

# NEWSLETTER

## November 2025



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### TIP OF THE MONTH

#### **The Importance of Strict Adherence to Proposal Page Limits**

Federal government contracting solicitations frequently impose page limits on proposals. Failing to strictly abide by those limits may have serious consequences.

It is common sense that if a prospective contractor, for example, submits a 50-page technical proposal when the solicitation limits responses to 25 pages, the proposal likely will be excluded from the competition; allowing one offeror to submit a longer proposal could be unfair to competitors who adhered to the page limit. A recent Government Accountability Office bid protest decision, however, demonstrates that failing to strictly adhere to a solicitation's page limits can be fatal to an offeror even when the offeror may not have gained any competitive advantage.

The GAO's decision in [Hive Group, LLC, B-423677 \(2025\)](#) involved a Department of Commerce Request for Quotations seeking a contractor to provide advisory and integrated management solutions support services. The RFQ was issued as a small business set-aside to offerors holding GSA Multiple Award Schedule contracts with a specified Special Item Number.

Among other requirements, the RFQ instructed vendors to submit a "cover page" containing certain required information. Although the RFQ used the term "cover page" in the singular, the RFQ specified that this portion of the proposal could not exceed two pages in length.

In its proposal, Hive Group, LLC submitted a "standalone graphic title page" in addition to the two pages of required cover page information. The agency determined that Hive had

submitted a three-page “cover page.” The agency reviewed the graphic title page and the first page of substantive information but did not review the second page of information because, in the agency’s view, the third page exceeded the two-page limit. Because the pages reviewed by the agency did not contain all the required information, the agency excluded Hive’s proposal from consideration.

In response to a bid protest filed by Hive, the GAO agreed that the agency had acted correctly. “Because the RFQ did not permit vendors to include a standalone graphic title page that was separate and apparent from the required two-page cover page, the agency reasonably interpreted Hive’s standalone graphic title page as the first page of its cover page,” the GAO wrote. The GAO denied the protest, concluding, “Hive took the risk that the agency would consider its standalone graphic title page part of its cover page when it elected to submit a document not specifically requested by the RFQ.”

The *Hive Group, LLC* case is a timely reminder for federal contractors about the critical importance of adhering to proposal page limits. If a prospective contractor is uncertain whether a particular document—like Hive’s graphic title page—will count toward a page limit, the contractor may have the opportunity to ask the agency for clarification if the agency accepts written questions from contractors and responds to those questions as part of a Q&A. In the absence of agency clarification, however, the only sure-fire safe approach may be to assume that the document will count toward the page limit, even if the document in question does not appear to confer a competitive advantage.

## NICC APEX ACCELERATOR NEWS YOU CAN USE

### **FAR 2.0 Update: Part 8 – Required Sources of Supplies and Services**

The Revolutionary FAR Overhaul process, also known as “FAR 2.0” continues to make major changes in how the federal government will buy goods and services moving forward. Recently, the FAR Council issued the “2.0” version of FAR Part 8, which covers required sources of supplies and services. Revised FAR Part 8 emphasizes the use of existing multiple-award contracting vehicles, such as the GSA Schedule and “Best in Class” multiple-award contracting vehicles. [Learn more about the FAR Part 8 update and its procurement impact.](#)

Would you like assistance with obtaining a GSA Schedule? Or assistance in determining what other Best in Class contracts might be a good fit for your company? Your APEX Accelerator can help! Contact your APEX Accelerator counselor today to arrange an appointment.

## GOVCON ROUNDUP LIVE

*GovCon Roundup Live* is a free monthly webcast hosted by Carroll Bernard and Steven Koprince of [Govology](#). The webcast covers policy changes, legislative updates, and industry shifts that signal strategic opportunities for contractors to pivot, reposition, and stay one step ahead. [Learn more about GovCon Roundup Live and register to attend future live sessions](#) (with the opportunity for live Q&A). You can also check out recordings of all previous episodes on [Spotify](#) and [YouTube](#).

Recent *GovCon Roundup Live* webcasts include:

- [The FAR Revolution: Three Proposed Procurement Reforms Contractors Should Watch](#)
- [Counting What Matters: Small Business Contracting Goals & Metrics](#)
- [The Pending FAR Overhaul](#)

## GOVOLOGY WEBINARS

Please use the new code **52NICC20** when registering for Govology webinars.



### **Creating Your Contract Strategy: What You Need to Know About FAR and Non-FAR Contract Pathways**

**Date:** November 13, 2025

**Time:** 1:00 p.m. EST

**Presenter:** Dolores Kuchina-Musina, Ph.D. (REXOTA Solutions LLC)

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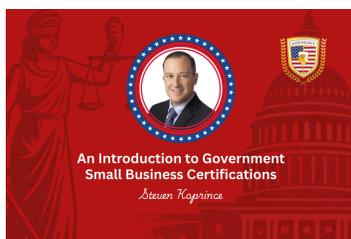
### **How to Modify Your GSA Schedule Contract**

**Date:** November 18, 2025

**Time:** 1:00 p.m. EST

**Presenter:** Brittany N. Opoku (First Foster Consulting, LLC)

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### **An Introduction to Government Small Business Certifications (2025 Update)**

**Date:** November 20, 2025

**Time:** 1:00 p.m. EST

**Presenter:** Steven Koprince (Govology)

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## RECOMMENDED INSIGHTS & UPDATES

### **A New Era for Small Business: Key Takeaways from the FAR Part 19 Rewrite**

As part of its Revolutionary FAR Overhaul, the Federal Acquisition Regulation Council recently issued its long-awaited update to FAR Part 19, which governs the small business self-certification program, as well as SBA-managed programs like the 8(a) Program and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Program. The revised FAR Part 19 preserves the “rule of two” framework for small business set-asides but introduces several changes that contractors should be aware of. [Read more about these changes](#), and [review this refresher on how the Rule of Two applies in practice](#).

## **SBA's OHA Further Defines Extraordinary Action in SDVOSB Appeal**

To qualify as a service-disabled veteran-owned small business for purposes of federal contracting, a contractor ordinarily must be unconditionally controlled by one or more service-disabled veterans. However, a non-SDV minority owner may (but need not) be given the legal right to block the SDV majority owner from making certain "extraordinary" decisions on behalf of the business. A [recent decision by the SBA's Office of Hearings and Appeals helps clarify what decisions qualify as "extraordinary"](#).

## **HUBZone Price Evaluation Preference Impacted Just 0.06% of FY 2024 Contracting Dollars**

The HUBZone Program's regulations contain a unique advantage for SBA-certified HUBZone participants: a 10% price evaluation preference against large business offerors. However, recently-released data shows that the HUBZone "PEP" impacted just 0.06% of acquisition dollars in Fiscal Year 2024. [This article examines why the HUBZone PEP was not more impactful](#) and offers suggestions for policymakers and contracting officials to help the government meet its HUBZone contracting goals.

## **CMMC & FOCI RESOURCES AND NEWS**

This section highlights items of special interest and importance to the Department of Defense Office of Small Business Programs (DOD OSBP). Please take a moment to visit the sites listed below for additional information.

### **Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC)/Cybersecurity Compliance Resources**

[DOD CMMC Resource Page](#) – Resources to assist government contractors with understanding and complying with CMMC/cybersecurity requirements.

[Project Spectrum](#) – Project Spectrum is working with APEX Accelerators to assist small businesses in achieving compliance with CMMC/cybersecurity requirements.

### **Foreign Ownership, Control, and Influence (FOCI) Resources**

[FOCI Frequently Asked Questions](#) – FOCI is a status or situation in which a contractor with access to classified information has some foreign investment or association with foreign interest. Learn more about the federal government's requirements relating to FOCI.

<https://business.defense.gov/> – The official website of DOD OSBP. It contains additional information, news, events, and other items for those interested in doing business (or currently engaged) with the DOD.

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### **CMMC Is Here—What It Means for Defense Contractors**

The long-awaited CMMC final rule has arrived in the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement. [This article covers what CMMC's DFARS arrival means for contractors](#), including the timeline of implementation, changes from the proposed rule to the final rule, and other key takeaways for contractors.

### **Department of Defense Finalizes Long-Awaited Cybersecurity Rule**

Like the previous article, [this article covers the arrival of the long-awaited CMMC final rule and its impact on federal contractors](#). The article discusses the history of CMMC, the key provisions of the final rule, and the next steps for affected contractors and subcontractors.

### **What Defense Contractors Should Know About Expanded FOCI Scrutiny**

The DoD is finalizing a new DFARS rule that will potentially apply FOCI scrutiny to

thousands of contractors who were not covered by previous FOIA rules. [This article explains what contractors should know about the pending changes.](#)

## **About Nebraska Indian Community College APEX Accelerator:**

### **Address (Macy Campus):**

1111 Hwy. 75/P.O. Box 428  
Macy, NE 68039  
(Coverage Area: Omaha Indian Reservation)

### **Address (Santee Campus):**

415 North River Road  
Niobrara, NE 68760  
(Coverage Area: Santee Sioux Indian Reservation)

**E-mail us: [APEX@thenicc.edu](mailto:APEX@thenicc.edu)**

*This APEX Accelerator (formerly known as PTAC) is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the Department of Defense.*

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