

Contract Administration

Activity 31: Postaward Orientation

Ensuring the contractor understands the contract terms and conditions; security requirements; inspection, acceptance, and invoicing procedures; and authority, responsibilities, and limitations of the Contracting Officer's Representative.

Related Flow Charts: [Flow Chart 31](#)

Related Courses: [FCL-A-0406 \(ACC: Post Award Conferences\)](#)

Tasks	FAR Reference(s)	Additional Information
1. Determine whether a postaward orientation is necessary.	FAR 42.501(c) General [postaward orientation]. FAR 42.502 Selecting contracts for postaward orientation.	Consider the need to examine issues that affect a clear and mutual understanding of all contract requirements or to identify and resolve mutual problems. As a minimum, consider the: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nature and extent of the preaward survey and any other prior discussions with the contractor;• Type, value, and complexity of the contract;• Complexity and acquisition history of the product or service;• Requirements for spare parts and related equipment;• Urgency of the delivery schedule and relationship of the product or service to critical programs;• Length of the planned production cycle;• Extent of subcontracting;• Contractor's performance history and experience with the product or service;• Contractor's status, if any, as a small business, small disadvantaged, women-owned, veteran-owned, HUBZone, or service-disabled veteran-owned, small

Tasks	FAR Reference(s)	Additional Information
		business concern; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractor’s performance history with small, small disadvantaged, women-owned, veteran-owned, small business subcontracting programs; • Safety precautions required for hazardous materials or operations; and • Complex financing arrangement, such as progress payments, advance payments, or guaranteed loans.
2. Determine the form of the postaward orientation, be it written or oral.	FAR 42.500 Scope of subpart [postaward orientation]. FAR 42.504 Postaward letters [postaward orientation].	Normally use a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written orientation (e.g., traditional letter, e-mail, or fax) when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are relatively few issues to cover; ○ The issues are relatively straightforward; and ○ There appears to be little need for two-way discussion. • Formal conference (e.g., face-to-face conference, teleconference, or videoconference) when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are numerous issues to cover; ○ The issues are relatively complex; or ○ There appears to be a need for two-way discussion.

Tasks	FAR Reference(s)	Additional Information
3a. Issue a written postaward orientation.	FAR 42.504 Postaward letters [postaward orientation].	<p>As a minimum, written postaward orientation should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the Government representative responsible for administering the contract; • Cite any unusual or significant contract requirements; and • Make it clear that the letter was not written to change the contract. <p>Normally, it is good business practice to require the contractor to acknowledge receipt.</p> <p>Remember that a postaward orientation letter may be used to interpret contract requirements, but it cannot be used to change the contract. That can only be accomplished using a contract modification.</p>
3(b)(i). Plan the postaward orientation conference.	FAR 42.503-1 Postaward conference arrangements.	<p>The contracting officer who decides that a conference is needed is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing the time and place of the conference; • Preparing the agenda, when necessary; • Notifying appropriate government representatives (e.g., contracting/contract administration office) and the contractor; • Designating or acting as the chairperson; • Conducting preliminary meeting of government personnel; and • Preparing the summary report of the conference. <p>It is often standard practice at some agencies to require a postaward orientation. Including a requirement to conduct a postaward conference in the PWS/SOW is a common occurrence.</p>

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3(b)(ii). Conduct the postaward orientation conference.	FAR 42.501(d) General [postaward]. FAR 42.503-2 Postaward conference procedure.	<p>Maximum benefits will be realized when orientation is conducted promptly after award.</p> <p>The conference chairperson should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present the name, responsibilities, and authority of any Government representative who will have a unique role in representing the Contracting Officer in administering the contract. • Discuss any unusual or significant contract requirements. • Emphasize that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Any contracting officer commitment or direction related to contract requirements must be made in writing; ○ Government representatives other than the contracting officer are not authorized to take any action that alters the contract; and ○ Any change to the contract that results from the postaward conference must be made by contract modification. • Identify any items (e.g., bonds or security clearances) that the contractor must provide to the Government before beginning work and have not yet provided. • Establish a plan for resolving any identified issues that cannot be resolved during the conference.

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3(b)(iii). Distribute the postaward conference report.	<p>FAR 42.503-2 Postaward conference procedure.</p> <p>FAR 42.503-3 Postaward conference report.</p>	<p>The postaward conference chairperson must prepare and sign a postaward conference report that covers all items discussed, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas requiring resolution; • Controversial matters; • All information and guidance provided to the contractor; and • The names of the participants assigned responsibility for further actions, and the due dates for the actions. <p>The report should also include the names and affiliations of all conference participants.</p> <p>Furnish copies of the report to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The contracting office; • The contract administration office; • The contractor; and • Others who require the information.

Tasks	FAR Reference(s)	Additional Information
<p>3(b)(iv). Participate in postaward subcontractor conference(s) when appropriate.</p>	<p>FAR 42.505 Postaward subcontractor conferences.</p>	<p>The prime contractor is generally responsible for conducting postaward conferences with subcontractors. However, the prime contractor may invite Government participation.</p> <p>When invited, Government participation is normally appropriate if the benefits of participation warrant the costs involved.</p> <p>Any Government representatives participating in a postaward subcontractor conference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must recognize the lack of privity of contract between the Government and subcontractors; • Must not take action that is inconsistent with or alters subcontracts; and • Must ensure that any changes in direction or commitment affecting the prime contract or contractor resulting from a subcontractor conference are made by written direction of the Contracting Officer to the prime contractor.
<p>4. Document the contract file.</p>	<p>FAR 4.803 Contents of contract files.</p>	<p>Retain a copy of any:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written preaward orientation; • Postaward conference report; or • Available documentation relating to Government participation in a postaward subcontractor conference.