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PROGRAM GUIDANCE

PROGRAM: Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG)

FOR: All Tribal Government Leaders and Tribally Designated Housing Entities (TDHEs)

for 

FROM: Rodger J. Boyd, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Native American Programs, PN

TOPIC: Federal Supply Sources

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Guidance is to provide information to tribes, tribally designated housing entities (TDHE) and Area ONAP staff about the General Services Administration (GSA) federal supply sources now available as a result of the change to the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (NAHASDA). The Public and Indian Housing Notice 2009-50 issued on December 3, 2009, indicated that information would be forthcoming.

BACKGROUND: The Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-411) added the following to section 101 of NAHASDA.

“(j) Federal Supply Sources.—For purposes of section 501 of title 40, United States Code, on election by the applicable Indian tribe—

(1) each Indian tribe or tribally designated housing entity shall be considered to be an Executive agency in carrying out any program, service, or other activity under this Act; and

(2) each Indian tribe or tribally designated housing entity and each employee of the Indian tribe or tribally designated housing entity shall have access to sources of supply on the same basis as employees of an Executive agency.”

Section 501 of title 40, United States Code, provides that the GSA Administrator shall procure and supply personal property and non-personal services for executive agencies to use in the proper discharge of their responsibilities, and perform functions related to procurement and supply including contracting, inspection, storage, issue, property identification and classification, transportation and traffic management, management of public utility services, and repairing and converting.

FEDERAL SUPPLY SOURCE: GSA is the centralized federal procurement agency designed to help federal agencies obtain goods and services. GSA provides acquisition and supply chain solutions for a wide range of high-quality, brand name products ranging from paper clips to computer equipment. GSA negotiates Multiple Award Schedule contracts, also called GSA Schedule and Federal Supply Schedule contracts, with the intent of acquiring the contractors' most favored customer price. GSA Schedules offer customers direct delivery of millions of state-of-the-art, high-quality commercial supplies and services at volume discount pricing. In order to ensure that they receive the best value at the lowest overall cost when using GSA Schedule contracts, buyers are encouraged and empowered to seek price reductions, not only for orders that exceed the maximum order threshold or when establishing blanket purchase agreements, but also when circumstances warrant, such as when a lower price is available elsewhere. All products available through GSA Schedule contracts are pre-negotiated with "ceiling" pricing, enabling buyers to negotiate pricing to meet their unique needs. Advantages of using GSA Schedule contracts include:

- GSA has determined that the vendors are responsible.
- GSA has determined prices under the Schedule contracts are fair and reasonable.
- Schedule contracts have been awarded in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.
- Schedule contracts offer a wide selection of state-of-the-art commercial supplies and services.
- The administrative time for procurement is reduced.

GSA has a number of procurement tools available to buyers. These tools include GSA Advantage, e-Buy, GSA eLibrary, GSA SmartPay Charge Card Program, and the ability to establish an Activity Address Code. Additionally, GSA offers the Center for Acquisition Excellence which provides information and training on how to use the GSA system.

GSA Advantage (www.gsaadvantage.gov): GSA Advantage is an online shopping and ordering system. GSA Advantage provides online access to millions of products and services from thousands of federal contractors including information technology, office products, tools, hardware, medical equipment, and furniture. Using GSA Advantage ensures that all customers, even those in remote locations, can order the latest technology and quality supplies and services, and will receive GSA awarded prices and deal with GSA sources. The system provides a powerful search engine to search by keyword, browse by category, research and purchase items, check status of orders, and reorder previously purchased items. To purchase through GSA Advantage, tribes and TDHEs need a GSA SmartPay charge card or an Activity Address Code. To register on GSA Advantage, tribal and TDHE employees should:

- Go to www.gsaadvantage.gov, then select register;
- Indicate you are a "Federal Government customer";
- Select the "Department of Housing and Urban Development" as the agency on the member registration; and
- Select "Department of Housing and Urban Development" as the bureau code.
- Complete the registration form.

It is important to note, GSA Advantage can be used to browse and do market research to identify suppliers and costs, and then items can be purchased by contacting the GSA contractor directly using a tribal or TDHE purchase order or tribal or TDHE credit card. If you are going to purchase outside

the GSA Advantage system you do not need to register in GSA Advantage. Simply go to the GSA Advantage website and browse.

E-Buy (www.gsa.gov/e-buy): E-Buy, a component of GSA Advantage, is an electronic request for quote (RFQ) system designed to allow buyers to prepare RFQs, directly on-line, for a wide range of services and products offered through GSA's Multiple Award Schedule program. E-Buy allows RFQs and quotes to be exchanged electronically between buyers and GSA Schedule contractors. Each RFQ is posted in the e-Buy system for a designated period of time and is assigned to a GSA Schedule Special Item Number (SIN) category by the buyer. The category assignment determines which Schedule contractors (sellers) may receive the email notice to submit quotations. Sellers are automatically listed under their awarded SINs. Buyers may choose to notify all sellers under a particular SIN category or choose to notify a lesser number of sellers. Once an RFQ has closed, buyers evaluate and accept the quotation that represents the best value. Buyers then issue an order to the contractor whose quotation was accepted. To gain access, buyers use their GSA Advantage user identification and password.

Tribes need to have an internet domain name suffix designating them as native sovereign nation government entities (an example of this is would be www.muscogeenation-nsn.gov). Tribal entities apply for the .gov domain name suffix through the Office of the Chief Information Officer at the Bureau of Indian Affairs. More information may be obtained at www.dotgov.gov.

GSA eLibrary (www.gsaelibrary.gsa.gov): GSA eLibrary serves as an online source of schedule contract award information searchable by contractor's name, contract number, special item number, schedule number, or keyword. GSA eLibrary provides an alphabetical listing of available contractors, allowing customers to easily locate all schedule and technology contracts for a particular company. An updated category guide is designed to facilitate searches for specific groups of items. The category structure makes it easy to find groups of vendors that can fulfill specific needs. GSA eLibrary provides GSA Schedule details, provides easy access to specific contract terms and conditions, links to vendor catalogs and product lists in GSA Advantage.

GSA SmartPay (www.gsa.gov/smartpay): GSA SmartPay program provides charge cards services through master contracts that have been negotiated with three major banks. The banks are Citibank, US Bank, and JP Morgan Chase. Through these contracts, agencies and organizations can issue or join a task order to obtain charge card products and services which may include:

- **Purchase cards:** Purchase cards are used to buy supplies and services. All purchase cards are centrally billed to the tribe or TDHE. A purchase card or an Activity Address Code is required to purchase items through the GSA Advantage system.
- **Travel cards:** Travel cards are used specifically to pay for travel and travel-related expenses for tribal or TDHE employees on official business. There are two types of travel cards, centrally billed accounts and individually billed accounts. Centrally billed accounts are generally used to manage the travel plans for a group of people or can be used for airline or hotel booking, and are billed directly to the tribe or TDHE. Usage of centrally billed accounts will vary by individual tribe or TDHE policy. Individually billed accounts are issued to individual travelers who are responsible for the payment of the card statement. Individually billed account travel cardholders must file a voucher in accordance with the travel policy in order to be reimbursed by the tribe or TDHE. Individually billed account cardholders must pay their travel card statement in full regardless of whether they have been reimbursed by the tribe or TDHE. Travel cards also allow for tribes or TDHEs to utilize and access the

government airfares through the Airline City Pair Program, featuring no blackout periods, last seat availability and fully refundable tickets (www.gsa.gov/citypairs).

- Fleet cards: Fleet cards are used to pay for fuel and vehicle maintenance expenses for tribal or TDHE vehicles and equipment. The fleet cards are centrally billed accounts.
- Integrated cards: Integrated cards are those cards which have multiple business lines integrated onto one piece of plastic. For example, an individual may have an integrated charge card which allows them to make office supply purchases as well as pay for travel expenses all on the same account.

For more information on how to participate and utilize this program, please visit the GSA SmartPay website, email the GSA SmartPay Customer Service Team at gsa_smartpay@gsa.gov or call the GSA SmartPay Customer Support phone line at 703-605-2808.

Activity Address Code (AAC): AAC is another payment method that may be used on the GSA Advantage to purchase items with National Stock Numbers (NSN) through GSA Global Supply (GSA Stock Program). An AAC is required if a tribe or TDHE wishes to purchase products and services on GSA Advantage and be billed through the US Treasury's Intra-Governmental Payment and Collection (IPAC) System. To apply for an AAC, the tribe or TDHE must submit an application to the Area ONAP. A list of contacts within the Area ONAP is attached (Attachment A).

The application must be on tribal letterhead signed by the tribal chairperson or other appropriate senior tribal official for a tribal application; or on TDHE letterhead signed the TDHE Executive Director or other appropriate senior TDHE official for a TDHE application.

The application must include the grant recipient name, grant number, billing terms and shipping and billing addresses; and should identify the individuals authorized to use the AAC on behalf of the tribe or TDHE.

The Area ONAP will review the application to ensure that all required information is completed and approved by an appropriate tribal or TDHE official and then the application will be forwarded to HUD's AAC point of contact in HUD Headquarters with a recommendation. Questions regarding the AAC should be sent to the Area ONAP's Point of Contact. The ONAP Administrator will forward applications to:

US Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street S.W., Room 6210
Washington, DC 20410
Attention: Nathan Barnes
Phone: (202) 708-1583 extension: 7283

HUD's AAC Point of Contact will forward the application to GSA Federal Acquisition Service. GSA will notify your POC when your AAC is assigned. AACs are firmly controlled and will only be assigned when the application is submitted to GSA by an authorized point of contact. Once you submit your application and would like to check the status, your first contact would be HUD's AAC Point Of Contact. If not available, you may send an email to ordermgmt@gsa.gov to request an update on your application.

Once an AAC has been assigned, a password must be requested to order on GSA Advantage using the AAC. Follow the steps below to request an AAC password.

- Login to GSA Advantage
- Select Profile from the GSA Advantage menu.
- Select Edit Methods of Payment
- Select Apply for a Password
- Complete the Password request form.
- The ACC Password will be sent by electronic mail within 48 hours.

Center for Acquisition Excellence (www.gsa.gov/cae): The Center for Acquisition Excellence is an electronic learning site available free of charge 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to provide customer agencies with online training and resources regarding GSA acquisition vehicles, policies and guidance. The training opportunities include those listed below as well as others:

- Using GSA Schedules: GSA Schedule Customers and Cooperative Purchasing Program courses show how to gain access to vendors, reduce acquisition cycle time, and purchase quality supplies and services at the best possible prices.
- Using Government-wide Acquisition Contracts: The Government-wide Acquisition Contracts Overview and Commits NexGen seminars are designed to instruct users on how to properly use Government-wide Acquisition Contracts vehicles to provide a total solution for their information technology requirements.

INDIAN PREFERENCE UNDER NAHASDA: 24 CFR 1000.52 provides that to the greatest extent feasible, recipients shall give preference in the award of contracts for projects funded through the IHBG program to Indian organizations and Indian-owned economic enterprises. This section further provides that a recipient will use a procurement system that is based upon adopted policies and procedures that will provide preference in procurement activities consistent with the requirements of section 7(b) of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act; or will advertise for bids or proposals limited to qualified Indian organizations and Indian-owned economic enterprises; or will use a 2-stage preference procedure that will determine if there is sufficient interest from Indian owned enterprises to warrant a solicitation limited to Indian organizations and Indian-owned economic enterprises. Recipients remain subject to the Indian preference requirements of 24 CFR 1000.52 when using the GSA system. An “Indian-owned economic enterprise” is any Indian- owned commercial, industrial, or business activity established or organized for the purpose of profit, except that Indian ownership must constitute not less than 51 percent of the enterprise. An “Indian organization” is the governing body of an Indian tribe or entity established or recognized by such governing body.

Socio-economic Preferences within GSA Systems: It is easy to identify and solicit bids by certain socio-economic preferences using the GSA ordering tools. The socio-economic preference classifications are small businesses, veteran-owned small businesses, service disabled veteran-owned small businesses, women-owned small businesses, Small Business Administration (SBA) certified Historically Underutilized Business Zone firms, SBA certified 8(a) firms or SBA certified small disadvantaged businesses.

The best method a buyer can use to identify Indian organizations and Indian-owned enterprises that have obtained a GSA contract is by going to the portion of the Small Business Administration

website devoted to the search of Small Businesses (http://dsbs.sba.gov/dsbs/search/dsp_dsbs.cfm). One of the criteria allows a search for Indian-owned businesses and another to identify those who have a GSA contract (under Capabilities). Simply identify those Indian-owned businesses to be able to search for them when using the GSA ordering tools.

Another means of identifying Indian-owned businesses is by issuing a Request for Information using the e-Buy system. First, determine the GSA Schedule, Special Item Number that covers the product or service you require and select all contractors within that category. Enter a description of the desired product or service and add the following comment “searching for Indian-Owned businesses = please respond if you are Indian-Owned with not less than 51 percent Indian ownership and have the capabilities to supply the product or perform the service desired.”

QUESTIONS: Questions regarding NAHASDA procurement requirements should be addressed to your Grants Management Specialist in the Area Office of Native American Programs. Consider bringing e-Buy training to your purchasing staff by contacting your local GSA Customer Service Director at www.gsa.gov/csd. Questions regarding GSA usage by tribes and TDHEs should be addressed to Florence Francis at 520-205-2663 or florence.francis@gsa.gov or to the Customer Service Director assigned to your area at www.gsa.gov/csd.

| AREA ONAP POINTS OF CONTACT | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Alaska ONAP 3000 C Street, Suite 401 Anchorage, AK 99503 | Donna Hartley (907) 677-9880 |
| Eastern/Woodlands ONAP Metcalfe Federal Building 77 West Jackson Boulevard, Room 2400 Chicago, IL 60604-3507 | Manny Naanep (312) 913-8776 |
| Northern Plains ONAP UMB Plaza 1670 Broadway, 22 nd Floor Denver, CO 80202-4801 | Edward Vaughan (303) 672-5179 |
| Northwest ONAP 909 First Avenue, Suite 300 Seattle, WA 98104-1000 | Tom Carney (206) 220-6204 |
| Southern Plains ONAP 301 NW 6 th Street, Suite 200 Oklahoma City, OK 73102-2807 | Virginia Fredman (405) 609-8445 |
| Southwest ONAP One North Central Avenue, Suite 600 Phoenix, AZ 85004 Attn: 9EPI | Marlin Knight (602) 379-7226 |