



Steps

Office of Acquisition Management
GSA Federal Acquisition Service

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FROM THE EDITOR



This issue of *GSA Steps* includes a wealth of information for contractors, including important updates for those using GSA's online payment processing system; the launch of phase two of *Contracts Online*, working towards improvements in Federal acquisition; what you need to know about prompt payment discounts (PPD); and news about environmental purchasing requirements.

If you would like to provide feedback and/or have suggestions for subjects to cover in future newsletters, please feel free to contact Lauren Geraghty at lauren.geraghty@gsa.gov.

We hope you're enjoying your summer!

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GSA Steps: lauren.geraghty@gsa.gov

NEW ROUTING NUMBER FOR IFF EPAY PAYMENTS EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2010

Pay.gov, GSA's online payment processing system, has introduced a new routing number, **041036046**, in addition to the current Pay.gov routing number, 042736141, **effective July 1, 2010.**

You may be impacted by this change if you submit your Industrial Funding Fee (IFF) to GSA electronically AND you utilize debit block services from your financial institution. If you unblock your accounts using Originating Depository Financial Institution (ODFI) routing numbers, you will need to provide the new routing number (**041036046**) in addition to the current routing number (**042736141**) to your financial institution. If you unblock your accounts using GSA's Company ID, **3101036151**, you will not be affected by this change. To determine whether this change will affect your future IFF payments, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Do you submit IFF payments through ePay Direct Debit from a bank or other financial institution account?

2. Does your bank or financial institution account currently have debit blocks in place?

If you answered "yes" to both of these questions, you must provide the new routing transit number (041036046) to your financial institution so your IFF payments will continue to process successfully. If you unblock your account using GSA's Company ID, you will not need to provide the new routing number.

Monitor your account to ensure that your payments are being debited from your account correctly and that GSA receives your payment in a timely fashion.

If this will be your first time remitting the IFF with ePay Direct Debit, ensure that your financial institution has unblocked the debit feature to GSA by providing the two routing numbers provided above or GSA's Company ID number. For additional assistance, please contact your assigned Administrative Contracting Officer (ACO).

CONTRACTS ONLINE

As part of GSA's commitment to achieving greater transparency, GSA is launching phase two of *Contracts Online*. *Contracts Online* is an effort to make Schedule contract clauses transparent to help ordering activities maximize their effective use of the Schedules Program. By empowering our customers to make informed decisions, *Contracts Online* supports the Obama administration's goal of greater transparency in Federal acquisition.

On June 24, 2010, GSA's Office of Acquisition Management issued a Mass Modification (Mass Mod) for all GSA Schedule contract holders. This modification is designed to capture clause exception(s) from existing contract holders. These clause exceptions will be stored with your respective contract(s). When you accept the Mass Mod, *Contracts Online*, a module in GSA eLibrary, will be updated to show the accepted standard terms and conditions, the solicitation refresh number, and any approved exceptions for your contract. The contract clauses, including exceptions for your contract, will be displayed in GSA eLibrary and may be used by ordering activities as part of their best value selection when establishing Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs), or placing task or delivery orders against Schedule contracts.

To launch the Mass Mod and capture the terms and conditions exceptions, all GSA Acquisition Centers have refreshed their Schedule solicitations. That action generated the Mass Mod for each solicitation. The Mass Mod baselines all Schedule contracts, captures any existing exceptions, and routes the exceptions to the contract's Procurement Contracting Officer (PCO). If exceptions to the standard terms and conditions have been awarded for your contract, enter the exception when you review/accept the Mass Mod. It will be routed to the PCO to ensure that the exceptions are valid. If you do not have any exceptions, the Mod you accepted will be routed to the ACO for signature. **Do not submit new exceptions** with this Mod, and be aware that any exception not submitted and verified during this process will no longer be valid for your contract. Only currently approved and awarded exceptions should be submitted.

When the Mass Mod was initiated, you received an email notification containing the Mass Mod link (<https://mcm.fas.gsa.gov>) and

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a PIN number for access to respond. Using the link and PIN number provided, log in and view the Mass Mod's "Overview" and "FAQ" pages. In addition, a guide is available on the Vendor Support Center's Web site (<https://vsc.gsa.gov>) to guide vendors through the process. Please contact the Vendor Support Center helpdesk at vendor.support@gsa.gov, or call toll free at (877) 495-4849 if you have technical questions about the process. Questions about your contract and its status, including exceptions to the standard terms and conditions, must be directed to your contracting officer.



PROPER TREATMENT OF PROMPT PAYMENT DISCOUNTS

Prompt payment discounts (PPD) provide customer agencies using the Schedules greater discounts on products and services if they take advantage of special payment terms. Many Schedule contractors have PPD terms negotiated on their base contract with GSA. However, according to a recent audit report released by the GSA Office of Inspector General, a sample of contractors did not display PPD terms appropriately, potentially resulting in thousands of dollars of overpayments by customer agencies.

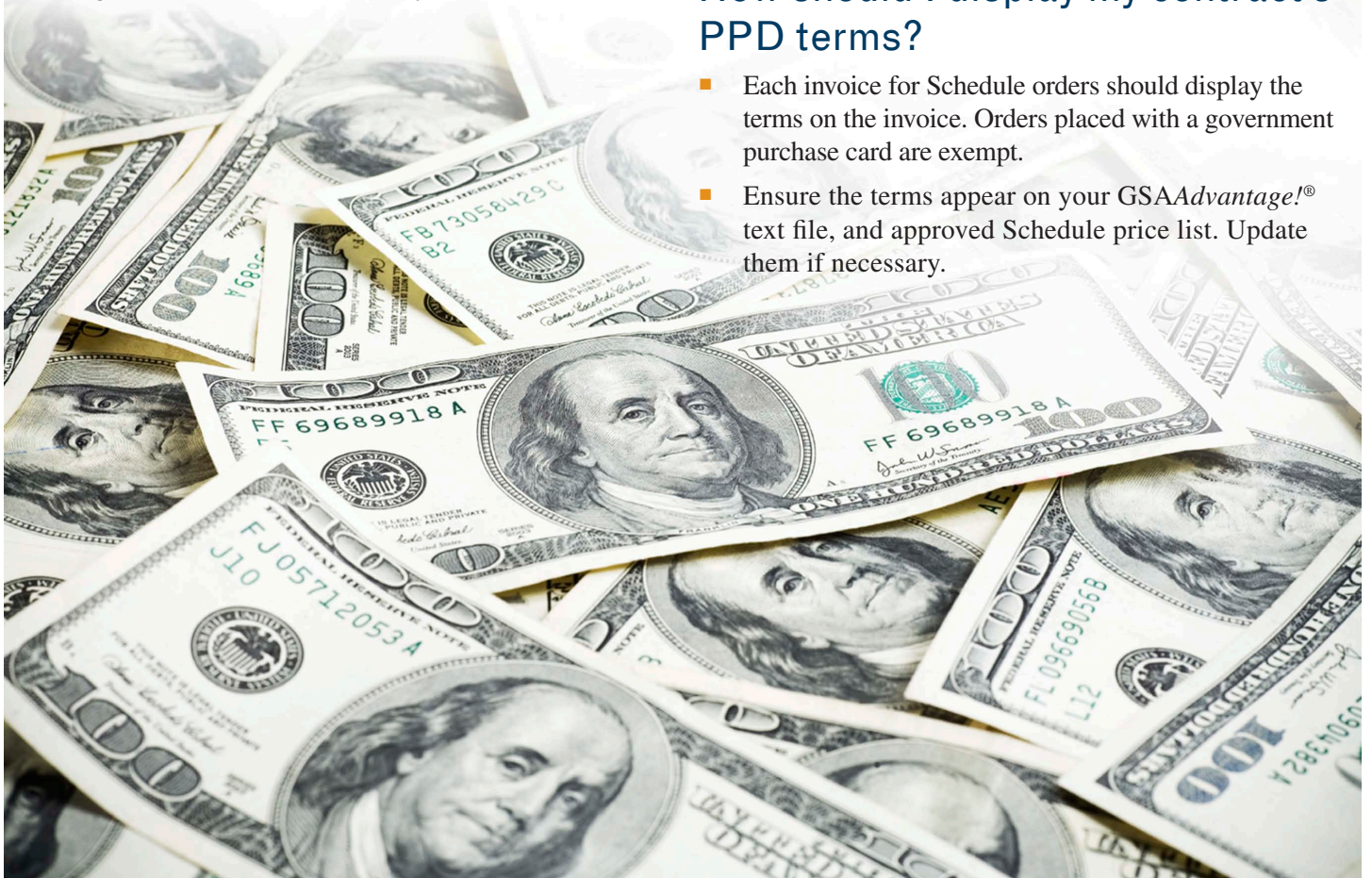
If your contract has PPD terms, you are required to list them on invoices for applicable items. Orders paid by government purchase cards are exempt from PPDs. There is a question on the Schedules Contractor Report Card that addresses whether PPDs were applied appropriately. Therefore, it is important to examine your processes to ensure you are following the terms and conditions of your contract.

How do I know if my contract has PPD terms?

- Look at your contract's Standard Form 1449 award document and any attached pages.
- If GSA exercised a five-year option period for your contract, consult the Standard Form 30. Your firm may have renegotiated the terms of your contract when the option was exercised. These changes will be reflected on this form.
- If still unsure, your contract's assigned Procurement Contracting Officer or Contract Specialist will be able to help. Locate your PCO/CS by searching for your contract on GSA eLibrary (<http://gsaelibrary.gsa.gov>).

How should I display my contract's PPD terms?

- Each invoice for Schedule orders should display the terms on the invoice. Orders placed with a government purchase card are exempt.
- Ensure the terms appear on your *GSA Advantage!*[®] text file, and approved Schedule price list. Update them if necessary.



WANTED: SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS!

Anyone who has recently done business with the Federal government is probably aware that environmental purchasing requirements are quickly intensifying. President Obama issued Executive Order (EO) 13514 last October, which requires **95 percent** of new contract actions to be “sustainable.” A sustainable product is defined as either:

- Energy-Efficient (Energy Star Federal Energy Management Program [FEMP] designated)
- Water-efficient
- Biobased
- Environmentally preferable (e.g., Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool [EPEAT] certified)
- Non-ozone depleting
- Containing recycled content
- Non-toxic (or a less toxic alternative)

In order to enable customer agencies to comply with this Executive Order, GSA’s General Supplies and Services (GSS), which manages most of the non-IT schedules, has a goal of increasing the number of sustainable products on its schedules from 41,000 to 250,000 by the end of FY 2015. Several initiatives are underway to meet this goal:

- The environmental symbols used in *GSA Advantage!*[®] (and other systems) to identify sustainable products are being changed to align with EO 13514. A document detailing these changes is posted at <https://vsc.gsa.gov/>.
- GSS is working with the vendor community to implement sustainable requirements at the Schedule level for designated product categories.
 - ▶ **Example 1:** A Schedule 75 requirement in effect that states printer and copier paper must be compliant with EPA’s Consumer Product Guidelines (30 percent recycled content) to be awarded on a Schedule contract.
 - ▶ **Example 2:** Schedule 36 will require that copiers printing less than 100 pages per minute must be ENERGY STAR compliant to be awarded on a Schedule contract.
- GSS continues to engage industry on the best strategies to “green” its Schedule service contracts.

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As a Schedule contractor, what should you do? Here are some suggestions:

- Review your catalog to determine if products currently on your contract meet any available sustainability standards (ENERGY STAR, CPG, EPEAT, etc.). If a product meets one of these standards, be sure to select it in the Schedule Input Program (SIP) so the symbol is displayed in *GSA Advantage!*[®].
- Manufacture or distribute products that comply with the standards in EO 13514 (www.fedcenter.gov/programs/eo13514/).
- Stay abreast of the latest trends in sustainability in the Federal government and your industry.