, Mar31, Jun30, and Sep 30) of the budget period. The report shall be submitted to the Corporation Program Manager no later than 30 days after the end of each fiscal quarter. Stipends cannot be reduced without prior written approval of the Corporation.

Institutions of higher education and other non-profit organizations covered by OMB Circular A-110 must maintain advance Federal funds in an interest bearing account. Interest earned on advances deposited in such accounts shall be remitted annually in a check, made payable to the U.S. Treasury, to the Department of Health and Human Services, Payment Management System, P.O. Box 6021, Rockville, MD 20852. The document transmitting the check must indicate that the payment is interest earned on advanced Federal funds. Interest up to \$250 per year may be retained by the grantee for administrative expenses.

Grantee will assure that at Recognition events, the Corporation is acknowledged as the Federal agency responsible for the primary Federal funding of the project.

Unexpended Federal funds from a prior budget period should be applied to reduce the advance amount by no later than the second advance.

External evaluation and data collection: The grantee must cooperate with the Corporation and its evaluators in all monitoring and evaluation efforts. As part of this effort, the grantee must collect and submit certain project data, as defined in the Project Profile and Volunteer Activity (PPVA) and must provide data as requested or needed to support external evaluations.

All provisions in the Memorandum of Agreement are incorporated by reference into this document.

Grantees may not, in whole or in part, delegate or transfer responsibility for the management of the grant, or stewardship and control of grant funds, to any other organization, institution, or entity.

No individual shall be selected for employment as a supervisor unless he/she meets the qualifications established for the position. No commitment for employment shall be made by the grantee or actual services rendered by any supervisor under this grant, until the Grantee's selection has been reviewed and approved by the Program Program/Project Manager in writing. The Grantee shall submit biographical data on each proposed supervisor and a summary of its selection process at least ten (10) days prior to the anticipated date that such supervisor will begin employment hereunder, if approved.

The grantee shall adhere to regulations concerning VISTA Supervision and Transportation Support Guidelines as published in the Federal Register, Volume 63, Number 111, dated June 10, 1998.

Costs allowed under this grant are limited to those categories contained in signed application package.

Financial Reports: Grantees paid through HHS/PMS must submit financial reports semi-annually from the start date of the grant to report the status of all funds. Financial reports must report expenses on a cumulative basis over the performance period of the grant and be submitted according to the following schedule:

Period Covering:	Report Due:
January 1 to June 30	July 31
July 1 to December 31	January 31

Programs completing the final year of their grant must submit a final financial report that is cumulative over the entire grant period. This report is due 90 days after the close of the grant.

Program Income: Program Income is defined as gross income earned by the VISTA project grant recipient that is directly generated by a VISTA-supported activity during the grant award period, or earned as a result of the grant award. If you believe your VISTA project has earned gross income that constitutes program income, please contact your CNCS grants officer for assistance.

Requirement for Central Contractor Registration (CCR):

Unless you are exempted from this requirement under 2 CFR 25.110, you as the recipient must maintain the currency of your information in the CCR until you submit the final financial report required under this award or receive the final payment, whichever is later. This requires that you review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration, and more frequently if required by changes in your information or another award term.

Requirement for Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Numbers:

If you are authorized to make subawards under this award, you:

1. Must notify potential subrecipients that no entity may receive a subaward from you unless the entity has provided its DUNS number to you.
2. May not make a subaward to an entity unless the entity has provided its DUNS number to you.

**NOTE: This section in no way authorizes the making of sub-grants. A grantee must be authorized to make sub-grants under the national service laws in order to do so.**

Reporting Subawards and Executive Compensation:

- a. Reporting of first-tier subawards.
  1. Applicability. Unless you are exempt as provided in paragraph d. of this award term, you must report each action that obligates \$25,000 or more in Federal funds that does not include Recovery funds (as defined in section 1512(a)(2) of the

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Pub. L. 111-5) for a subaward to an entity (see definitions in paragraph e of this award term).

2. Where and when to report.
    - i. You must report each obligating action described in paragraph a.1. of this award term to [www.fsr.gov](http://www.fsr.gov).
    - ii. For subaward information, report no later than the end of the month following the month in which the obligation was made. (For example, if the obligation was made on November 7, 2010, the obligation must be reported by no later than December 31, 2010.)
  3. What to report. You must report the information about each obligating action that the submission instructions posted at [www.fsr.gov](http://www.fsr.gov) specify.
- b. Reporting Total Compensation of Recipient Executives.
1. Applicability and what to report. You must report total compensation for each of your five most highly compensated executives for the preceding completed fiscal year, if --
    - i. the total Federal funding authorized to date under this award is \$25,000 or more;
    - ii. in the preceding fiscal year, you received --
      - (A) 80 percent or more of your annual gross revenues from Federal procurement contracts (and subcontracts) and Federal financial assistance subject to the Transparency Act, as defined at 2 CFR 170.320 (and subawards); and
      - (B) \$25,000,000 or more in annual gross revenues from Federal procurement contracts (and subcontracts) and Federal financial assistance subject to the Transparency Act, as defined at 2 CFR 170.320 (and subawards); and
    - iii. The public does not have access to information about the compensation of the executives through periodic reports filed under section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78m(a), 78o(d)) or section 6104 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. (To determine if the public has access to the compensation information, see the U.S. Security and Exchange Commission total compensation filings at <http://www.sec.gov/answers/execomp.htm>.)
  2. Where and when to report. You must report executive total compensation described in paragraph b.1. of this award term:
    - i. As part of your registration profile at [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov).
    - ii. By the end of the month following the month in which this award is made, and annually thereafter.
- c. Reporting of Total Compensation of Subrecipient Executives.
1. Applicability and what to report. Unless you are exempt as provided in paragraph d. of this award term, for each first-tier subrecipient under this award, you shall report the names and total compensation of each of the subrecipient's five most highly compensated executives for the subrecipient's preceding completed fiscal year, if --
    - i. in the subrecipient's preceding fiscal year, the subrecipient received --

- (A) 80 percent or more of its annual gross revenues from Federal procurement contracts (and subcontracts) and Federal financial assistance subject to the Transparency Act, as defined at 2 CFR 170.320 (and subawards); and
    - (B) \$25,000,000 or more in annual gross revenues from Federal procurement contracts (and subcontracts), and Federal financial assistance subject to the Transparency Act (and subawards); and
  - ii. The public does not have access to information about the compensation of the executives through periodic reports filed under section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78m(a), 78o(d)) or section 6104 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. (To determine if the public has access to the compensation information, see the U.S. Security and Exchange Commission total compensation filings at <http://www.sec.gov/answers/execomp.htm>.)
- 2. Where and when to report. You must report subrecipient executive total compensation described in paragraph c.1. of this award term:
  - i. To the recipient.
  - ii. By the end of the month following the month during which you make the subaward. For example, if a subaward is obligated on any date during the month of October of a given year (i.e., between October 1 and 31), you must report any required compensation information of the subrecipient by November 30 of that year.
- d. Exemptions  
If, in the previous tax year, you had gross income, from all sources, under \$300,000, you are exempt from the requirements to report:
  - i. subawards, and
  - ii. the total compensation of the five most highly compensated executives of any subrecipient.
- e. Definitions. For purposes of this award term:
  - 1. “Entity” means all of the following, as defined in 2 CFR part 25:
    - i. A Governmental organization, which is a State, local government, or Indian tribe;
    - ii. A foreign public entity;
    - iii. A domestic or foreign nonprofit organization;
    - iv. A domestic or foreign for-profit organization;
    - v. A Federal agency, but only as a subrecipient under an award or subaward to a non-Federal entity.
  - 2. “Executive” means officers, managing partners, or any other employees in management positions
  - 3. “Subaward”:
    - i. This term means a legal instrument to provide support for the performance of any portion of the substantive project or program for which you received this award and that you as the recipient award to an eligible subrecipient.
    - ii. The term does not include your procurement of property and services needed to carry out the project or program (for further explanation, see

Sec. --.210 of the attachment to OMB Circular A-133, “Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations”).

- iii. A subaward may be provided through any legal agreement, including an agreement that you or a subrecipient considers a contract.
4. “Subrecipient” means an entity that:
  - i. Receives a subaward from you (the recipient) under this award; and
  - ii. Is accountable to you for the use of the Federal funds provided by the subaward.
5. “Total compensation” means the cash and noncash dollar value earned by the executive during the recipient’s or subrecipient’s preceding fiscal year and includes the following (for more information see 17 CFR 229.402(c)(2)):
  - i. Salary and bonus.
  - ii. Awards of stock, stock options, and stock appreciation rights. Use the dollar amount recognized for financial statement reporting purposes with respect to the fiscal year in accordance with the Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 123 (Revised 2004) (FAS 123R), Shared Based Payments.
  - iii. Earnings for services under nonequity incentive plans. This does not include group life, health, hospitalization or medical reimbursement plans that do not discriminate in favor of executives, and are available generally to all salaried employees.
  - iv. Change in pension value. This is the change in present value of defined benefit and actuarial pension plans.
  - v. Above-market earnings on deferred compensation which is not tax-qualified.
  - vi. Other compensation, if the aggregate value of all such other compensation (e.g. severance, termination payments, value of life insurance paid on behalf of the employee, perquisites or property) for the executive exceeds \$10,000.

Compliance with OMB Cost Principle Circulars: A21 (Educational Institutions); A87 (State and Local Governments and Indian tribes); A-122 (Non Profit Organizations).

Compliance with OMB Uniform Requirement Circulars: A-87 (State and Local Governments and Indian Tribes); A-110 (Educational Institutions and Non Profit Organizations).

Compliance with OMB Circular A-133 (Single Audit) is required.

This term of award is pursuant to paragraph (g) of section 106 of the Trafficking Victims Protections Act of 2000, as amended (22 USC 7104).

- a. Provisions applicable to a recipient that is a private entity.
  1. You as the recipient, your employees, subrecipients under this award, and subrecipients' employees may not—
    - i. Engage in severe forms of trafficking in persons during the period of time that the award is in effect;
    - ii. Procure a commercial sex act during the period of time that the award is in effect; or

- iii. Use forced labor in the performance of the award or subawards under the award.
- 2. We as the Federal awarding agency may unilaterally terminate this award, without penalty, if you or a subrecipient that is a private entity –
  - i. Is determined to have violated a prohibition in paragraph a.1 of this award term; or
  - ii. Has an employee who is determined by the agency official authorized to terminate the award to have violated a prohibition in paragraph a.1 of this award term through conduct that is either—
    - A. Associated with performance under this award; or
    - B. Imputed to you or the subrecipient using the standards and due process for imputing the conduct of an individual to an organization that are provided in 2 CFR part 180, "OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement)," as implemented by our agency at 2 CFR part 376.
- b. Provision applicable to a recipient other than a private entity.  
We as the Federal awarding agency may unilaterally terminate this award, without penalty, if a subrecipient that is a private entity—
  - 1. Is determined to have violated an applicable prohibition in paragraph a.1 of this award term; or
  - 2. Has an employee who is determined by the agency official authorized to terminate the award to have violated an applicable prohibition in paragraph a.1 of this award term through conduct that is either—
    - i. Associated with performance under this award; or
    - ii. Imputed to the subrecipient using the standards and due process for imputing the conduct of an individual to an organization that are provided in 2 CFR part 180, "OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement)," as implemented by our agency at 2 CFR part 376.
- c. Provisions applicable to any recipient.
  - 1. You must inform us immediately of any information you receive from any source alleging a violation of a prohibition in paragraph a.1 of this award term
  - 2. Our right to terminate unilaterally that is described in paragraph a.2 or b of this section:
    - i. Implements section 106(g) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA), as amended (22 U.S.C. 7104(g)), and
    - ii. Is in addition to all other remedies for noncompliance that are available to us under this award.
  - 3. You must include the requirements of paragraph a.1 of this award term in any subaward you make to a private entity.
- d. Definitions. For purposes of this award term:
  - 1. "Employee" means either:
    - i. An individual employed by you or a subrecipient who is engaged in the performance of the project or program under this award; or

- ii. Another person engaged in the performance of the project or program under this award and not compensated by you including, but not limited to, a volunteer or individual whose services are contributed by a third party as an in-kind contribution toward cost sharing or matching requirements.
- 2. "Forced labor" means labor obtained by any of the following methods: the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.
- 3. "Private entity":
  - i. Means any entity other than a State, local government, Indian tribe, or foreign public entity, as those terms are defined in 2 CFR 175.25.
  - ii. Includes:
    - A. A nonprofit organization, including any nonprofit institution of higher education, hospital, or tribal organization other than one included in the definition of Indian tribe at 2 CFR 175.25(b).
    - B. A for-profit organization.

"Severe forms of trafficking in persons," "commercial sex act," and "coercion" have the meanings given at section 103 of the TVPA, as amended (22 U.S.C. 7102)

## PROCUREMENT STANDARDS

The grantee shall adhere to procurement regulations TITLE 45--Public Welfare Subtitle B--REGULATIONS RELATING TO PUBLIC WELFARE CHAPTER XXV--CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE. The procurement standards are found in 45 CFR §2543.40 thru 45 CFR §2543.46, Procurement Standards for Non-Profit Organizations and 45 CFR §2541.360, Procurement Standards for State and Local Governments.

### Procurement Standards for Non-Profit Organizations

#### **§2543.40 Purpose of procurement standards.**

Sections §2543.41 through §2543.48 set forth standards for use by recipients in establishing procedures for the procurement of supplies and other expendable property, equipment, real property and other services with Federal funds. These standards are furnished to ensure that such materials and services are obtained in an effective manner and in compliance with the provisions of applicable Federal statutes and executive orders. No additional procurement standards or requirements shall be imposed by the Federal awarding agencies upon recipients, unless specifically required by Federal statute or executive order or approved by OMB.

#### **§2543.41 Recipient responsibilities.**

The standards contained in this section do not relieve the recipient of the contractual responsibilities arising under its contract(s). The recipient is the responsible authority, without recourse to the Federal awarding agency, regarding the settlement and satisfaction of all contractual and administrative issues arising out of procurements entered into in support of an award or other agreement. This includes disputes, claims, protests of award, source evaluation or other matters of a contractual nature. Matters concerning violation of statute are to be referred to such Federal, State or local authority as may have proper jurisdiction.

#### **§2543.42 Codes of conduct.**

The recipient shall maintain written standards of conduct governing the performance of its employees engaged in the award and administration of contracts. No employee, officer, or agent shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by Federal funds if a real or apparent conflict of interest would be involved. Such a conflict would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in the firm selected for an award. The officers, employees, and agents of the recipient shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors, or parties to subagreements. However, recipients may set standards for situations in which the financial interest is not substantial or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value. The standards of conduct shall provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations of such standards by officers, employees, or agents of the recipient.

#### **§2543.43 Competition.**

All procurement transactions shall be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition. The recipient shall be alert to organizational conflicts of interest as well as noncompetitive practices among contractors that may restrict or eliminate competition or otherwise restrain trade. In order to ensure objective contractor performance and eliminate unfair competitive advantage, contractors that develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, invitations for bids, and/or requests for proposals shall be excluded from competing for such procurements. Awards shall be made to the bidder or offeror whose bid or offer is responsive to the solicitation and is most advantageous to the recipient, price, quality and other factors considered. Solicitations shall clearly set forth all requirements that the bidder or offeror shall fulfill in order for the bid or offer to be evaluated by the recipient. Any and all bids or offers may be rejected when it is in the recipient's interest to do so.

#### **§2543.44 Procurement procedures.**

(a) All recipients shall establish written procurement procedures. These procedures shall provide for, at a minimum, that:

(1) Recipients avoid purchasing unnecessary items,



(2) Where appropriate, an analysis is made of lease and purchase alternatives to determine which would be the most economical and practical procurement for the Federal Government, and

(3) Solicitations for goods and services provide for all of the following:

(i) A clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product or service to be procured. In competitive procurements, such a description shall not contain features which unduly restrict competition.

(ii) Requirements which the bidder/offeror must fulfill and all other factors to be used in evaluating bids or proposals.

(iii) A description, whenever practicable, of technical requirements in terms of functions to be performed or performance required, including the range of acceptable characteristics or minimum acceptable standards.

(iv) The specific features of "brand name or equal" descriptions that bidders are required to meet when such items are included in the solicitation.

(v) The acceptance, to the extent practicable and economically feasible, of products and services dimensioned in the metric system of measurement.

(vi) Preference, to the extent practicable and economically feasible, for products and services that conserve natural resources and protect the environment and are energy efficient.

(b) Positive efforts shall be made by recipients to utilize small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises, whenever possible. Recipients of Federal awards shall take all of the following steps to further this goal.

(1) Ensure that small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises are used to the fullest extent practicable.

(2) Make information on forthcoming opportunities available and arrange time frames for purchases and contracts to encourage and facilitate participation by small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises.

(3) Consider in the contract process whether firms competing for larger contracts intend to subcontract with small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises.

(4) Encourage contracting with consortiums of small businesses, minority-owned firms and women's business enterprises when a contract is too large for one of these firms to handle individually.

(5) Use the services and assistance, as appropriate, of such organizations as the Small Business Administration and the Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency in

the solicitation and utilization of small businesses, minority-owned firms and women's business enterprises.

(c) The type of procuring instruments used (e.g., fixed price contracts, cost reimbursable contracts, purchase orders, and incentive contracts) shall be determined by the recipient but shall be appropriate for the particular procurement and for promoting the best interest of the program or project involved. The "cost-plus-a-percentage-of-cost" or "percentage of construction cost" methods of contracting shall not be used.

(d) Contracts shall be made only with responsible contractors who possess the potential ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the proposed procurement. Consideration shall be given to such matters as contractor integrity, record of past performance, financial and technical resources or accessibility to other necessary resources. In certain circumstances, contracts with certain parties are restricted by agencies' implementation of E.O.s 12549 and 12689, "Debarment and Suspension."

(e) Recipients shall, on request, make available for the Federal awarding agency, pre-award review and procurement documents, such as request for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc., when any of the following conditions apply.

(1) A recipient's procurement procedures or operation fails to comply with the procurement standards in the Federal awarding agency's implementation of this Circular.

(2) The procurement is expected to exceed the small purchase threshold fixed at 41 U.S.C. 403 (11) (currently \$25,000) and is to be awarded without competition or only one bid or offer is received in response to a solicitation.

(3) The procurement, which is expected to exceed the small purchase threshold, specifies a "brand name" product.

(4) The proposed award over the small purchase threshold is to be awarded to other than the apparent low bidder under a sealed bid procurement.

(5) A proposed contract modification changes the scope of a contract or increases the contract amount by more than the amount of the small purchase threshold.

#### **§2543.45 Cost and price analysis.**

Some form of cost or price analysis shall be made and documented in the procurement files in connection with every procurement action. Price analysis may be accomplished in various ways, including the comparison of price quotations submitted, market prices and similar indicia, together with discounts. Cost analysis is the review and evaluation of each element of cost to determine reasonableness, allocability and allowability.

#### **§2543.46 Procurement records.**

Procurement records and files for purchases in excess of the small purchase threshold shall include the following at a minimum:

- (a) Basis for contractor selection;
- (b) Justification for lack of competition when competitive bids or offers are not obtained; and
- (c) Basis for award cost or price.

**§2543.47 Contract administration.**

A system for contract administration shall be maintained to ensure contractor conformance with the terms, conditions and specifications of the contract and to ensure adequate and timely follow up of all purchases. Recipients shall evaluate contractor performance and document, as appropriate, whether contractors have met the terms, conditions and specifications of the contract.

**§2543.48 Contract provisions.**

The recipient shall include, in addition to provisions to define a sound and complete agreement, the following provisions in all contracts. The following provisions shall also be applied to subcontracts.

- (a) Contracts in excess of the small purchase threshold shall contain contractual provisions or conditions that allow for administrative, contractual, or legal remedies in instances in which a contractor violates or breaches the contract terms, and provide for such remedial actions as may be appropriate.
- (b) All contracts in excess of the small purchase threshold shall contain suitable provisions for termination by the recipient, including the manner by which termination shall be effected and the basis for settlement. In addition, such contracts shall describe conditions under which the contract may be terminated for default as well as conditions where the contract may be terminated because of circumstances beyond the control of the contractor.
- (c) Except as otherwise required by statute, an award that requires the contracting (or subcontracting) for construction or facility improvements shall provide for the recipient to follow its own requirements relating to bid guarantees, performance bonds, and payment bonds unless the construction contract or subcontract exceeds \$100,000. For those contracts or subcontracts exceeding \$100,000, the Federal awarding agency may accept the bonding policy and requirements of the recipient, provided the Federal awarding agency has made a determination that the Federal Government's interest is adequately protected. If such a determination has not been made, the minimum requirements shall be as follows.
  - (1) A bid guarantee from each bidder equivalent to five percent of the bid price. The "bid guarantee" shall consist of a firm commitment such as a bid bond, certified check, or other

negotiable instrument accompanying a bid as assurance that the bidder shall, upon acceptance of his bid, execute such contractual documents as may be required within the time specified.

(2) A performance bond on the part of the contractor for 100 percent of the contract price. A "performance bond" is one executed in connection with a contract to secure fulfillment of all the contractor's obligations under such contract.

(3) A payment bond on the part of the contractor for 100 percent of the contract price. A "payment bond" is one executed in connection with a contract to assure payment as required by statute of all persons supplying labor and material in the execution of the work provided for in the contract.

(4) Where bonds are required in the situations described herein, the bonds shall be obtained from companies holding certificates of authority as acceptable sureties pursuant to 31 CFR part 223, "Surety Companies Doing Business with the United States."

(d) All negotiated contracts (except those for less than the small purchase threshold) awarded by recipients shall include a provision to the effect that the recipient, the Federal awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their duly authorized representatives, shall have access to any books, documents, papers and records of the contractor which are directly pertinent to a specific program for the purpose of making audits, examinations, excerpts and transcriptions.

(e) All contracts, including small purchases, awarded by recipients and their contractors shall contain the procurement provisions of Appendix A to this Circular, as applicable.

### **Procurement Standards for State and Local Governments**

#### **§2541.360 Procurement.**

(a) *States.* When procuring property and services under a grant, a State will follow the same policies and procedures it uses for procurements from its non-Federal funds. The State will ensure that every purchase order or other contract includes any clauses required by Federal statutes and executive orders and their implementing regulations. Other grantees and subgrantees will follow paragraphs (b) through (i) of this section.

(b) *Procurement standards.* (1) Grantees and subgrantees will use their own procurement procedures which reflect applicable State and local laws and regulations, provided that the procurements conform to applicable Federal law and the standards identified in this section.

(2) Grantees and subgrantees will maintain a contract administration system which ensures that contractors perform in accordance with the terms, conditions, and specifications of their contracts or purchase orders.

(3) Grantees and subgrantees will maintain a written code of standards of conduct governing the performance of their employees engaged in the award and administration of contracts. No

employee, officer or agent of the grantee or subgrantee shall participate in selection, or in the award or administration of a contract supported by Federal funds if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, would be involved. Such a conflict would arise when --

(i) The employee, officer or agent;

(ii) Any member of his immediate family;

(iii) His or her partner; or

(iv) An organization which employs, or is about to employ, any of the above, has a financial or other interest in the firm selected for award. The grantee's or subgrantee's officers, employees or agents will neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value from contractors, potential contractors, or parties to subagreements. Grantee and subgrantees may set minimum rules where the financial interest is not substantial or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal intrinsic value. To the extent permitted by State or local law or regulations, such standards or conduct will provide for penalties, sanctions, or other disciplinary actions for violations of such standards by the grantee's and subgrantee's officers, employees, or agents, or by contractors or their agents. The awarding agency may in regulation provide additional prohibitions relative to real, apparent, or potential conflicts of interest.

(4) Grantee and subgrantee procedures will provide for a review of proposed procurements to avoid purchase of unnecessary or duplicative items. Consideration should be given to consolidating or breaking out procurements to obtain a more economical purchase. Where appropriate, an analysis will be made of lease versus purchase alternatives, and any other appropriate analysis to determine the most economical approach.

(5) To foster greater economy and efficiency, grantees and subgrantees are encouraged to enter into State and local intergovernmental agreements for procurement or use of common goods and services.

(6) Grantees and subgrantees are encouraged to use Federal excess and surplus property in lieu of purchasing new equipment and property whenever such use is feasible and reduces project costs.

(7) Grantees and subgrantees are encouraged to use value engineering clauses in contracts for construction projects of sufficient size to offer reasonable opportunities for cost reductions. Value engineering is a systematic and creative analysis of each contract item or task to ensure that its essential function is provided at the overall lower cost.

(8) Grantees and subgrantees will make awards only to responsible contractors possessing the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of a proposed procurement. Consideration will be given to such matters as contractor integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance, and financial and technical resources.

(9) Grantees and subgrantees will maintain records sufficient to detail the significant history of a procurement. These records will include, but are not necessarily limited to the following: Rationale for the method of procurement, selection of contract type, contractor selection or rejection, and the basis for the contract price.

(10) Grantees and subgrantees will use time and material type contracts only --

(i) After a determination that no other contract is suitable; and

(ii) If the contract includes a ceiling price that the contractor exceeds at its own risk.

(11) Grantees and subgrantees alone will be responsible, in accordance with good administrative practice and sound business judgment, for the settlement of all contractual and administrative issues arising out of procurements. These issues include, but are not limited to source evaluation, protests, disputes, and claims. These standards do not relieve the grantee or subgrantee of any contractual responsibilities under its contracts. Federal agencies will not substitute their judgment for that of the grantee or subgrantee unless the matter is primarily a Federal concern. Violations of law will be referred to the local, State, or Federal authority having proper jurisdiction.

(12) Grantees and subgrantees will have protest procedures to handle and resolve disputes relating to their procurements and shall in all instances disclose information regarding the protest to the awarding agency. A protester must exhaust all administrative remedies with the grantee and subgrantee before pursuing a protest with the Federal agency. Reviews of protests by the Federal agency will be limited to:

(i) Violations of Federal law or regulations and the standards of this section (violations of State or local law will be under the jurisdiction of State or local authorities); and

(ii) Violations of the grantee's or sub-grantee's protest procedures for failure to review a complaint or protest. Protests received by the Federal agency other than those specified in this paragraph (b)(12)(ii) will be referred to the grantee or subgrantee.

(c) *Competition.* (1) All procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner providing full and open competition consistent with the standards of this section. Some of the situations considered to be restrictive of competition include but are not limited to:

(i) Placing unreasonable requirements on firms in order for them to qualify to do business;

(ii) Requiring unnecessary experience and excessive bonding;

(iii) Noncompetitive pricing practices between firms or between affiliated companies;

(iv) Noncompetitive awards to consultants that are on retainer contracts;

(v) Organizational conflicts of interest;

(vi) Specifying only a "brand name" product instead of allowing "an equal" product to be offered and describing the performance of other relevant requirements of the procurement; and

(vii) Any arbitrary action in the procurement process.

(2) Grantees and subgrantees will conduct procurements in a manner that prohibits the use of statutory or administratively imposed in-State or local geographical preferences in the evaluation of bids or proposals, except in those cases where applicable Federal statutes expressly mandate or encourage geographic preference. Nothing in this section preempts State licensing laws. When contracting for architectural and engineering (A/E) services, geographic location may be a selection criteria provided its application leaves an appropriate number of qualified firms, given the nature and size of the project, to compete for the contract.

(3) Grantees will have written selection procedures for procurement transactions. These procedures will ensure that all solicitations:

(i) Incorporate a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product, or service to be procured. Such description shall not, in competitive procurements, contain features which unduly restrict competition. The description may include a statement of the qualitative nature of the material, product or service to be procured, and when necessary, shall set forth those minimum essential characteristics and standards to which it must conform if it is to satisfy its intended use. Detailed product specifications should be avoided if at all possible. When it is impractical or uneconomical to make a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements, a "brand name or equal" description may be used as a means to define the performance or other salient requirements of a procurement. The specific features of the named brand which must be met by offerors shall be clearly stated; and

(ii) Identify all requirements which the offerors must fulfill and all other factors to be used in evaluating bids or proposals.

(4) Grantees and subgrantees will ensure that all prequalified lists of persons, firms, or products which are used in acquiring goods and services are current and include enough qualified sources to ensure maximum open and free competition. Also, grantees and subgrantees will not preclude potential bidders from qualifying during the solicitation period.

(d) *Methods of procurement to be followed -- (1) Procurement by small purchase procedures.* Small purchase procedures are those relatively simple and informal procurement methods for securing services, supplies, or other property that do not cost more than the simplified acquisition threshold fixed at 41 U.S.C. 403(11) (currently set at \$100,000). If small purchase procedures are used, price or rate quotations shall be obtained from an adequate number of qualified sources.

(2) Procurement by *sealed bids* (formal advertising). Bids are publicly solicited and a firm-fixed-price contract (lump sum or unit price) is awarded to the responsible bidder whose bid, conforming with all the material terms and conditions of the invitation for bids, is the lowest in price. The sealed bid method is the preferred method for procuring construction, if the conditions in §2541.36(d)(2)(i) apply.

(i) In order for sealed bidding to be feasible, the following conditions should be present:

(A) A complete, adequate, and realistic specification or purchase description is available;

(B) Two or more responsible bidders are willing and able to compete effectively and for the business; and

(C) The procurement lends itself to a firm fixed price contract and the selection of the successful bidder can be made principally on the basis of price.

(ii) If sealed bids are used, the following requirements apply:

(A) The invitation for bids will be publicly advertised and bids shall be solicited from an adequate number of known suppliers, providing them sufficient time prior to the date set for opening the bids;

(B) The invitation for bids, which will include any specifications and pertinent attachments, shall define the items or services in order for the bidder to properly respond;

(C) All bids will be publicly opened at the time and place prescribed in the invitation for bids;

(D) A firm fixed-price contract award will be made in writing to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. Where specified in bidding documents, factors such as discounts, transportation cost, and life cycle costs shall be considered in determining which bid is lowest. Payment discounts will only be used to determine the low bid when prior experience indicates that such discounts are usually taken advantage of; and

(E) Any or all bids may be rejected if there is a sound documented reason.

(3) Procurement by *competitive proposals*. The technique of competitive proposals is normally conducted with more than one source submitting an offer, and either a fixed-price or cost-reimbursement type contract is awarded. It is generally used when conditions are not appropriate for the use of sealed bids. If this method is used, the following requirements apply:

(i) Requests for proposals will be publicized and identify all evaluation factors and their relative importance. Any response to publicized requests for proposals shall be honored to the maximum extent practical;

(ii) Proposals will be solicited from an adequate number of qualified sources;

(iii) Grantees and subgrantees will have a method for conducting technical evaluations of the proposals received and for selecting awardees;

(iv) Awards will be made to the responsible firm whose proposal is most advantageous to the program, with price and other factors considered; and



(v) Grantees and subgrantees may use competitive proposal procedures for qualifications-based procurement of architectural/engineering (A/E) professional services whereby competitors' qualifications are evaluated and the most qualified competitor is selected, subject to negotiation of fair and reasonable compensation. The method, where price is not used as a selection factor, can only be used in procurement of A/E professional services. It cannot be used to purchase other types of services though A/E firms are a potential source to perform the proposed effort.

(4) Procurement by *noncompetitive proposals* is procurement through solicitation of a proposal from only one source, or after solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate.

(i) Procurement by noncompetitive proposals may be used only when the award of a contract is infeasible under small purchase procedures, sealed bids or competitive proposals and one of the following circumstances applies:

(A) The item is available only from a single source;

(B) The public exigency or emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation;

(C) The awarding agency authorizes noncompetitive proposals; or

(D) After solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate.

(ii) Cost analysis, i.e., verifying the proposed cost data, the projections of the data, and the evaluation of the specific elements of costs and profits, is required.

(iii) Grantees and subgrantees may be required to submit the proposed procurement to the awarding agency for pre-award review in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(e) *Contracting with small and minority firms, women's business enterprise and labor surplus area firms.* (1) The grantee and subgrantee will take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that minority firms, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible.

(2) Affirmative steps shall include:

(i) Placing qualified small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises on solicitation lists;

(ii) Assuring that small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises are solicited whenever they are potential sources;

(iii) Dividing total requirements, when economically feasible, into smaller tasks or quantities to permit maximum participation by small and minority business, and women's business enterprises;

(iv) Establishing delivery schedules, where the requirement permits, which encourage participation by small and minority business, and women's business enterprises;

(v) Using the services and assistance of the Small Business Administration, and the Minority Business Development Agency of the Department of Commerce; and

(vi) Requiring the prime contractor, if subcontracts are to be let, to take the affirmative steps listed in paragraphs (e)(2) (i) through (v) of this section.

(f) *Contract cost and price.* (1) Grantees and subgrantees must perform a cost or price analysis in connection with every procurement action including contract modifications. The method and degree of analysis is dependent on the facts surrounding the particular procurement situation, but as a starting point, grantees must make independent estimates before receiving bids or proposals. A cost analysis must be performed when the offeror is required to submit the elements of his estimated cost, e.g., under professional, consulting, and architectural engineering services contracts. A cost analysis will be necessary when adequate price competition is lacking, and for sole source procurements, including contract modifications or change orders, unless price reasonableness can be established on the basis of a catalog or market price of a commercial product sold in substantial quantities to the general public or based on prices set by law or regulation. A price analysis will be used in all other instances to determine the reasonableness of the proposed contract price.

(2) Grantees and subgrantees will negotiate profit as a separate element of the price for each contract in which there is no price competition and in all cases where cost analysis is performed. To establish a fair and reasonable profit, consideration will be given to the complexity of the work to be performed, the risk borne by the contractor, the contractor's investment, the amount of subcontracting, the quality of its record of past performance, and industry profit rates in the surrounding geographical area for similar work.

(3) Costs or prices based on estimated costs for contracts under grants will be allowable only to the extent that costs incurred or cost estimates included in negotiated prices are consistent with Federal cost principles (see §2541.220). Grantees may reference their own cost principles that comply with the applicable Federal cost principles.

(4) The cost plus a percentage of cost and percentage of construction cost methods of contracting shall not be used.

(g) *Awarding agency review.* (1) Grantees and subgrantees must make available, upon request of the awarding agency, technical specifications on proposed procurements where the awarding agency believes such review is needed to ensure that the item and/or service specified is the one being proposed for purchase. This review generally will take place prior to the time the specification is incorporated into a solicitation document. However, if the grantee or subgrantee desires to have the review accomplished after a solicitation has been developed, the awarding agency may still review the specifications, with such review usually limited to the technical aspects of the proposed purchase.

(2) Grantees and subgrantees must on request make available for awarding agency pre-award review procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc. when:

(i) A grantee's or subgrantee's procurement procedures or operation fails to comply with the procurement standards in this section; or

(ii) The procurement is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold and is to be awarded without competition or only one bid or offer is received in response to a solicitation; or

(iii) The procurement, which is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold, specifies a "brand name" product; or

(iv) The proposed award is more than the simplified acquisition threshold and is to be awarded to other than the apparent low bidder under a sealed bid procurement; or

(v) A proposed contract modification changes the scope of a contract or increases the contract amount by more than the simplified acquisition threshold.

(3) A grantee or subgrantee will be exempt from the pre-award review in paragraph (g)(2) of this section if the awarding agency determines that its procurement systems comply with the standards of this section.

(i) A grantee or subgrantee may request that its procurement system be reviewed by the awarding agency to determine whether its system meets these standards in order for its system to be certified. Generally, these reviews shall occur where there is a continuous high-dollar funding, and third- party contracts are awarded on a regular basis.

(ii) A grantee or subgrantee may self-certify its procurement system. Such self-certification shall not limit the awarding agency's right to survey the system. Under a self-certification procedure, awarding agencies may wish to rely on written assurances from the grantee or subgrantee that it is complying with these standards. A grantee or subgrantee will cite specific procedures, regulations, standards, etc., as being in compliance with these requirements and have its system available for review.

(h) *Bonding requirements.* For construction or facility improvement contracts or subcontracts exceeding the simplified acquisition threshold, the awarding agency may accept the bonding policy and requirements of the grantee or subgrantee provided the awarding agency has made a determination that the awarding agency's interest is adequately protected. If such a determination has not been made, the minimum requirements shall be as follows:

(1) *A bid guarantee from each bidder equivalent to five percent of the bid price.* The "bid guarantee" shall consist of a firm commitment such as a bid bond, certified check, or other negotiable instrument accompanying a bid as assurance that the bidder will, upon acceptance of his bid, execute such contractual documents as may be required within the time specified.

(2) *A performance bond on the part of the contractor for 100 percent of the contract price.* A "performance bond" is one executed in connection with a contract to secure fulfillment of all the contractor's obligations under such contract.

(3) *A payment bond on the part of the contractor for 100 percent of the contract price.* A "payment bond" is one executed in connection with a contract to assure payment as required by law of all persons supplying labor and material in the execution of the work provided for in the contract.

(i) *Contract provisions.* A grantee's and subgrantee's contracts must contain provisions in paragraph (i) of this section. Federal agencies are permitted to require changes, remedies, changed conditions, access and records retention, suspension of work, and other clauses approved by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy.

(1) Administrative, contractual, or legal remedies in instances where contractors violate or breach contract terms, and provide for such sanctions and penalties as may be appropriate. (Contracts more than the simplified acquisition threshold)

(2) Termination for cause and for convenience by the grantee or subgrantee including the manner by which it will be effected and the basis for settlement. (All contracts in excess of \$10,000)

(3) Compliance with Executive Order 11246 of September 24, 1965, entitled "Equal Employment Opportunity," as amended by Executive Order 11375 of October 13, 1967, and as supplemented in Department of Labor regulations (41 CFR chapter 60). (All construction contracts awarded in excess of \$10,000 by grantees and their contractors or subgrantees)

(4) Compliance with the Copeland "Anti-Kickback" Act (18 U.S.C. 874) as supplemented in Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR Part 3). (All contracts and subgrants for construction or repair)

(5) Compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. 276a to 276a-7) as supplemented by Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR Part 5). (Construction contracts in excess of \$2000 awarded by grantees and subgrantees when required by Federal grant program legislation)

(6) Compliance with Sections 103 and 107 of the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. 327-330) as supplemented by Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR Part 5). (Construction contracts awarded by grantees and subgrantees in excess of \$2000, and in excess of \$2500 for other contracts which involve the employment of mechanics or laborers)

(7) Notice of awarding agency requirements and regulations pertaining to reporting.

(8) Notice of awarding agency requirements and regulations pertaining to patent rights with respect to any discovery or invention which arises or is developed in the course of or under such contract.

(9) Awarding agency requirements and regulations pertaining to copyrights and rights in data.

(10) Access by the grantee, the subgrantee, the Federal grantor agency, the Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their duly authorized representatives to any books, documents, papers, and records of the contractor which are directly pertinent to that specific contract for the purpose of making audit, examination, excerpts, and transcriptions.

(11) Retention of all required records for three years after grantees or subgrantees make final payments and all other pending matters are closed.

(12) Compliance with all applicable standards, orders, or requirements issued under section 306 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 1857(h)), section 508 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1368), Executive Order 11738, and Environmental Protection Agency regulations (40 CFR part 15). (Contracts, subcontracts, and subgrants of amounts in excess of \$100,000)

(13) Mandatory standards and policies relating to energy efficiency which are contained in the state energy conservation plan issued in compliance with the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (Pub. L. 94-163, 89 Stat. 871).

*[59 FR 41598, Aug. 12, 1994, as amended at 60 FR 19639, 19646, Apr. 19, 1995]*

Section 189D of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (NCSA), as amended by the Serve America Act of 2009, requires that all current and future VISTA sponsors who receive funds from VISTA complete background checks on sponsor employees who receive any portion of their salary from CNCS (VISTA) grant funding. These background checks are not an allowable cost for using VISTA grant funds because they are considered part of the grantee's share of VISTA supervision. Copies of background check results should be kept in sponsor employee files and may be subject to monitoring site checks or audits. Background checks for existing employees should be initiated as soon as possible and no later than April 1, 2011.

For the purposes of this policy, a vulnerable population is defined as a client population that may include, but is not limited to, elders (over age 65), minors (18 or younger) and/or individuals with mental or physical disabilities.

**For sponsor employees whose salaries are paid, at least in part, with VISTA grant funds, and who *work with* vulnerable populations:**

The VISTA sponsor must conduct the following three (3) actions:

1. An National Sex Offender Public Records (NSOPR) search, available at <http://www.nsopr.gov>
2. A State criminal registry or repository search in the state where the VISTA project is operating and the State where the staff member/members reside; and
3. Submit fingerprints to the FBI for a national criminal history background check. Instructions are available at <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/background-checks>. Note: Employees can submit request for background checks, and have the results sent to the sponsor organization.

**For sponsor employees whose salaries are paid, at least in part, with VISTA grant funds, and who *do not* work with vulnerable populations:**

The VISTA project must conduct the following two (2) actions:

1. An NSOPR search, available at <http://www.nsopr.gov>
2. **And either:**
  - a) A State criminal registry or repository search in the state where the VISTA project is operating and the State where the staff member/members reside; **OR**
  - b) Submit fingerprints to the FBI for a national criminal history background check, instructions are available at <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/background-checks>