

**ACQUISITION AND CONTRACTING POLICY**

**1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** To update policy for acquisitions and the contracting of supplies and services for the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) through the NCA Contracting Service.

**2. SUMMARY OF CHANGES:** This revised directive:

a. Provides current information regarding the National Cemetery Administration's (NCA) Contracting Service;

b. Unifies information previously found in two policy documents into one in order to foster consistent compliance with federal contracting and acquisition laws and regulations;

c. Updates NCA acquisition policy to align with current laws and regulations. Implements provisions published in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), Title 48, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Chapter 1, and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Acquisition Regulations (VAAR) published at Title 48, CFR, Chapter 8.

d. Includes requirements to follow Federal and VA policies related to sustainable/green procurement for products and services.

**3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** NCA Contracting Service, 18434 Joplin Rd, Triangle, VA, 22172, is responsible for the contents of this directive. Questions may be referred to the Director, NCA Contracting Service.

**4. RELATED PUBLICATIONS:** SharePoint-accessible NCA Contracting Service Customer Resource Guide.

**5. RESCISSIONS:**

a. NCA Directive 7400 – NCA Acquisition/Contracting (September 26, 2007).

b. NCA Handbook 0058 – NCA Green Purchasing Procedures (April 30, 2012).

**6. RECERTIFICATION:** This publication is scheduled for recertification on the last day of August 2025.

/s/ Ronald E. Walters  
Principal Deputy Under Secretary  
for Memorial Affairs

Distribution: Electronic

## ACQUISITION AND CONTRACTING POLICY

**1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE:** This National Cemetery Administration (NCA) directive provides guidance on acquisition-related activities managed by the NCA Contracting Service in support of NCA programs and offices.

**2. BACKGROUND:** NCA Contracting Service has developed the *NCA Contracting Service Customer Resource Guide* that serves as a central repository for NCA Program Offices to access customer guides and helpful information to streamline business practices with NCA Contracting Services. The *NCA Contracting Service Customer Resource Guide* and the *Acquisition Lifecycle Flowchart* are available electronically to NCA staff on the *NCA Contracting Services Customer Resource Portal*. These resources explain each contracting phase in detail, provide additional background information, and provide examples for each part of the contracting process.

**NOTE:** First time users of the NCA Contracting Services Customer Resource Portal will have to request access by following the prompts on the website.  
<https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VACONCAITBRAS/DUSMgmt/NCAContSvcCustRes/SitePages/Home.aspx>

**3. POLICY:** It is NCA policy to adhere to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) that apply to all Federal agencies for procurement and acquisitions. This directive implements provisions published in the FAR, Title 48, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Chapter 1. The FAR is further supplemented by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Acquisition Regulations (VAAR) published at Title 48, CFR, Chapter 8 and the Veterans Affairs Acquisition Manual (VAAM) and all active Procurement Policy Memorandums, including and executive orders (EOs) to “buy green” or the purchase of sustainable products and services.

### **4. RESPONSIBILITIES:**

a. **Deputy Under Secretary for Management** is responsible for:

- (1) Serving as the Head of Contracting Activity (HCA) for NCA;
- (2) Providing guidance to all NCA facilities in all areas of acquisition; and
- (3) Overseeing all contracting activities.

b. **Director, Contracting Service** is responsible for:

(1) Managing NCA’s day to day purchasing, contracting activities and Procurement Acquisition Lead Time (PALT) expectations.

(2) Updating the NCA Contracting Service Customer Resource Guide and NCA Contracting Services Customer Resource Portal with the latest information and guidance.

c. **Contracting Officer (CO)** is responsible for:

(1) Entering into contracts, administering contracts, terminating contracts, and making related determinations and findings.

(2) Managing Pre-award functions, to include:

(i) Conducting quality review of package requirement;

(ii) Assisting customers with market research;

(iii) Pre-solicitation planning;

(iv) Determining availability of qualified sources through market research;

(v) Finalizing business approach and source selection criteria;

(vi) Preparing solicitation documents (including appropriate clauses, other terms and conditions);

(vii) Obtaining requisite technical and legal reviews and clearances;

(viii) Issuing the solicitation; receiving and evaluating proposals and quotes; and

(ix) Providing guidance to evaluation teams on the execution of their duties and monitoring these teams.

(3) Managing contract administration functions, to include:

(i) Contract award;

(ii) Post award; and

(iii) Closeout.

(4) Ensuring that Federal policies are followed concerning the purchase of sustainable/green products and services.

(i) Promoting sustainable acquisition and procurement by verifying that the environmental performance and sustainability factors outlined in the order are included to the maximum extent practicable for all applicable procurements in the planning, award, and execution phases of the acquisition.

d. **Contracting Officer's Representative (COR)** is responsible for:

(1) Representing the CO within the limits of the authority delegated in writing by the CO.

(2) Taking actions as authorized in the contract and within the delegation and informing the CO of technical or contractual issues including:

(i) Monitoring the contractor's performance (within the scope of authority) to ensure compliance with technical requirements of the contract terms, conditions and specifications are adhered to;

(ii) Ensuring all required items, documentation, data, and/or reports are submitted as required;

(iii) Evaluating proposals intended for input into negotiation of changes, modifications and claims at the request of the CO;

(iv) Reviewing and approving invoices;

(v) Maintaining adequate records during the life of the Contract in order to describe contract fulfillment;

(vi) Providing contractor evaluation to the CO via the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS); and

(vii) Evaluating contract terms and conditions, cost and price, and the offeror's responsibility (e.g., adequate financial resources, ability to comply with delivery or performance schedule, satisfactory record of past performance).

e. **NCA Contracting Customers** are responsible for:

(1) Submitting a complete requirement package to the CO (See customer resource guide);

(2) Conducting market research;

(3) Preparing justification for acquisition strategies other than full and open competition;

(4) Preparing justification for brand name or sole source justification;

(5) Reviewing the draft solicitation prepared by the CO;

(6) Assisting the CO in answering request for information (RFI) questions from offerors;

(7) Participating in the source selection plan if the CO decides to use negotiated procedures in accordance with FAR 15;

(8) When required, creating an Evaluation Team (ET), to evaluate technical proposals;

(9) Participating in the ET's work;

(10) Participating in pre-solicitation and pre-award conferences;

(11) Providing advice to the CO on technical issues;

(12) Helping to respond to contractor queries. Provide supporting documentation for the solicitation, for example, providing answers to the CO for use in publicizing questions and answers in response to questions received from contractors in the solicitation process;

(13) Verifying that the prices offered are within the range that the program has budgeted and that offered prices reflect an understanding of the Government's requirements;

(14) Assisting the CO with determining whether offered prices are fair and reasonable;

(15) Evaluate Technical Proposals; and

(16) Coordinating ET review of technical proposals and any final proposal revisions;

(17) Ensuring that Federal and NCA Environmental Management policies are followed when requesting the purchase of sustainable/green products and services for:

(i) Promote building energy conservation, efficiency, and management

(ii) Improve agency water use efficiency and management, including stormwater management

(iii) Improve agency fleet and vehicle efficiency and management

(iv) Purchase environmentally preferable products or services

(v) Establish an annual target for the number of contracts to be awarded with BioPreferred and biobased criteria

(vi) Reduce copier and printing paper use and acquiring uncoated printing and writing paper

f. **Evaluation Team (ET) Members** are responsible for:

(1) Evaluating the original technical proposals and final proposal revisions against the criteria established in the solicitation (not against each other).

(2) Ranking the proposals in order of merit and preparing written technical evaluation reports for the CO on each proposal, with narrative to support the rationale for any business judgments.

(3) Making recommendations to the CO regarding clarifications needed and deficiencies identified; and Assisting the CO during negotiations, if required.

**4. REFERENCES:**

- a. Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) System (Title 48, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1).
- b. Department of Veterans Affairs, Acquisition Regulation (VAAR) (Title 48, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 8).
- c. Veterans First Public Law, P.L. 109-461 (38 U.S.C. § 8127).
- d. Veterans Affairs Acquisition Manual (VAAM).
- e. NCA Contracting Services Customer Resource Portal (FOR AGENCY USE ONLY).
- f. VA Handbook 0058 – VA Green Purchasing Program (July 19, 2013).