

# 501.603-1 General.

(a) *Definitions.* As used in this subsection:

“Contracting experience” means personal and substantial involvement in purchasing, renting, leasing, or otherwise obtaining goods or services from federal and non-federal sources and includes any of the following functions: preparing and issuing purchase orders, including issuing requests for quotations or solicitations, evaluating bids or proposals, selecting sources, price/cost analysis, participating in price negotiations, and contract award and administration.

“Lease amendment” includes the dollar value of Reimbursable Work Authorizations and is based on the absolute value of changes.

“Total lease contract value” means the entire lease award amount at initial award, including the dollar value of option periods and excluding the dollar value of Reimbursable Work Authorizations for tenant improvements that are above standard agency tenant improvement allowances.

(b) *Certifications.* All employees, regardless of series, must be certified at the designated level in the appropriate acquisition certification program pursuant to GSA policy and guidance in order to be considered for a contracting officer warrant.

(1) *Application Process:*

(i) Applicants are responsible for preparing an application package for submission electronically through the career management system of record. The electronic application must include all supporting documentation including transcripts, training certificates, resume, and any other supporting documents.

(2) *Waivers.* The SPE may waive the requirement for obtaining a certification prior to appointment as a contracting officer. Waivers will only be considered in compelling and well documented circumstances. This authority is non-delegable. Waivers are not transferable to other agencies.

(c) *Contracting Officer Warrant Board Procedures.*

(1) GSA contracting and leasing activities shall structure their COWB procedures in a manner that is consistent with 501.603-2.

(2) Guidance for preparation of written COWB procedures is provided on the GSA Acquisition Career Management page on the GSA Acquisition Portal at <https://insite.gsa.gov/acquisitionportal>.

(3) Service-level policy organizations (*e.g.*, FAS’s Office of Policy and Compliance, PBS’s Office of Acquisition Management, PBS Office of Leasing, and Office of Internal Acquisition (OIA’s) Acquisition Policy and Workforce Division) have the discretion to conduct additional reviews prior to warrant package submission to the Administrative Warrant Issuing Agent.

(d) *Contracting Officer Warrant Program (COWP).* GSA’s COWP is administered by the Office of Acquisition Policy.

(1) *Factors in determination of need for warranted contracting officers.* The COWP ensures that a GSA organization has qualified individuals as contracting officers who meet the organization's needs for contracting authority. Factors considered in determining the number of contracting officers

appropriate for a given organization include volume of actions, work complexity, and organizational structure.

(2) *Training, education and experience.* The COWP ensures warrant applicants meet all federal and agency requirements for training, education and experience.

(3) *Responsibilities.*

(i) GSA's SPE:

(A) Establishes the policies, procedures, and requirements that govern COWP.

(B) Approves/disapproves in writing, any deviations, waivers or exemptions from any of the COWP requirements.

(C) Minimum standards for GSA warrants are identified on the Acquisition Career Management pages on the GSA Acquisition Portal at <https://insite.gsa.gov/acquisitionportal>.

(D) Authorizes changes in warrant level thresholds (see paragraph (d)(5)(iv) of this subsection).

(ii) HCAs:

(A) Establish and budget for training plans for contracting officers.

(B) Monitor contracting officers' performance.

(C) Establish controls to ensure compliance with laws, regulations, procedures, and good management practice with respect to warrant use by contracting officers.

(D) Determine the number of contracting officer warrants necessary for a particular work unit and the grade levels at which the warrant authority will be granted.

(E) Establish an infrastructure to support acquisition career management, including certifications and warrant programs, for workforce members.

(F) Appoint the contracting activity's Contracting Officer Warrant Board (COWB) to process requests for contracting officer warrants.

(G) Establish written procedures for the COWB to ensure the requirements of Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 1.603 and this section [501.603](#) are met when appointing contracting officers.

(H) Select and nominate through the COWB qualified candidates for appointment as contracting officers.

(I) Certify that the candidate, based upon satisfaction of the warrant requirements, supervisor recommendation, and concurrence of the COWB, is eligible for a specific level of warrant.

(J) Appoint contracting officers. The HCA may further limit warrant authorities at each warrant level.

(K) May establish additional requirements beyond the minimum standards for training, education, experience and certifications prior to issuing a warrant.

(L) Retain acquisition career management responsibilities for warrants, based on the contracting

officer's organizational assignment..

(iii) ACM:

(A) Ensures consistent implementation of the COWP across GSA.

(B) Establishes minimum criteria for the contracting activity's COWB to use in the selection, appointment, and termination of appointment of GSA contracting officers.

(4) *Applicability*. COWP applies to all contracting officers except those appointed under the Inspector General Act (Pub. L. 95-452). Contracting authority is not required to:

(i) Sign training authorizations for public course offerings.

(ii) Sign travel documents.

(iii) Order printing and duplicating services from Government sources.

(iv) Order supplies from GSA stock through GSA Advantage! or other electronic means.

(v) Sign Government Bills of Lading.

(vi) Sign system-generated orders for motor vehicles or for requisitions under the Federal Acquisition Service Special Order Program.

(vii) Authorize interagency transfers of funds.

(viii) Use the Government telephone systems for commercial long distance and local service and/or approving payments for such services.

(ix) Use the Federal Acquisition Service (FAS) nationwide contract for express small package transportation services and/or approving payments for such services.

(x) Certify receipt and acceptance of goods or services. (This does not apply to certified invoices under [513.370](#).)

(xi) Approve system-generated authorizations or payments that do not exceed the micro-purchase threshold for motor vehicle maintenance service and/or repairs managed by the Electronic Maintenance and Repair Authorization System (EMRAS).

(5) *Warrant levels*.

(i) COWP warrant levels are based on the dollar value of individual transactions.

(ii) Individual transactions include the following:

(A) The dollar value of a contract at award or a total lease contract value at award, including the dollar value of option periods.

(B) The dollar value of a modification award or lease amendment award, individually, and not the aggregate contract dollar value of a contract or lease including the contract modification or lease amendment.

(C) The dollar value of a blanket purchase agreement award including the dollar value of option

periods.

(D) The dollar value of a blanket purchase agreement modification award, and not the aggregate blanket purchase agreement dollar value.

(E) The dollar value of an order award against an indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contract (e.g. Federal Supply Schedules, Governmentwide Acquisition Contracts, Multi-agency Contacts, agency- specific indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contracts) including the dollar value of option periods, and not the aggregate contract dollar value.

(F) The dollar value of a modification award to an order against an indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contract, and not the aggregate order dollar value.

(G) The dollar value of a purchase order.

(H) The dollar value of a modification to a purchase order and not the aggregate purchase order dollar value.

(iii) If an individual transaction includes both additions and deductions, the aggregate, absolute value of the changes determines the warrant level required for award (e.g., the value of an individual action that adds \$35,000 of work and deducts \$80,000 is \$115,000).

(iv) Warrant level thresholds.

Warrant Level	Threshold
Basic	\$25,000
Simplified	SAT (SLAT for Leasing)
Intermediate	\$10,000,000
Senior	Unlimited

<sup>1</sup> *SLAT Warrant Procurement Limit*. Lease procurement awards using a Simplified warrant shall not exceed a total lease contract value of \$10,000,000.

(v) GSA use of the Government purchase card for micro-purchases shall follow the instructions under GSA Order OAS 4200.1, Use of the GSA Purchase Card.

(e) *Contract administration office*. The HCA, per [542.302\(c\)](#) may establish a contract administration office. A contracting officer with an unlimited warrant may authorize contract administrative functions in accordance with [542.302\(d\)](#).

**Parent topic:** [501.603 Selection, appointment, and termination of appointment for contracting officers](#).