

USAMRAA's COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

This supplemental guidance is to address frequently asked questions associated with contracts that may arise in relation to COVID-19. The United States Army Medical Research Acquisition Activity (USAMRAA) is providing this information as a service to our contractors to address immediate, high-level questions. Please note that given the fact that COVID-19 and associated impacts continue to evolve, individuals are strongly encouraged to monitor the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and World Health Organization resources for updates. Please also continue to contact your Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) or Contracting Officer with any questions.

1. Have thresholds been updated due to COVID-19?

Based on the President's declaration of a national emergency under the Stafford Act for efforts supporting COVID-19, flexibilities in accordance with FAR 18.203, have been implemented. Based on this declaration, the following thresholds have been increased as noted below:

- a. The micro-purchase threshold is raised from \$10,000 to \$20,000 for domestic purchases and to \$30,000 for purchases outside the U.S.¹.
- b. The simplified acquisition threshold is raised from \$250,000 to \$750,000 for domestic purchases and \$1.5 million for purchases outside the U.S.; and
- c. Agencies may use simplified acquisition procedures up to \$13 million for purchases of commercial item buys.

2. I have a contract award by USAMRAA, how is it impacted by COVID-19?

Modifications to contracts will be issued only if absolutely necessary, therefore, it is imperative that contractors communicate with the COR or Contracting Officer if there is an anticipation of an adverse impact due to COVID-19. Each situation will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

3. Can I allow contractor employees to telework during this time?

In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) memorandum M-20-18 of 20 March 2020 (Managing Federal Contract Performance Issues Associated with the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)) agencies have been requested to evaluate and maximize telework for contractor employees, wherever possible. USAMRAA is implementing this guidance to the maximum extent practicable. Please contact your COR or Contracting Officer regarding questions on telework eligibility.

4. Will my contract be terminated due to COVID-19?

Contracts are written in a way to allow certain flexibilities such as excusable delays, changes, suspending or stop work, and if necessary, termination. These flexibilities are permitted in your contract per the applicable clauses. If you anticipate there will be any impact on your contract due to COVID-19, please contact your COR or Contracting Officer.

¹ The U.S. is defined as the 50 states and the District of Columbia

5. The state where the contract is performed has issued an order requesting that non-essential businesses close, how does this impact the contract?

If a business who supports a government contract is deemed non-essential, the COR and Contracting Officer shall be notified immediately. The place of performance on the contract may be altered in order to meet mission requirements or allow for telework, if possible.

6. Our supplier has closed due to COVID-19 and we are unable to obtain the supplies from another source, how should we proceed?

For deliveries from non-essential businesses or inability to access a Government facility due to COVID-19, please contact your COR or Contracting Officer for further details.

7. Are on-site contractor support personnel expected to report to their normal duty station or are they permitted to telework?

In order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, telework is encouraged whenever possible, however consult with your Contracting Officer or COR. USAMRAA is implementing the OMB M-20-18 of 20 March 2020 guidance to the maximum extent practicable. If a contractor is required to travel onto a government facility, the individual will be required to adhere to current guidelines in order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Individuals who are symptomatic, or otherwise may pose a danger to health safety or welfare of the community or a command, will not be allowed to enter into a government facility. There may also be frequent updates to this guidance based on changes in federal, state and even local command policy or law.

In addition, as of 8:00 PM on 30 March 2020, Gov. Hogan issued a “Stay at Home Order” for the state of Maryland (<https://governor.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Gatherings-FOURTH-AMENDED-3.30.20.pdf>). The effects of this order on Fort Detrick are as follows:

- a. Only mission essential personnel should report to work. If you do not have a signed travel memo do not attempt to access the installation.
- b. Each command is responsible for identifying who is mission essential and provide signed memos designating those individuals. A template memorandum was shared with all installation Commanders and agency Directors.
- c. The Garrison highly recommends mission essential employees print and carry a copy of the memo at all times.
- d. Contractor personnel should receive their directives from their company who will get guidance from the contracting officer.
- e. This does not affect residents living in military housing.
- f. Contractors are required to use a cloth face covering, to the extent practical, on DoD property, installations, and facilities when they cannot maintain six feet of social distance in public areas or work centers.

8. My SAM registration is set to expire, is there any extensions on re-registering?

Current active SAM registrants expiring before 17 May 2020 will be afforded a one-time extension of 60 days.

9. The COR has cancelled a meeting due to the travel restrictions, how will this be handled?

Each situation will be handled on a case-by-case basis; however, if travel is required as part of the contract the Contracting Officer may issue a modification to cancel the travel requirement or suspend travel until travel to the specific location is deemed safe. Alternative means to traveling such as video conferencing, Webex, or teleconferencing may be required in order to meet mission requirements.

10. As a small business, are there any resources available?

Contractors are encouraged to take advantage of guidance and resources outlined by the Small Business Administration (SBA), if impact is anticipated.

11. If a contracted employee is suspected of COVID-19 exposure, what steps should be taken to ensure the health and safety of all personnel?

Any individual who is suspected of being exposed to COVID-19 should follow the appropriate steps in accordance with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines. Employees who are symptomatic should not return to work and report any possible exposures to the COR or Contracting Officer.

Questions related to this document should be referred to the USAMRAA Contract Execution Oversight Branch at

usarmy.detrick.medcom-usamraa.mbx.policy@mail.mil