



January 27, 2021

United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Departmental Administration

Office of Contracting and Procurement

Procurement Operations Division

301 S. Howes Street, Suite 321 Fort Collins, CO 80521

ACQUISITION OPERATING PROCEDURE (AOP)

FROM: Richard R. Jiron Mission Area Senior Contracting Official

RICHARD JIRON

Digitally signed by RICHARD JIRON Date: 2021.01.27 12:06:12 -07'00'

SUBJECT: AOP No. 2: Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting Officer Representative (FAC-COR)

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Acquisition Operating Procedure (AOP) is to provide guidance for the request of the Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting Officer Representative (FAC-COR) in the Federal Acquisition Institute Training and Application System (FAITAS). FAC-COR Certification is an assurance that the individual has the experience, education, training and personal factors such as business acumen, judgment, character, reputation, and ethics to perform selected COR duties.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This AOP is effective on January 27, 2021 .

REVISIONS: This AOP is canceled in its entirety. The Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) Website at www.fai.gov provides the most current information on the Federal Acquisition Certification (FAC) program relating to the certification requirements, training and development opportunities that continuously improves the program. In addition, the USDA Contracting Desk Book at https://www.dm.usda.gov/procurement/policy/index.htm incorporated the other related certification guidance (e.g., CPARS, continuous learning within 4-year period, COR delegation/designation memo).

This AOP replaces AOP No. 2, dated February 20, 2015.

AUTHORITIES: Federal Acquisition Regulation 1.602-2; Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) memo, Revisions to the FAC-COR, dated September 6, 2011; Procurement Advisory Numbers 85A, Acquisition Workforce Training, Certification, Delegation and Management System, dated October 2, 2014, and 112B, Continuous Learning Management for USDA's Acquisition Workforce, dated October 21, 2014.

CONTRACT RISK RELATED FAC-COR LEVEL

The CO will consider the risk factors (e.g. complexity, contract type) to help determine the appropriate COR level for a specific contract during the acquisition planning. The CO may use the COR Appointment Criteria Matrix (Attachment I).¹

Table with 3 columns: COR Experience, Contract Risk. Rows include Level I (0 year, Low risk contracts), Level II (1 year, Perform general project management activities), and Level III (2 years, Perform significant program management activities).

1 Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) memo, Revisions to the FAC-COR, dated September 6, 2011.

		complexity with significant/major acquisition investment as defined by OMB Circular A-11/agency mission critical contracts
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◆ **TRAINING:**

- 1) ~~In addition to the required COR training listed on the www.fai.gov website:

 - a. ~~A new COR must complete the CPARS Overview, and CPARS Quality and Narrative courses.~~
 - b. ~~Individuals holding a current FAC COR certification must complete the CPARS Overview, and CPARS Quality and Narrative courses within their current Certification 2-year continuous learning period, if the courses were not previously completed.~~~~
- 2) ~~The CPARS courses are available at www.epars.gov, under the *Training* tab.~~
- 3) ~~The same or similar continuous learning should not be repeated within a 4-year period, and will not be applied to retain the FAC COR certification. Continuous learning relevant to the work to be performed as a COR under the contract should be completed.~~
- 4) ~~Attachment 2 is a list of recommended continuous learning.~~

◆ **EXPERIENCE:**

~~The COR Delegation memorandum issued, in writing by the Contracting Officer is the appropriate document that lists the roles and responsibilities, and the delegation performance period for the years of experience that the individual served as COR under the specified contract. AOP No. 13, Delegation of COR provides the guidance for the delegation and is available at <http://www.dm.usda.gov/oppm/pod/awc.htm>.~~

◆ **PROCESS TO REQUEST FAC COR:**

1. ~~View the FAC COR certification requirements, training, continuous learning, etc. at www.fai.gov, under the *Certification* tab.~~
2. ~~Register and request the FAC COR Certification at www.fai.gov, under the *FAITAS* tab, and then *Manage Career* tab. The User Guides are found under the *Help* tab in FAITAS.~~
3. ~~In FAITAS, attach the documents indicated below to the *Supporting Documentation* link:

 - a) ~~*Education:* A college/university degree and/or 24 semester hour in business courses is not required. Training certificates should not be attached in this field.~~
 - b) ~~*Experience:* Attach the COR Delegation memorandum in this field. If needed, contact the appropriate Contracting Officer to obtain a copy for your file.~~~~

e) ~~Training:~~ Courses completed in FAITAS are shown under the *Training History* tab and ~~do not need to be manually uploaded with the request in FAITAS. Attach copies of training certificates for courses completed outside of FAITAS.~~

◆ ~~SUPERVISOR OF THE COR:~~

a. ~~Supervisors must ensure that designated individuals with the technical responsibilities and duties for their program areas are fully trained and qualified to help alleviate possible delays in carrying out the contractual requirements. By designating an individual to be a COR, the supervisor is confirming the qualifications of the individual.~~

b. ~~Supervisors should designate individuals with adequate technical and management experience to accommodate the complexities or visibility of the contract. Supervisors should assess the COR's experience as it relates to the type of contract the COR will be managing to determine if additional training is needed, e.g., performance-based acquisition, earned value management, incentive contracts, green purchasing.~~

◆ ~~EXPIRATION DATE:~~ This AOP will remain in effect until canceled.

[END]

COR Appointment Criteria Matrix

Risk Factor	Little or no risk associated with project	Significant or high risk associated with project
1 Sensitivity or Complexity of What is Being Procured	Oversight confined to basic inspection and acceptance (e.g., COTS or standard supplies)	Highly complex requirements; professional and technical services closely associated with inherently governmental functions; critical function; 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

RECOMMENDED CONTINUOUS LEARNING COURSES

The Federal Acquisition Institute webpage at www.fai.gov offers online, webinar and classroom courses “free of charge” in the Federal Acquisition Institute Training Application System (FAITAS). The site lists the courses required to obtain the certification. The list below (titles may be same/similar) is not all-inclusive, but courses offered by commercial vendors, colleges/ universities, etc., that can be completed to obtain additional instructions pertinent to the duties of the COR during the acquisition process of the requirement.

Market Research for Technical Personnel	CPARS Overview
Writing Performance Work Statements	CPARS Quality and Narrative Writing
Writing Statement of Work	Changes under Government Contracts
Developing Independent Government Cost Estimates	Fundamental of System Acquisition Management
Work Breakdown Structure	Contract Administration
Cost Estimating for Technical Personnel	Managing IT Projects
Software Cost Estimating	Patent, Technical Data and Computer Software
Federal Appropriation Law	Customer Service Skills and Techniques
Anti deficiency Act	Best Value Source Section Using Tradeoffs
Ethics in Federal Contracting	Scheduling
Contracting Organizational Conflict of Interest	Risk Analysis and Management
Contracting for the Rest of Us	Earned Value Management
COR with a Mission Focus	Value Engineering
COR Courses I, II, III	Performance Based Payment Overview
COR Workshops & Refresher	Prompt Payment Act and Voucher Examination
Bio-Preferred Requirements	Progress Payments
Green Purchasing	Contract Claims
Small Business Program Contracting	Construction Claims