



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY

ACQUISITION CERTIFICATIONS PROGRAM HANDBOOK

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Foreword

The Department of Energy (DOE) Acquisition Certifications Program (ACP) Handbook is the guidance for certifications per the Acquisition Career Management Program (ACMP) described in [DOE Order 361.1C](#) and [DOE Order 541.1C](#). As noted in the [Office of Federal Procurement Policy \(OFPP\) Memorandum dated May 7, 2014](#), “Agencies should ensure guidance is in place to enable the appropriate certification and development of their contracting professionals.” This handbook provides a road map for Acquisition Workforce (AWF) members guiding them through the training, education and experience needed to build competence, facilitate professional development, and achieve certification when appropriate.

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SECTION I. OVERALL GUIDANCE

Chapter 1. Introduction and Organization

Introduction

The ACP Handbook provides guidance for DOE employees seeking certifications required to perform acquisition-related duties. It does not carry the weight of a governing regulation enforceable by outside bodies, rather it implements guidance to enable the appropriate certification and development of DOE’s AWF. Every effort is made to ensure consistency with Office of Personnel Management (OPM) regulations and requirements; however, in the event of a conflict between this Handbook and OPM regulations and requirements, OPM regulations and requirements will govern.

DOE’s AWF members include, but are not limited to the following:



Organization

AWF members, managers, and Site Acquisition Career Managers (SACMs) are encouraged to use this Handbook as a desk reference for matters concerning the DOE AWF topics. This Handbook is organized as follows:

- Section I: Overall Guidance
- Section II: Federal Acquisition Certification (FAC) Programs
- Section III: DOE Certification Programs
- Section IV: Contracting Officer Warrant Requirements

Chapter 2. Certifications Overview

Certification programs, both Federal and DOE, as described in this Handbook are administered by the ACM pursuant to [DOE Order 361.1C](#) and [DOE Order 541.1C](#). DOE issues certifications in accordance with Federal standards as well as DOE (agency-specific) supplemental standards.

Federal certifications applicable to all Executive Branch (civilian) agencies were established through amendments to [Title 41 of the U.S. Code, Section 433 Title 41](#) of the U.S. Code, Section 433, by Congress in order to extend Defense AWF Improvement Act (DAWIA)-type certifications to non-DOD Executive Branch agencies. These government-wide certifications include:

Federal Acquisition Certifications (FAC)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting (FAC-C) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specialization: FAC-C Digital Services (FAC-C DS) • Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting Officer’s Representatives (FAC-COR) • Federal Acquisition Certification for Program/Project Managers (FAC-P/PM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specialization: FAC-P/PM Information Technology (IT) Core-Plus

These statutory and regulatory requirements are in addition to the basic qualification requirements specified in the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) [Classification & Qualifications General Schedule Qualification Standards](#).

In the absence of a Chief Acquisition Officer (CAO), DOE’s Senior Procurement Executive (SPE) fulfills the primary functions of a CAO. The ACM, appointed by the SPE, is authorized to grant Federal Acquisition Certifications (FACs).

In addition to Federal certifications, DOE has established the following certification programs:

DOE Acquisition Certifications
Certification in Purchasing (Purchasing)
Certification in Financial Assistance (FA)
Certification for Technical Project Officer (TPO)
Certification in Personal Property Management (PPM)
Certified Realty Specialist (CRS)

All certification programs are designed to establish consistent competencies and standards for those performing acquisition-related work in civilian agencies. Certifications are federal standards recognized across agencies but do not guarantee assignment or advancement. In addition to experience and training standards required for each certification program, FAC-C also includes education requirements pursuant to the [OPM’s Classifications and Qualifications](#).

Certification in the respective program is mandatory for the following GS occupational series:

Series	Career Field	Federal Certification
1102	Contracting	FAC-C
Series	Career Field	DOE Certification
1103	Industrial Property Management	Personal Property Management
1105	Purchasing Agent	Purchasing

1109	Grants Management	Financial Assistance (FA)
1170	Realty (Real Estate)	Certified Realty Specialist (CRS)

Certification is mandatory based on delegated (warrant) authority, as follows:

Warrant Authority	Federal Certification
Contracting	FAC-C
Warrant Authority	DOE Certification
Simplified Acquisitions	Purchasing
Financial Assistance	FA
Real Estate	Certified Realty Specialist

Certification Requirements

As stated in [OFPP’s May 7, 2014 Memorandum, “Revisions to the Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting \(FAC-C\)”](#), there is no provision that allows experience to substitute for education in order to receive a higher level certification or grade than that held prior to January 1, 2000. Agency education waivers to OPM’s GS-1102 qualification standard for hiring/selection purposes do not satisfy the education standard for FAC-C.

Note: While the SPE of a civilian agency may waive the education and training requirements for an applicant for a GS-13 position and above, this waiver is not transferable to another agency and does not apply toward the requirements for the FAC-C.

The experience standard can only be met through performance of relevant duties for the period of time required for that specific certification level. For example, to meet the experience requirements for contracting, relevant experience would be in the award and administration of contracting instruments. The competencies for each certification program are available to review on the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI)’s [website](#). Employees and supervisors should refer to the identified competencies when deciding on work assignments, mentoring and/or training/education necessary to gain appropriate experience.

Effective Period

To keep the AWF current with changes in contracting knowledge, skills, and techniques, OFPP established a two-year timeframe on FACs and a [Continuous Learning Points \(CLPs\) requirement](#). This requirement also applies to all DOE certifications.

Continuous Learning (CL)

DOE follows guidance set forth by [FAI](#) and OFPP regarding CL. It is the AWF member’s responsibility to ensure that his/her CL requirements are met. Supervisors have flexibility in determining how CLPs may be achieved and should work with employees to identify appropriate opportunities. It is recommended that CLPs be earned through a combination of activities and be included in Individual Development Plans (IDPs). All activities must be job-related and must earn points only in the year accomplished, awarded or published. Annual DOE Online Learning Center (OLC) courses required of all employees do not qualify for continuous learning credit, such as Continuity of Operations (COOP), Security Awareness, Privacy Act, etc.

Note: The “CLP Accreditation Chart” below presents suggested activities. The chart is not all-inclusive as other activities may be considered.

Creditable Activities	CLP Credit
Academic Courses:	Academic Courses:
College Courses (Cont. Edu. Units) Accredited Higher Edu Courses	10 CLPs per CEU
Equivalency Exams	Same points as awarded for the course
Training Courses/Modules:	Training Courses/Modules:
FAI/DAU Courses/Continuous Learning Modules	# of CLPs per certificate
Awareness Briefing/Training—no testing/assessment associated (excluding annual OLC2 training required of all employees)	1 CLP per hour of instruction
Training: Classroom/Online	1 CLP per hour of instruction
Leadership Training	1 CLP per hour of instruction
Equivalency Exams	Same points as awarded for the course
Professional Activities:	Professional Activities:
Professional Exam/License/Certification	20 to 40 CLPs
Publications of Articles or Papers	1 CLP per hour of material preparation; Maximum of 20 CLPs per year
Teaching /Lecturing – at Symposia/Conferences/Workshops	2 CLPs per hour, 1 CLP per hour for prep time; Maximum 20 CLPs per year
Participation in Organizational Management	20 to 40 CLPs
Symposia/Conference Attendance	# of CLPs per certificate
Workshop Participation	# of CLPs per certificate
Webinars/Video Teleconference (VTC)	# of CLPs per certificate
FEI, Harvard Kennedy SEF, DoD Senior Service Schools, DOE Supervisory Training	1 CLP per hour
Experience:	Experience:
Course Audit	5 CLPs per course (including course credit, if not taken in last 3 years)
OJT Assignments (Training pertaining to a NEW assignment/position)	1 CLP per hour of activity; Maximum 20 CLPs per year
Member of a Project Peer Review	Maximum 8 CLPs per day; Maximum 32 CLPs year
Technical Content Advisor for one or more courses in your certification program	Maximum 20 CLPs per year
Procurement Management Reviews (PMR)Team Members	Number of CLPs shown on “Senior Procurement Executive PMR Memorandums” or other documentation by other Senior Official confirming the event; Maximum 32 CLPs per year
Procurement Management Reviews (PMR)Team Leaders	Number of CLPs shown on “Senior Procurement Executive PMR Memorandums” or other documentation by other Senior Official confirming the event; Maximum 40 CLPs per year
Procurement Evaluation Re-engineering Team (PERT) Review Team Members	Number of CLPs shown on “Senior Procurement Executive PERT Memorandums” or other documentation by other Senior Official confirming the event; Maximum 32 CLPs per year
Procurement Evaluation Re-engineering Team (PERT) Review Team Leaders	Number of CLPs shown on “Senior Procurement Executive PERT Memorandums” or other documentation by other Senior Official confirming the event; Maximum 40 CLPs per year

Integrated Project Team (IPT) Team Members	Number of CLPs shown on “Senior Procurement Executive IPT Memorandums” or other documentation by other Senior Official confirming the event; Maximum 25 CLPs per year
Integrated Project Team (IPT) Team Leaders	Number of CLPs shown on “Senior Procurement Executive IPT Memorandums” or other documentation by other Senior Official confirming the event; Maximum 30 CLPs per year
Source Evaluation Board Team Member	Number of CLPs shown on “Source Evaluation Board (SEB) Secretariat Certificate/Memorandums” or other documentation by other Senior Official confirming the event; Maximum 25 CLPs per year
Source Evaluation Board Team Leader	Number of CLPs shown on “Source Evaluation Board (SEB) Secretariat Certificate/Memorandums” or other documentation by other Senior Official confirming the event; Maximum 30 CLPs per year
Integrated/Annual Project Peer Review (IPR/APR) Team Member	Number of CLPs shown on “Senior Procurement Executive IPR/APR Memorandums” or other documentation by other Senior Official confirming the event; Maximum 32 CLPs per year
Integrated/Annual Project Peer Review (IPR/APR) Team Leader	Number of CLPs shown on “Senior Procurement Executive IPR/APR Memorandums” or other documentation by other Senior Official confirming the event; Maximum 40 CLPs per year
Formal Mentoring Program (Contact PDD for a Formal Mentoring Agreement)	1 CLP per hour of activity; Maximum 20 CLPs per year
Rotation/Detail Assignment – Per SF- 50	Based on learning achieved, length and complexity of assignment/detail.
1 - Month	20 - CLPs
2 - Months	30 - CLPs
3 - Months	35 - CLPs
6 - Months	45 - CLPs
9 - Months	65 - CLPs
12 - Months Rotation/Detail Assignment	80 - CLPs

Many training activities will be automatically captured in FAI’s Cornerstone OnDemand (FAI CSOD). To ensure CLPs are awarded accurately and timely for external CL activities (e.g., courses and other activities completed without using FAI CSOD to enroll), AWF members are required to submit “External CL Activity Requests” in FAI CSOD. AWF employees should provide appropriate documentation verifying completion. When requesting CLPs for training, requestors must submit one, or a combination of, the following: certificates of completion, transcripts, (college, DAU, etc. with PII removed/redacted). Bulk training from DOE’s Employee Self-Service (ESS) Summaries will not be accepted as training documentation. AWF members must upload each training event/activity separate from their ESS Summary to ensure CLP credit is accurately recorded. All CLPs earned must be recorded in FAI CSOD within the two-year timeframe to be counted towards certification requirements. CLPs earned above the required number of CLPs do not roll over to the next CL cycle. Identical CLP activities are ineligible within the same two-year CL cycle.

The “Certification CLP” table below shows the CLPs required every two-year timeframe and recommended CL topics for each certification program:

Certification Programs	Required CLPs	Recommended CL Topics
FAC-C Level I Level II Level III	Every 2 years: 80 CLPs 80 CLPs 80 CLPs	Contracting professionals are encouraged to take the classes recently added to the contracting certification program since obtaining their certification. CL can also be used to strengthen an individual’s skills and capabilities in the specialized areas in which they work. Taking courses outside the area of contracting such as project management helps broaden the contracting professional’s understanding of their customers. Other recommended topics include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category Management • Safety Events • Leadership Training • Business • Information Technology/Training • Project Management • Budget and Financial Management • Ethics and Law • Professional Competency areas for Contracting (problem solving, customer service, communication, etc.)
FAC-COR Level I Level II Level III	Every 2 years: 8 CLPs 40 CLPs 40 CLPs	CORs are encouraged to take the classes recently added to the COR certification program since obtaining their certification. CL can also be used to strengthen an individual’s skills and capabilities in the specialized areas in which they work. Taking courses outside the area of COR such as contracting, program management, engineering, logistics, test & evaluation, financial management, etc., helps broaden the understanding of customer requirements. Other recommended topics include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category Management • Invoice Processing • Leadership Training • IT Training • Project Management • Ethics and Law • Professional Competency areas for CORs (e.g., business acumen and communications)

FAC-P/PM Entry Level Mid-Level Senior Level	Every 2 years: 80 CLPs 80 CLPs 80 CLPs	P/PMs are encouraged to take the classes recently added to the FAC-P/PM certification program since obtaining their certification. CL can also be used to strengthen an individual's skills and capabilities in the specialized areas in which they work. Taking courses outside the area of program and project managers such as contracting, engineering, logistics, test & evaluation, financial management, etc., helps broaden the program and project managers understanding of their customer requirements. Other recommended topics include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Training • IT Training • Business • Ethics and Law
Financial Assistance Level I Level II Level III	Every 2 years: 40 CLPs 40 CLPs 40 CLPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics in the Grants Environment • Appropriation Law for Financial Assistance • Essential Skills for Grants Professionals • Any classes in grants management for recipients • Completion of all classes leading up to a Level III certification • Cost analysis • Negotiation techniques • Financial Assistance Close Out
Personal Property Management Level I Level II Level III	Every 2 years: 80 CLPs 80 CLPs 80 CLPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending or giving Property Management-related lecture • Attending Personal Property Management Conferences • Attending National Education Seminars • Attending monthly National Property Management Association Luncheons/Lectures
Purchasing Requirements Level I Level II	Every 2 years: 80 CLPs 80 CLPs	See the DAU Core Plus Development Guide for Purchasing Level I and Purchasing Level II for suggested CL courses.
Technical Project Officer Level I Level II	Every 2 years: 40 CLPs 40 CLPs	TPOs should consider taking online or classroom courses in grants management available from many commercial training vendors in addition to project management courses. TPOs may also benefit from technically specific training in such areas as property management, intellectual property and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Also consider any of the applicable FA recommended topics listed above.

Certification Timeline for GS-1102 Occupational Series

The certification level required for the employee's grade (for FAC-C, see [OPM's Classification and Qualifications for GS-1102s](#)) must be attained within: (1) 24 months from the date of hire; or (2) the date the applicant will meet the FAC-C experience standard (e.g., 1, 2, or 4 years depending on level, whichever occurs later).

An extension may be granted by the approving official for circumstances prohibiting achievement of the requisite certification level by the applicable deadline. The circumstances causing the delay must be documented and a schedule of completion attached, including registration in any outstanding coursework.

Changes to Curriculum during the Certification Process

FAI or OFPP may change the certification requirements as necessary. The ACM, with input from functional advisors and the concurrence of the SPE, may authorize mandatory training and experience requirements for certification in addition to those established by OFPP. Additionally, changes to the curriculum in DOE certification programs may also be required.

Any requests by AWF members for changes to certification requirements must be submitted to the ACM through the assigned SACM. The request must be in writing and include appropriate justification for the desired changes.

AWF members are required to complete any new curriculum requirements as CL. If the curriculum changes before it is completed, the AWF member should proceed with the curriculum in effect when they started it. However, the new curriculum does apply toward the next level of certification.

Training Priority

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that AWF members are provided the opportunity to meet the mandatory certification requirements of their acquisition position and career field. AWF members should be advised to prioritize training requests (subject to availability of funds) in accordance with the following criteria:

- (1) Required by law,
- (2) Established as mandatory by DOE and training is needed to qualify an incumbent for their position,
- (3) To become eligible for the next higher career level after completion of mandatory training for incumbent positions,
- (4) For new assignments,
- (5) That is “desired/elective,” and
- (6) Other.

Training Sources

Training requirements can be attained from the following sources:

- (1) Completion of the required courses from FAI, DAU, other federal agency (OFA) or the specified training provider, if applicable;
- (2) Completion of a course certified as equivalent by DAU;
- (3) Completion of courses required for DOE acquisition certifications (CFA, TPO, Property Management, Real Estate, Purchasing) which may or may not be available from DAU/FAI/OFA/Vendor Provided; or

Training sources that incur a cost to DOE should only be used when circumstances justify it; e.g., courses not available from a no-cost source. Note: DAU and FAI may have prerequisite requirements that should be planned for prior to enrolling.

Training Eligibility

Training must have been completed within the past 5 years in order to be considered for initial certification. This applies to both FAC and DOE certifications.

College Credit

Some of the courses provided by DAU and FAI have been reviewed by American Council on Education (ACE) and recommended for college credit. DAU provides the opportunity for organizations (colleges and universities, DoD schools, other federal agencies, commercial vendors, and professional societies) to offer courses, programs or certifications which are deemed and accepted as equivalent to one or more DAU courses. AWF members currently enrolled in a degree program should check DAU’s [website](#) to determine if he/she can get college credit for attendance of a DAU course, and pursue obtaining such college credit through their college/university.

Requesting a Certification

To request a certification, an AWF member should work with his/her supervisor and SACM to present the required documentation for review by the ACMP. Certifications have varying requirements, but all certifications will be issued through FAI CSOD.

Certification Maintenance

In accordance with [OFPP Acquisition Flash 22-01](#), AWF members holding a FAC-C, FAC-COR, or FAC-P/PM certification are required to obtain the required CLPs within the two-year common continuous learning period,

which began May 1, 2022. The same CL requirement also applies to DOE certifications. Refer to [FAI.gov](https://www.fai.gov) for more information regarding CL requirements.

Waivers

[OFPP](#) stipulates that, in the case of FAC-C, “A candidate must meet the education and experience requirements established in the [OPM](#) Contract Specialist (GS-1102) Qualification Standard. There are no exceptions to these requirements and candidates must provide evidence of this to the ACM.” Additionally, “...education waivers granted by the agency, in accordance with the [GS-1102] Qualification Standard...do not satisfy the education requirement for a FAC-C.” An employee must meet the appropriate education requirements to be certified.” For example, a GS-1102 that was promoted based on an agency waiver of the OPM education standard will be certifiable up to the FAC-C Level supported by their actual education history.

Temporary waivers to the certification requirements are permitted as follows:

Certification	Approving Official	Limit
FAC-C	SPE	Case-by-case basis
Purchasing	ACM	Case-by-case basis
FAC-COR	SPE	6-12 months
FA	ACM	Case-by-case basis
TPO	ACM	6-12 months
Property Management	DOE Director of Asset Management; or NNSA SPE (or designee)	Case-by-case basis

OFPP permits the DOE SPE to [waive](#) some or all of the FAC-COR requirements for a period not to exceed 12 months, in both cases where it is demonstrated to be in the best interests of the agency. The DOE ACM performs this function on behalf of the DOE SPE.

A certification waiver permits an AWF member who does not meet the certification requirements of the position to remain in that position without being certified for the period indicated in the waiver. It does not certify the member and it does not carry over from one position to another. It only allows a member to remain in a specific position without meeting the certification requirements. The waiver is only for the member’s current position.

The waiver request should be initiated by the individual’s supervisor and signed by the HCA. The waiver package must include:

- identify the specific certification standards that the person does not meet,
- state the reason the individual does not meet all of the requirements and include a plan for obtaining the requirements,
- identify the time frame in which the situation will be rectified, and
- provide a statement regarding the member’s ability to perform successfully in the position without meeting the standards, and the potential impact if a waiver is not granted.

Additionally, a certification waiver does not negate the responsibility of management and the member to continue to pursue certification.

Waiver request templates are available upon request from the ACM and should be tailored. Approval of a waiver does not relieve the grantee of the requirement to obtain training leading to the requisite certification level. The SACM is responsible for following up with the individual to ensure that progress is made, and certification is obtained per the waiver commitment.

Section II. FAC CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

Overview

The [OFPP Act](#) charges OFPP with establishing acquisition certifications for Executive Branch agencies comparable to the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) program. To implement this statutory requirement, OFPP issued its [Policy Letter 05-01](#) and memoranda establishing the three government-wide certifications:

- (1) The Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting (FAC-C); by memorandum dated January 20, 2006, revised December 2008 and May 7, 2014. Federal Acquisition Regulation Subpart 1.603-1 makes FAC-C integral to the selection and appointment of contracting officers. See Chapter 3 below.
- (2) The Federal Acquisition Certification for Program and Project Managers (FAC-P/PM); by memorandum dated April 25, 2007; revised by memorandum dated December 13, 2013. See Chapter 5 below.
- (3) The Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting Officer's Representatives (FAC-COR); by memorandum dated November 26, 2007; revised by memorandum dated September 6, 2011 (see Chapter 4). Federal Acquisition Regulation Subpart 1.602-2(d)(2) prohibits the appointment of CORs who are not certified or who fail to maintain their certification for the life of the contract.

Chapter 3. Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting (FAC-C)

OFPP established a uniform set of standards recognized by all Executive Branch (civilian) agencies as evidence that an individual meets core education, experience and training standards for the FAC-C contracting career field at the junior, intermediate and senior levels. These requirements are sequential and cumulative, i.e., FAC-C Level I must be earned before achieving FAC-C Level II, and so forth. As required by OFPP, the levels for FAC-C for GS-1102 employees are tied to grades as shown below:

Grade	Level	Skill Level
GS-05/07	I	Junior
GS-09/11/12	II	Intermediate
GS-13 and above	III	Senior

Applicability

FAC-C certification is required at DOE for all employees required to hold a contracting officer warrant (see Chapter 11) and for all employees occupying GS-1102 positions. Other DOE employees may complete courses in the FAC-C curriculum as part of employee development but are not eligible for FAC-C.

Training Standard

The training standard requires completing the FAC-C curriculum specific to each level. FAI publishes and maintains the FAC-C training curricula on its [website](#) as well as in [FAI CSOD](#). Agencies are permitted to tailor electives in the FAC-C program to their agency's mission/needs. Of the electives listed by FAI's FAC-C Level III training requirements, **DOE requires ACQ 370 (FED) Acquisition Law**.

Education Standard

To qualify for FAC-C at the respective level, the education requirements in the GS-1102 [Contracting Series Qualification Standard](#), published by OPM must be met. The education standard for Levels I and II aligns with the GS-1102 education requirement up through GS-12. The Level III education standard aligns with the GS-1102 education requirement for GS-13 and above. An employee must meet the appropriate education standard to be certified. Waivers are not transferrable; therefore, a FAC-C issued with a waiver cannot be transferred to another agency. Refer to [FAI.gov](#) for more information regarding education requirements.

Experience Standard

OFPP advises that experience is generally based on OPM's GS-1102 [Contracting Series Qualification Standard](#). Experience may be time spent on the job in a contracting-related job assignment, either in the private or public sector, which reflects the accumulation of knowledge, skills and abilities during years of progressively responsible work assignments. There is no exception to the experience requirement and candidates must provide evidence of their experience to their certifying official. Experience can be tracked using the [1102 Experience Development Tool](#). Satisfaction of experience requirements from one certification level may be applied to the satisfaction of experience requirements of a higher certification level. FAC-C will be issued through FAI CSOD when ACMP has reviewed the completed training records, resume, and applicable transcripts.

DAWIA Reciprocity

Requests for FAC-C are based on current DAWIA certification. The employee is responsible for providing a copy of his/her DAWIA certification and must be current with CL and provide any necessary documentation.

Continuous Learning

Refer to the [Certification CLP table](#) for the number of CLPs required every two years by certification program.

Expired FAC-C

OFPP Policy Letter [05-01](#) and FAR [1.603-1](#) require current FAC-C as a condition for holding a warrant; this requirement is flowed down to HCA directives for granting contracting officer warrants. FAI CSOD does not contain warrant information, which is managed locally.

FAC-C reinstatement may require completion of the changed FAC-C curriculum for each level since the initial FAC-C was granted. GS-1102s and warrant holders who do not maintain/renew FAC-C on time, risk reassignment to a position not involving contract award and contract administration.

Core-Plus Specialization: FAC-C in Digital Services (FAC-C-DS)

Background

The purpose of the FAC-C Core-Plus specialization is to establish additional training, experience, and CL requirements for contracting professionals who are FAC-C certified and manage specific investments requiring specialized knowledge, skills, and abilities. Recognizing that buying digital services is not a skill gained through the FAC-C, OFPP established the Core-Plus Certification in Contracting for Digital Services, known as FAC-C-DS in the [May 18, 2018 OFPP Memorandum, Establishment of Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting Core-Plus Specialization in Digital Services \(FAC-C-DS\)](#).

FAC-C-DS addresses an urgent need for digital services expertise. As part of an overall effort to improve capabilities for buying technology, the specialization brings new skills to those responsible for the acquisition of digital services. The FAC-C-DS program specifically addresses the acquisition and business advisor expertise (e.g., online forms and benefits applications) across a variety of platforms, devices, and delivery mechanisms (e.g., websites, mobile applications and social media). This specialization is achieved through completion of a comprehensive training and development program called the Digital IT Acquisition Program (DITAP).

Applicability

The FAC-C-DS program is primarily for those contracting professionals who:

- Are responsible for the acquisition of digital services;
- Have completed a DITAP training and development program;
- Are assigned to acquisitions consisting primarily of digital services over the FAR Subpart 13.5 certain commercial item threshold, currently \$7 million (or \$13 million for acquisitions as described in 13.500(c)); and
- Demonstrate a level of skill beyond entry level (FAC-C-DS specialization will only be granted to those holding Level II or Level III FAC-C certification).

Experience and Training Standard

Because the DITAP program is experiential, there are no additional experience requirements. The most current competency model for the FAC-C-DS is available on FAI's [website](#). This site will be updated as needed to ensure currency of skills required. Competencies and additional information can also be found on [TechFAR Hub](#).

CL Specific to FAC-C-DS

Contracting professionals completing the DITAP program shall receive between 60 and 80 CLPs depending upon their level of achievement during the program. Contracting professionals holding the FAC-C-DS specialization must achieve 20 CLPs of their overall FAC-C 80 CLPs (required every two years) within the area of digital services to maintain their certification. Emphasis of the CL shall be to maintain currency in this quickly evolving discipline. A list of suggested classes and other ways to obtain CL can be found on [TechFAR Hub](#) and FAI's [website](#).

Contracting professionals assigned to acquisitions consisting primarily of digital services over the established threshold shall obtain specialization within two years of assignment. Beginning in FY22, contracting professionals assigned to acquisitions consisting primarily of digital services over the established threshold shall have the specialization prior to being assigned. The DOE SPE may waive this requirement and allow them to be certified within one year after being assigned. This decision must be documented in writing and provided to the ACM.

FAI lists additional references until more information is readily available on FAI's [website](#):

- [TechFAR Hub Digital IT Acquisition Professional Training Program Info](#)
- [FAC-C-DS Competencies and Performance Outcomes](#)

- [How to Apply to the DITAP](#)

Chapter 4. Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting Officer's Representatives (FAC-COR)

The appointment, authority and responsibilities of a FAC-COR are established in the FAR 1.602-2(d) and 1.604 and implemented at the DOE through the Department of Energy Acquisition Regulation (DEAR) [Department of Energy Acquisition Regulation \(DEAR\) 901.603](#) and [DOE Order 361.1C](#). The COR is appointed by written memorandum signed by the contracting officer that conforms to the requirements in [DOE Order 541.1C](#).

By memorandum dated November 26, 2007, OFPP established FAC-COR to develop specific competencies required of federal employees serving in COR roles. In their memorandum dated September 6, 2011, OFPP created three certification levels tied to increasing levels of risk/complexity of contracts. New training and experience standards were established for each level of certification. These revisions took effect January 1, 2012 and are incorporated into the guidance that follows.

Applicability

DOE policy is to certify employees who are (1) currently serving under a COR appointment on an active contract, or are about to be appointed COR on the pending award of a contract (or a delivery order or task order) under an existing contract; and, (2) to the level the CO requires. Employees who expect to be appointed COR responsibilities in the future are encouraged to take advantage of training opportunities to ensure they are prepared to apply for certification when the need arises. If appointment is expected and certification required, employees should coordinate with their SACM.

Certification Level

There are three levels of FAC-COR. The level of certification the COR candidate must hold/achieve is determined by the CO as part of his/her decision to appoint a COR, with input from the program/requiring office. The decision is based on the needs of the contract, and the level of complexity and the risks involved in the acquisition.

Note: Level III certification is required prior to assignment to an M&O contract.

Experience Standard

Effective January 1, 2012, OFPP added a requirement that first-time applicants for Level II and III certification possess prior COR experience: one year for Level II certification, and two years for Level III certification. In addition, in order to be certified at Level III, OFPP strongly recommends CORs have prior certification at Level II.

In the absence of a previous COR appointment, experience in the COR competencies may be substituted. The full suite of COR competencies is published on FAI's [website](#).

OFPP requires initial applicants for Level II and III certification to “validate to the Acquisition Career Manager...that he/she has gained the required experience...”. The [COR Summary of Experience](#) form should be used to document qualifying experience supported by a copy of the most recent COR appointment letter to serve as validation. Acceptable experience must be cited and confirmed in writing by a cognizant official such as the CO (preferred), COR, team leader or supervisor (an e-mail is sufficient). The applicable contract number(s), description and contractor should be included. Experience gained outside DOE may be more difficult to validate and should be discussed with the SACM before submitting required documentation.

Training Standard

The training standard requires completing the FAC-COR curriculum specific to each level. FAI publishes and maintains the FAC-COR training curricula on its [website](#).

For purposes of CL, it is highly encouraged that FAC-COR holders participate in courses that are customized for DOE. These courses include, but are not limited to, *Managing Performance Based Contracts*, *Earned Value Management*, and *Managing Contract Changes*. Additional recommendations for targeted CL can be found in Chapter 2 of this handbook.

Reciprocity

FAC-COR under reciprocity is not automatic, but granted based on need, as established by the CO. Reciprocity is one-way only; FAC-COR does not qualify the incumbent for FAC-C or FAC-P/PM. If reciprocity applies, employees should contact their SACM for instructions on requesting certification.

Per page A-6 of the OFPP September 6, 2011, memorandum subparagraph 6.g., FAC-C and FAC-P/PM qualifies for reciprocal FAC-COR as follows:

Certification	Level	Eligible for FAC-COR Level
FAC-C	I	II
FAC-C	II	II
FAC-C	III	III
FAC-P/PM	I	II
FAC-P/PM	II	II
FAC-P/PM	III	III
FPD	I	II
FPD	II	II
FPD	III-IV	III

Note: The Project Manager Career Development Program (PMCDP) is managed by DOE's Office of Project Management <http://energy.gov/pm>.

COR Appointment

OFPP stresses the importance of selecting the right individual to be a COR in terms of technical expertise and having the time and resources necessary to perform the COR function. Additionally, FAR 1.602-2(d) (7)(iv) prohibits the re-designation of COR duties. In addition, a potential conflict of interest and violation of FAR 3.101-1 is created when the appointed COR is in the CO's management chain. For these reasons, COR appointments to employees holding management/leadership positions are discouraged because (1) the demands of their position preclude fulfilling COR duties for individual contract actions on a day-to-day basis; (2) assigning COR duties to subordinates is not permitted; and (3) the CO's direction to the COR may be compromised if the COR supervises the CO directly or indirectly.

The COR is appointed by written memorandum signed by the contracting officer that conforms to the requirements in [DOE Order 541.1C](#). The COR appointment letter will identify the contract number, awardee, and effective date. It will provide details on the scope and limitations of CO authority designated to the COR. The appointment letter will provide additional details/instructions tailored to the contract. The COR is required to sign their acknowledgement of the appointment. The appointment expires upon contract expiration or termination, whichever occurs earlier.

CORs are required by the Ethics in Government Act (EIGA), as amended, to file a Confidential Financial Disclosure Report (OGE-450) because of the responsibilities associated with their positions.

Note: FAI indicates, "Level III CORs are the most experienced CORs within an agency and should be assigned to the most complex and mission critical contracts within the agency. These CORs are often called upon to perform significant program management activities and should be trained accordingly." If the AWF member requires a Level III certification, it is recommended the AWF member contact their SACM for additional guidance.

*FAC-COR will be issued through FAI CSOD when ACMP has reviewed the completed training records, resume (applicable to FAC-COR Levels II and III, and must clearly demonstrate years of experience), and CO "Designation Letter" (or COR nomination or email). If an email from the CO is used in lieu of a "Designation Letter", the email must include the COR Level required, the contract number, the anticipated or actual award date and the period of performance/duration of the contract. If requesting FAC-COR Level I, SACMs must verify designation, as there is no upload available for FAC-COR Level I.

The following do not necessarily meet required experience to request COR:

- Technical Monitors
- Task Monitors
- Government Inspectors for Simplified Acquisitions
- Interagency Agreements
- Financial Assistance Instruments (see Technical Project Officer certification covered in Chapter 8 below)
- Invoice Approving Officials
- Requirements Developers
- Others (who assist contracting officers in managing their contracts)

The matrix below covers six risk factors that should be considered.

COR Certification/Appointment Criteria Matrix			
Risk Factor		0-1 Points: No or little risk associated with the project	2-3 Points: Significant or high risk associated with project
1	Complexity of Services and Supplies	Oversight confined to basic inspection and acceptance (e.g., COTS or standard supply/service)	Highly complex requirements; continuous oversight or technical direction required (e.g., developmental; new or emerging technologies; poor or no performance history)
2	Number and Location of Performance Sites	Non-complex shipping/delivery at a single domestic delivery site	Highly complex shipping/packaging/delivery (e.g., requiring export; staging of shipments; multiple customers with competing requirements; multiple deliverables or sites; foreign performance site(s)) (span of control)
3	Impact of Delay	If project is delayed, no serious impact to mission that cannot be easily alleviated	Serious impact on mission; high degree of impact on follow-on or interdependent projects; Time is critical due to urgency, weather, or long-lead time items in critical path (e.g., contingency contract)
4	Visibility	Little or no internal or external interest anticipated	High degree of internal or external interest anticipated (e.g., GAO oversight; congressional engagement; other special interests)
5	Contract Type/Structure	Firm fixed price contracts with basic provisions	Contracts other than firm fixed price (e.g., letter contract; cost type contract; contract financing provisions required; hybrid contract; incentives; time and materials contract)
6	Special Considerations	No rights in data or government property required; No Personally Identifiable Information (PII) or security concerns	High level of oversight required to assure government/contractor rights in data or government property; Significant security concerns relating to contract classification or PII data
Total Points		<i>(Calculate)</i>	<i>(Calculate)</i>

The scale below may be used as a guide in determining the appropriate COR Level after totaling the scores assigned to the six risk factors.

Total Points	COR Level
0-5	I
6-11	II
12-18	III

Continuous Learning

Refer to the [Certification CLP table](#) for the number of CLPs required every two years by certification program.

Chapter 5. Federal Acquisition Certification for Program/Project Managers (FAC-P/PM)

Background

The FAC-P/PM is issued pursuant to [OFPP Act, 41 U.S.C. § 1101 et. seq., and OFPP Policy Letter 05-01](#), which established a requirement for Federal acquisition certification programs. Guidance is further defined in the OFPP Memorandum dated December 16, 2013.

Applicability

OFPP advises that at a minimum, agencies shall consider applying the FAC-P/PM requirements to the following:

1. individuals with significant involvement in one or more phases of the acquisition investment process (initiation, conceptualization/design, development, implementation, modification, maintenance, evaluation, disposal),
2. managers with authority and responsibility for overseeing multiple phases of the acquisition investment process,
3. individuals with responsibility for leading cross-agency or acquisition investment programs for a major portion or all of the investment life-cycle,
4. individuals responsible for leading, coordinating, managing integrated project teams for acquisition investments,
5. individuals participating on an integrated project team or a phase of the investment lifecycle with aspirations for career development as a program or project manager.

The target completion date for this certification is one year from the date of assignment to the program or project.

Experience Standard

The experience requirements for FAC-P/PM are maintained on [FAI's website](#).

Applicants are required to demonstrate experience in each of the competencies outlined by FAI's [Competency Model](#). Each competency must be addressed through training and direct acquisition-based program/project experience. Acquisition-based program/project experience is provided in a narrative format on the application and must detail time spent on-the-job in an acquisition-based program and project management-related job assignment which reflects the accumulation of knowledge, skills and abilities during years of progressively responsible work assignments. There is no exception to the experience requirements. A Guide to Understanding FAC-P/PM and the application forms can be found on ANSWERS [here](#).

Training Standard

The training standard requires completing the FAC-P/PM curriculum specific to each level. FAI publishes and maintains the FAC-P/PM training curricula on its [website](#).

Core-Plus Specialization

FAC-P/PM Core-Plus Specialization and FAC-P/PM Information Technology (IT) Certification

In addition to the outlined requirements for FAC-P/PM Level II and III, FAC-P/PM Core-Plus Specialization and FAC-P/PM IT certification require additional training and detailed experience specific to IT related projects/programs as outlined by FAI [here](#). Additional training requirements and course prerequisites are listed below. Note: there is no entry level FAC-P/PM IT certification at this time.

Continuous Learning

Refer to the [Certification CLP table](#) for the number of CLPs required every two years by certification program.

SECTION III. DOE CERTIFICATIONS

Chapter 6. DOE's Certification in Purchasing

OFPP [Policy Letter 05-01](#) identifies GS-1105 employees as AWF members and advocates developing and training them using common standards. For this reason, the DOE's certification in Purchasing program was established for GS-1105 employees of DOE. DOE's certification in Purchasing is modeled after the DOD/DAU certification in Purchasing program, similar to other DOE-specific programs where specific courses required for DOE certification are identified in lieu of the electives allowed under the DAU curriculum. The purpose of the certification in Purchasing is not only for GS-1105s to acquire necessary skills, but also to prepare them for the GS-1102 career field.

Applicability

DOE employees outside of the 1105 series may take courses in the Purchasing curriculum as part of employee development but are not eligible for certification. The levels for Purchasing certification are generally tied to grades as shown below:

Grade	Level	Skill Level
GS-05	I	Junior
GS-06-09	II	Senior

The standards to qualify for initial certification in Purchasing, shown below, consist of experience and training as well as recommended levels of education. These requirements are sequential and cumulative, i.e., Purchasing Level I must be earned before pursuing Level II.

Experience and Training Standard

Purchasing Level I	
Education	(Desired) 24 semester hours of undergraduate work with emphasis in business
Experience	1 year of experience in purchasing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CON 100 Shaping Smart Business Arrangements • CON 237 Simplified Acquisition Procedures • CLC 030 Essentials of Interagency Acquisitions/Fair Opportunity • CLC 058 Introduction to Contract Pricing • CLC 004 Market Research • CLM 059 Fundamentals of Small Business for the Acquisition Workforce

Purchasing Level II	
Education	(Desired) 24 semester hours of undergraduate work with emphasis in business
Experience	2 years of experience in purchasing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CON 121 Contract Planning • CON 124 Contract Execution • CON 127 Contract Management • CLC 055 Competition Requirements

Refer to the [Certification CLP table](#) for the number of CLPs required every two years by certification program.

Chapter 7. DOE’s Certification in Financial Assistance (CFA)

Background

Financial assistance award and administration at DOE is performed primarily by grants management specialists as well as contract specialists, as financial assistance has its own counterparts to contract planning, preparing solicitation documents, proposal analysis, cost analysis, negotiation, selection of award instrument, financing, performance, audits, preparing award documents, debriefing, administration, monitoring, terminations, and closeout. The Certification in FA (CFA) is targeted at gaining these competencies in the context of supporting a recipient’s program versus satisfying a DOE requirement.

Applicability

Certification is reserved for GS-1109 and GS-1102 employees. Employees not in the GS-1109 or GS-1102 job series who perform financial assistance duties, e.g., GS-1101s, are not eligible for FA certification; however, relevant courses from the Level I and II curriculum below should be added to their IDPs to ensure that they gain the necessary skills.

There are four levels of Financial Assistance certification. Levels are tied to the award type(s) administered and grade (GS-1109 and 1102, as applicable) as follows:

Grade	Level	Skill Level	Award Type
GS-05/07	I	Junior	Grants & Cooperative Agreements
GS-09/11	II	Intermediate	
GS-12 and above	III	Senior	
GS-12 and above	IV	Senior	TIAAs

Requirements are sequential and cumulative, i.e., CFA Level I must be earned before pursuing CFA Level II. Levels I-III apply to employees who award and administer grants and cooperative agreements. Level IV is reserved for employees who award and administer Technology Investment Agreements (TIAAs).

GS-1102s holding FAC-C Level III with unlimited financial assistance warrants are required to complete the entire CFA curriculum and earn CFA Level III.

Experience and Training Standards

CFA Level I
1 year of experience in financial assistance/acquisition.
<p>Required Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGR 402 Ethics in the Grants Environment • FFM 205 Coop Agreements and Substantial Involvement <p>Required Training Track 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FFM 105 Federal Financial Assistance <p>Or alternatively, complete all three courses in Training Track 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FFM 101 Introduction to Grants & Cooperative Agreements for Federal Personnel • FFM 102 Monitoring Grants and Cooperative Agreements for Federal Personnel • FFM 103 Uniform Administrative Requirements for Federal Grants: 2 CFR 200 (Subparts A-D) <p>Required Training (Choose 1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FFM 208 Negotiating FFA Agreements Reaching Fair Consensus • FGR 206 Evaluating Financial Capabilities of Grant Recipients

CFA Level II
Level I Certification and 2 or more years of experience in financial assistance/acquisition.
<p>Required Training Section 1 (Choose 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGR 205 Cost Principles for Federal Grants: 2 CFR Part 200 (Subpart E) and FAR 31.2 • FFM 210 Cost Principles for Federal Grants and Financial Assistance Agreements <p>Required Training Section 2 (Choose 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing And Leveraging Risk Assessments for Grants Management • FFM 211 Federal Funds Management Evaluating Risk and Auditing Performance <p>Required Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detecting and Preventing Fraud on Federal Grant Projects

CFA Level III
Level II Certification and 4 or more years of experience in financial assistance/acquisition.
<p>Required Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FFM 409 Federal Assistance Law • FGR 400 Appropriations Law for Federal Grants • FGR 204 Performance Measurement for Federal Grants Under 2 CFR 200 <p>Required Training Section 1 (Choose 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGR 203 Audit of Federal Grants and Assistance Awards • FFM 212 Auditing Federal Grants and Financial Assistance Agreements <p>Required Training Section 2 (Choose 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FFM 207 Advanced Cost Principles: Avoiding Problem Areas and Responding to Questioned Cost • FFM 213 Advanced Cost Principles for Federal Grants and Financial Assistance

Certification in FA for Technology Investment Agreements (CFA Level IV)	
Experience	Level III contracting certification and CFA, and 7 years of experience in federal contracting or financial assistance
Training	Cost/Price Analysis (minimum 64hrs)
	Negotiation Training (minimum 16hrs)
	FCL-DOE-401 - Technology Investment Agreements (TIA)

Note: Contract Specialists with a current FAC-C Level III are not required to take the Cost/Price Analysis or Negotiation Training for Level IV TIA Certification. They are required to take the DOE TIA Training only. Those with CFA that do not have a current FAC-C Level III certification ARE required to take the Cost/Price Analysis **and** Negotiation Training in addition to the DOE TIA Training to obtain a Level IV/TIA Certification.

Continuous Learning

Refer to the [Certification CLP table](#) for the number of CLPs required every two years by certification program.

Chapter 8. DOE's Technical Project Officer (TPO)

Technical Project Officer

The award and administration of financial assistance agreements (grants, cooperative agreements and TIAs) requires federal technical presence and oversight. Cooperative agreements and TIAs require knowledgeable Technical Project Officers (TPOs) to coordinate DOE's substantial involvement in these awards and to ensure that Federal involvement is appropriately provided.

Applicability

Pursuant to [DOE Order 361.1C](#), a TPO is defined as an individual nominated by the Program Office and appointed by the CO to coordinate DOE's substantial involvement in the award and administration of financial assistance agreements to ensure Federal technical presence and oversight. TPO responsibilities include developing the programmatic aspects of a proposed announcement, participating in the technical review and evaluation of applications, participating in the development of recommendations for selection, and monitoring the programmatic aspects of project performance.

Before a TPO delegation may be issued to a prospective candidate, the candidate must be certified in accordance with the core curriculum requirements for TPO certification provided below. Note that Level II is cumulative from Level I; i.e., Level II applicants must have completed both the Level I and Level II courses in order to qualify.

Training Standards

TPO Level I (Grants and Cooperative Agreements Under \$10M)

Required Training:

- FFM 101 Introduction to Grants & Cooperative Agreements for Federal Personnel
- FFM 102 Monitoring Grants and Cooperative Agreements for Federal Personnel
- FFM 103 Uniform Administrative Requirements for Federal Grants: 2 CFR 200 (Subparts A-D)

TPO Level II (Grants and Cooperative Agreements Over \$10M Including All TIA's)

Required Training:

- FGR 204 Cooperative Agreements and Substantial Involvement
- FFM 205 Performance Measurement for Federal Grants Under 2 CFR 200
- Detecting and Preventing Fraud on Federal Grant Project

Reciprocity

A TPO certification may be granted to an AWF member if he/she currently holds a COR certification that is supplemented by a COR appointment letter.

FAC-COR	TPO
I	N/A
II	I
III	II

Continuous Learning

Refer to the [Certification CLP table](#) for the number of CLPs required every two years by certification program. Note: The first cycle of CL for TPO certification based on FAC-COR must focus on completing the TPO Level I and II coursework.

Chapter 9. DOE's Personal Property Management Certification

Background

Industrial/Contract professionals perform management and oversight of personal property and develops policy and procedures for personal property management. Responsibilities also include managing life cycle processes for personal property, ensuring uniformity and consistency in the administration of personal property policies and procedures, and ensures management of personal property to protect the interests of the Department in a cost-effective manner. Provides guidance on personal property related activities for personnel to perform specific responsibilities during acquisition planning, contract formation, and contract management. They shall conduct reviews of the Contractor's personal property management system for compliance with statutory regulations and validate that those policies and procedures do not conflict with contractual obligations and or requirements.

The Personal Property Management curriculum is designed to provide the acquisition workforce professional with the necessary knowledge and technical skills to perform personal property asset management duties in accordance with the laws, regulations, and DOE policy. It will also enable the acquisition workforce professional to administer personal property requirements for the acquisition, control, use, management, reporting, and disposal of personal property. Oversight of personal property shall be based on the requirements which seek to maximize utilization, mission, and return on investment of property.

Applicability

This applies to acquisition workforce professionals with personal property management responsibilities. Only those employees classified by the Human Capital office as Industrial Property Management Specialists, Property Administrators, and Organizational Property Management Officers require the Personal Property Management certification to perform at the designated level. Individuals who have been delegated or appointed stewardship for DOE property, are designated to the GS-1103 series. The 1103 series designees need to meet the requirements and be able to perform oversight functions from acquisition through disposition.

Appointment of Industrial/Contract professionals

Guidance for the appointment of Industrial/Contract professionals is provided in 41 CFR 109-1.107-50 as excerpted below.

- Heads of Contracting Activity designates Organizational Property Management Officers (OPMO) to establish and administer personal property management programs within their organizations.
- Contracting Officers designates Property Administrators (PA) as authorized representatives responsible for performing delegated contract administration functions for contract and financial assistance requirements relating to Government personal property.

Specific procedures for appointment and the issuance of a certificate of appointment are contained in DOE O 361.1C Chg. 1 (LtdChg), [Acquisition Career Management Program](#) and DOE G 580.1-1A Chg. 1 (LtdChg) or their successor versions.

The acquisition workforce is subject to one of multiple certification levels. For personal property management, the levels are generally tied to the Office of Personnel Management General Schedule (GS) grades as shown below:

Series/Grade	Level	Skill Level
GS-1103-05/07	I	Junior
GS-1103-09/11/12	II	Intermediate
GS-1103-13+	III	Senior

Certification Standards

The core certification courses to provide the DOE personal property management workforce with the knowledge base necessary to support the Department's mission are outlined below. Courses without the "IND" prefix are available through a variety of approved providers including commercial vendors, colleges, and universities. Other

sources, as approved by the ACMP may be used to acquire the core courses; however, DAU remains the preferred provider for personal property management courses.

DOE/NNSA may grant equivalencies for certificates based on documented evidence.

In addition to the core subjects, DOE and NNSA have identified desired courses that cover specific areas of personal property management requiring more in-depth knowledge. Also, to keep acquisition workforce current with changes in contracting knowledge, skills, and techniques, OFPP established a 2-year limit on federal acquisition certifications and a continuing education requirement. This requirement applies to all DOE certifications. During the two-year certification period, employees are responsible for earning and reporting the applicable number of CLPs in FAI/CSOD before their certification expires.

Standard	Property Management Level I	Property Management Level II	Property Management Level III
Experience	1 year of property management experience	2 years of property management experience	4 years of property management experience
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CON 100 Shaping Smart Business Arrangements • CON 121 Mission Support Planning • CON 124 Mission Planning Execution • CON 127 Mission Performance Assessment • IND 105 Contract Property Fundamentals* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IND 205 Contract Government Property Management Systems and Auditing Concepts* • CON 200 Business Decisions for Contracting • CON 216 Legal Considerations in Contracting • Demilitarization Course (DOD Only) • Personal Property and Nonproliferation Course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CON 360 Contracting for Decision * • DOE OLC Online Training Modules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leadership (2.5 hours) ▪ Communication and Leadership (4 hours) ▪ Communication Skills (3.5 hours) ▪ Emotionally Intelligent Leadership (2 hours) ▪ Leadership and Change (1.5 hours)

Continuous Learning

Refer to the [Certification CLP table](#) for the number of CLPs required every two years by certification program.

Chapter 10. DOE's Certified Realty Specialist Program

Background

"Certified Realty Specialist" (CRS) is defined in [DOE Order 430.1C](#). A CRS must review and approve all real estate actions to acquire, manage and dispose of real property assets. Certification covers the following real estate actions, organized into three specialty areas:

Acquisition including fee; permanent and temporary less-than-fee interests (easements, licenses, leases other than building space, permits, rights-of-entry, mineral rights, water rights, timber rights); exchanges, transfers from other Federal agencies; withdrawals from the public domain; excluding acceptance of donations and institution of condemnation actions, but including settlements after condemnation proceedings are instituted.

Leasing includes lease acquisition under DOE authorities; leases by contractors that are reimbursable by DOE; lease options; renewals; approval of appraisals for leasing actions; and Occupancy Agreements (OAs) with GSA.

Land Management and Disposal including disposal of fee, out-grants of permanent and temporary less-than-fee interests (easements, licenses, leases, permits, rights-of-entry, mineral rights, water rights, timber rights); exchanges, transfers to other Federal agencies; approval of utilization surveys; annexation decisions; legislative jurisdiction; approval of appraisals for management and disposal actions; relinquishment of withdrawals; abrogation of restrictions within DOE disposal documents.

Applicability

Realty Specialists in the GS-1170 Series are eligible for certification.

There are three certification levels. Each level has three standards: experience, education and training. Levels I and II have a dollar-value limit on actions a CRS may approve:

Grade	Level	Skill Level	Limit
GS-9	I	Junior	\$250,000*
GS-11/12	II	Intermediate	\$1,000,000
GS-13 and above	III	Senior	Unlimited

***Level I** is limited to transactions valued at or below the simplified acquisition threshold (SAT), as defined in statute (41 U.S. Code section 134) and regulations ([Federal Acquisition Regulation 2.101](#)), which is currently \$250,000.

For leases, the limit is based on average annual rent. For disposal actions without monetary consideration, a CRS's authority shall be limited to the fair market value (FMV) of the real property, or real property interest conveyed, or an estimate of market value such as the replacement plant value (RPV) of improvements.

Level III CRS certifications and RECO warrants have no dollar-value limit.

Education Standards

There is no education requirement for certification as a CRS. However, education may be substituted for some portion of required experience. See below for further information.

Experience and Training Standards

For all certification levels, creditable years are years of experience as a Federal GS-1170 Realty Specialist (1 year of credit for each year of experience). Other experience, such as state/local government, or private sector experience

will be evaluated for its applicability to the Realty Specialist field and credited on a full or partial basis as determined by the Certification Committee.

Level I: A minimum of one (1) year of creditable experience in the real estate field, at least one (1) year of which is Federal (GS-1170) at the GS-9 level, or equivalent, or above.

Level II: A minimum of three (3) years of creditable experience in the real estate field, at least one (1) year of which is Federal (GS-1170) at the GS-11 level, or equivalent, or above.

Level III: A minimum of six (6) years of creditable experience in the real estate field, at least one (1) year of which is Federal (GS-1170) at the GS-13 level, or equivalent, or above.

The following training courses are required prior to appointment as a CRS at the levels and in the specialty areas indicated below:

Standard	Realty Specialist Level I	Source	Specialty Area(s)
Training	Lease Acquisition Training	Management Concepts, Inc. or Federal Acquisition Institute	Leasing
	Federal Real Property Utilization and Disposal	GSA	Management & Disposal
	Basic Appraisal Principles	The Appraisal Institute or Federal Acquisition Institute	All

Standard	Realty Specialist Level II/III	Provider	Specialty Area(s)
Training	Federal Real Property Lease Law	Management Concepts, Inc. or Federal Acquisition Institute	Leasing
	Cost and Price Analysis of Lease Proposals	Management Concepts, Inc. or Federal Acquisition Institute	Leasing
	Techniques of Negotiating Federal Real Property Leases	Management Concepts, Inc. or Federal Acquisition Institute	Leasing

Additional training or education can be substituted for one year of required experience, but not for the required year of experience in the GS-1170 series. 180 classroom hours of training, or 6 semester credit hours of education, or a combination thereof, may substitute for one year of work experience. Courses must be directly related to real estate to qualify, and courses required for certification are not eligible. Substitution of education or training for experience requires approval by the Certification Committee. This approval may be sought in two ways: (1) a prospective applicant may request credit for previously completed coursework, or (2) a prospective applicant may request development of a training plan identifying specific courses to take for credit. The second option may be particularly beneficial for a Realty Specialist who lacks experience in one or more specialty areas and is unlikely to attain such experience in his or her current position. For example, a Realty Specialist lacking experience in acquisition could take courses related to acquisition to help attain certification in this specialty area.

Applying for Certification

- Applications for certification are submitted to the Office of Asset Management (MA-50) via e-mail to: therealestatecertificationprogram@hq.doe.gov for distribution to the Certification Committee (Committee). Applications for certification must contain the following:

- A cover letter from the Site Manager, or equivalent containing the following:
 - Request for certification, including level and specialty area(s) requested
 - Certification that the applicant serves in a GS-1170 Realty Specialist position at the required Grade for the certification level sought
- A completed “Certified Realty Specialist Biography”
- Documentation that the applicant has completed required training
- Discussion of personal experience with reference to the experience requirements for Level I, II or III certification, including, to the extent practicable, descriptions of specific transactions the applicant has performed work on.

Application forms can be obtained from the Office of Asset Management (MA-50) or on Powerpedia:

https://powerpedia.energy.gov/wiki/Real_Estate

- (2) Within thirty (30) days after receipt, the Committee shall convene a meeting to consider the application. The Committee will evaluate the applicant’s experience and determine whether he or she meets the requirements for the level of certification requested. The Committee will confirm completion of required training. The Committee will evaluate other training and education when the applicant requests credit towards the experience requirement per the “Training Standard” above.

The Certification Committee has five members:

- DOE Senior Realty Officer (SRO), co-chair
- NNSA CRS, co-chair
- 3 DOE CRSs

The NNSA CRS serving as co-chair is appointed by NNSA, and the other three committee members serve by invitation of the Committee, with the consent of the committee member’s management.

- (3) Committee actions involving NNSA applicants require the NNSA co-chair to be in attendance. The Committee may recommend approval, disapproval, or to request additional information. The Committee may also recommend certification at a lower level than requested. Committee actions require a unanimous vote. If the Committee cannot obtain a unanimous vote, the co-chairs will discuss the application and attempt to overcome any objections. If they are unable to reach agreement, the matter will be forwarded to the Head of Contracting Activity for Real Property Management (HCA), or NNSA management for actions involving NNSA, for a final decision. Actions by the Committee are subject to review and override by the HCA, or by NNSA management for actions involving NNSA.
- (4) The HCA, with countersigning by the appropriate NNSA official for NNSA employees, will issue certificates of appointment to approved applicants.

Term

Certification is permanent, subject to the continuous learning requirement. Certification will automatically terminate upon the resignation, retirement, or transfer of the Certificate holder from a GS-1170 position or to another position that has no organizational responsibility for real estate. In addition, for DOE employees, the HCA can withdraw certification at any time for just cause. The withdrawal of a certification of an NNSA employee requires the concurrence of NNSA Management. Certificates are issued to individuals, not positions.

Continuous Learning

Refer to the [Certification CLP table](#) for the number of CLPs required every two years by certification program. Note: The CRS must also complete the annual agency-required Ethics Training Program.

A list of real estate courses that have been pre-approved for continuous learning credit is posted on Powerpedia at:

https://powerpedia.energy.gov/wiki/Real_Estate. Other courses may be approved for credit at the discretion of the Real Estate Certification Committee. When a course provider or sponsor does not assign CLPs, credit will be awarded at the discretion of the Real Estate Certification Committee Sources¹ for real estate continuous learning include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Real estate courses in a classroom or seminar setting
- Web-based real estate courses, including webinars
- Attendance at DOE-sponsored real estate training sessions
- Courses (in-person or web-based) in related fields, such as real estate law, environmental law, historic preservation, land management, facilities management, contracting, and project management
- Teaching courses, or presenting at a seminar, webinar or training session, on real estate or a related topic.

Every 2 years from the date of the most recently issued certification or renewal, the CRS will provide a list of activities completed and total CLPs to the Real Estate Certification Committee. Courses required or otherwise used to attain certification may not be used to meet the continuous learning requirement. Failure to maintain the continuous learning requirement will result in a suspension of all Certificates held by the CRS until the requirements have been met. With written justification, the HCA can extend the deadline date for submission of the currency requirements for a DOE CRS. With written justification and the concurrence of NNSA management, such waivers can be granted to NNSA employees.

Real Estate Contracting Officer (RECO) Warrants

Warrants – Real Estate			Requirements	
Acquisition	Leasing	Disposal	Minimum Years of RE Experience	Minimum CRS Level (must be current)
Up to SAT (\$250,000)	Up to SAT (\$250,000)	Up to SAT (\$250,000)	GS-1170 1 year of experience	I
Up to \$1,000,000	Up to \$1,000,000	Up to \$1,000,000	GS-1170 3 years' experience	II
Up to Unlimited	Up to Unlimited	Up to Unlimited	GS-1170 6 years' experience	III

¹ The CRS is advised to request approval in advance of attending any course not on the list of pre-approved courses.

SECTION IV. CONTRACTING OFFICER WARRANTS

Chapter 11. Contracting Officer Warrants

Introduction

Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) [1.603-1](#) references 41 USC requirements that:

- (1) agency heads establish systems for the selection, appointment, and termination of appointment of contracting officers; and
- (2) such appointments be supported by active FAC-C.

The above requirement for active FAC-C makes the warrant self-canceling should the underlying FAC-C expire.

[FAR 1.603-3\(a\)](#) requires that contracting officers be appointed using the Standard Form 1402, Certificate of Appointment (“warrant”).

[FAR 1.602-1\(a\)](#) requires that the limits of warrant authority be “clear and readily available to the public and agency personnel”, meaning, the warrant limits must be printed on the face of the warrant.

The OFPP [memorandum](#) establishing FAC-C requires:

- (1) that contracting officers be certified at an appropriate level to support their warrant obligations;
- (2) that the Chief Acquisition Officer tie warrant limits to FAC-C levels; and
- (3) FAC-C Level III as a condition of issuing/maintaining an unlimited warrant.²

[DOE Order 541.1C](#) extends the above requirements to contracting officer warrants delegating authority to award and administer federal financial assistance instruments; sales and donation of personal property; and real estate transactions. That is, Contracting Officer warrants for such instruments shall be contingent upon earning and maintaining the applicable DOE certification set forth in the preceding chapters. Contracting officer warrants are issued by the Head of the Contracting Activity pursuant to his/her delegation of authority from the Senior Procurement Executive.

Note that warrants are not an entitlement. The HCA’s decision to grant warrant authority to an individual must take into consideration the total number of active warrants, their dollar limits, anticipated workload and workload profile (dollar values, numbers of transactions, etc.).

Any changes made to the warrant holder’s warrant by the HCA (e.g., warrant amount changes, instrument type authority changes, employee retires, etc.) must be Communicated by the SACM, including documentation, to the STRIPES POINT OF CONTACT (SPOC) on site. Confirmation of any changes must be maintained by the SACM.

Application Process

Requirements for warrant applications from initiation through issuance are set forth in [DOE Order 541.1C](#). The warrant request process shall be managed locally at each site on behalf of the respective HCA.

In general, the reviewers in the workflow process will recommend approval, disapprove, return to employee, return to previous process step, or request waivers. The final approval authorities are the only reviewers who can approve and activate the warrant.

Warrant Requirements

² Changed from recommended to mandatory by OFPP’s [FAC-C “refresh” memorandum dated May 7, 2014](#).

Warrant Type/Instrument	Supporting Certification
Contracting	FAC-C
Purchasing (simplified acquisition methods)	Purchasing
Financial Assistance	FA
Personal Property (LEDP & property sales)	Personal Property Management
Real Estate (RECO)	Certified Realty Specialist

Certification Requirements

Per OFPP, certification requirements by warrant limit are set forth below. These are in addition to the certification levels by grade for the GS-1102, 1103, 1105, 1109 and 1170 series above.

Certification Waivers for Warrants

In addition to education and training waivers, as specified in the May 7, 2014 OFPP Memorandum, the agency's CAO or SPE may waive the requirement for obtaining a certification for warranting purposes in writing, on a case-by-case basis, if granting a waiver is in the best interest of the agency. Waivers shall only be granted for exceptional and compelling reasons. This authority may not be delegated further. A written justification shall include the reason for, and conditions of, the waiver and the benefits to the agency. This waiver is not transferable to another agency.

The following information, at a minimum, should be included in the waiver request submission:

- Why other qualified candidates are not readily available for the position;
- Details on how the candidate shows potential for advancement to levels of greater responsibility and authority based on demonstrated analytical and decision-making capabilities, job performance, qualifying experience, etc.;
- Any remedial actions that will be taken to meet the educational and training requirements along with associated timeframes; and
- The impact on the agency should the SPE not issue a waiver for the candidate.

All waiver requests must be coordinated through the ACM. Additional information may be required by the SPE when evaluating waiver requests. Samples are available by request through the ACM.

Contracting

HCAs are responsible for making warrant limit determinations within the guidance below; however, any contracting officer awarded an unlimited warrant must have a minimum of four consecutive years of contracting experience and must possess a current FAC-C Level III.

Warrants – Acquisition		Requirements	
Warrant Name	Warrant Level	Maximum Dollar Amount	Requirements
Acquisition I	I	\$250,000	Baccalaureate degree OR 24 business related semester hours among these disciplines: accounting, law, business, finance, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, and organization and management.,GS-05/07, FAI - FAC-C, Level I, One year of contracting experience.
Acquisition II	II	\$25,000,000	Baccalaureate degree OR 24 business related semester hours among these disciplines: accounting, law, business, finance, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, and organization and management.,GS-09/11/12,FAI - FAC-C, Level II, Two years of cumulative contracting experience (functional).
Acquisition III	III	Unlimited	Baccalaureate degree AND 24 business related semester hours among these disciplines: accounting, law, business, finance, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, and organization and management,GS-13, FAI - FAC-C, Level III, Four years of cumulative contracting experience (functional).

Purchasing

HCA's are responsible for making warrant limit determinations within the guidance below; however, any 1102 Contracting Series or 1105 Purchasing Series AWF member awarded a Purchasing warrant may only be issued within the limits shown below and up to \$1 million FAR Part 8 Established Sources, but they must have at least two consecutive years of experience as an 1102 or an 1105 and must possess a minimum current Level II Purchasing Certification (Purchasing Certification is Level I or II only, no higher).

*Warrants – Purchasing		Requirements
Threshold	Job Series	Purchasing Level (must be current)
Up to \$25,000	GS-1105	I
Up to \$150,000	GS-1105	II

Financial Assistance

HCA's are responsible for making warrant limit determinations within the guidance below; however, any 1102 Contracting Series or 1109 Grants Management Series AWF member awarded a Financial Assistance warrant must have met the following minimum requirements for the limitations listed below:

Warrants – Financial Assistance		Requirements	
Grants & Cooperative Agreements	Funding & Continuation Actions excl. Renewals	Minimum Years of FFA Experience	Minimum CFA Level (must be current)
Up to \$150,000	Up to \$150,000	GS-1102 or 1109 series (GS-05/07)	I
Up to \$10,000,000	Up to \$10,000,000	GS-1102 or 1109 series (GS-09/11) plus 2 years' experience	II
Up to Unlimited	Up to Unlimited	GS-1102 or 1109 series (GS-12 and above) 4 years' experience	III
Technology Investment Agreements		GS-1102 series/FAC-C Level III/ 7 years' experience	IV

Personal Property Sales (includes Lab Equipment Donation Program (LEDP))

Warrants – Personal Property		Requirements	
LEDP	Sales	Minimum Years of Experience	Minimum Property Management Level (must be current)
Up to SAT	Up to SAT	GS-1103 2 years' experience	I
Up to \$500,000	Up to \$500,000	GS-1103 3 years' experience	II
Up to Unlimited	Up to Unlimited	GS-1103 5 years' experience	III

Real Estate Contracting Officer (RECO) Warrants

Warrants – Real Estate			Requirements	
Acquisition	Leasing	Disposal	Minimum Years of RE Experience	Minimum CRS Level (must be current)
Up to SAT (\$250,000)	Up to SAT (\$250,000)	Up to SAT (\$250,000)	GS-1170 1 year of experience	I
Up to \$1,000,000	Up to \$1,000,000	Up to \$1,000,000	GS-1170 3 years' experience	II
Up to Unlimited	Up to Unlimited	Up to Unlimited	GS-1170 6 years' experience	III

Revocation (or Termination)

If the SPE chooses to revoke a contracting officer's warrant for failure to maintain certification, the SPE will direct the HCA to revoke the warrant. The HCA must notify the warrant holder in writing when the revocation is to be effective, providing enough time to ensure that no unauthorized obligations are made, and counsel the warrant holder on how the warrant holder can correct the situation. The warrant holder must acknowledge this notification in writing. For more information, refer to [DOE Order 541.1C](#).

Level I and Level II Changes pursuant to the [June 27, 2018 Memorandum](#) issued by Director, Office of Asset Management and Head of Contracting Activity for Real Property Management.