

# PTAC TALK

A newsletter of the Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning & Development Commission's Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC).

Proudly serving the northwestern Pennsylvania counties of Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango and Warren.



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## YOUR NORTHWEST COMMISSION PTAC TEAM:

### Robyn Young

Government Contracting Manager  
robyny@northwestpa.org

## Happy New Year!

*Wishing our clients, colleagues & community a happy and prosperous 2018! Thank you for another good year in 2017; we look forward to continuing to serve Northwest PA by providing PTAC services & government contracting assistance in 2018.*



## New Government Contracting Specialist Joins PTAC Program

In December, Robyn Young, PTAC Manager, announced the hiring of another Government Contracting Specialist to the PTAC, bringing our program back to a three-person staff.

**Kelly Weaver** will be joining the program as of January 2, 2018. Kelly has been at the Northwest Commission since 2015, having previously held a position in the Commission's Fiscal Department.

**Congratulations and welcome, Kelly!** The staff of the Northwest Commission join in congratulating Kelly; we look forward to working with her in her new role.

## Changes to PTAC Counselors' Assigned Counties

**Effective January 3, 2016**, the geographical areas assigned to the Northwest Commission Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) counselors will change as we transition to a three-person staff again.

Businesses in **Erie and Warren counties** will be assisted by Government Contracting Manager **Robyn Young** who may be reached at 814-677-4800 ext. 130, or by email at [robyny@northwestpa.org](mailto:robyny@northwestpa.org).

Those located in **Clarion, Crawford, & Lawrence counties** will be assisted by Government Contracting Specialist **Melissa Becker**, [melissab@northwestpa.org](mailto:melissab@northwestpa.org), 814-677-4800 ext. 124.

Our newest staff member, **Kelly Weaver** will be working with businesses located in **Forest, Venango & Mercer**. As Kelly is training in her new position, Robyn & Melissa will be working with her while assisting clients in these counties. Kelly's contact information is [kellyw@northwestpa.org](mailto:kellyw@northwestpa.org), 814-677-4800 ext. 108.

## Melissa Becker

Government Contracting Specialist  
melissab@northwestpa.org

## Kelly Weaver

Government Contracting Specialist  
kellyw@northwestpa.org

### Visit our website:

<http://northwestpa.org/government-contracting/>

### Follow us on social media:

[www.facebook.com/nwcommission/](http://www.facebook.com/nwcommission/)

[twitter.com/nwpa\\_commission](https://twitter.com/nwpa_commission)



*The Northwest Commission PTAC, which serves as a Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC), is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA).*

## QUICK UPDATES Federal:

### Once More: Cybersecurity Regulations

More & more often, federal contractors and subs are hearing (or WILL hear) the question "**Are you DFARS compliant?**"

Do you know what this means? Are you familiar with the FAR & DFARS cybersecurity clauses? Because of newer rules, "DFARS compliant" refers to the DoD cybersecurity

## Minimum Wage for Federal Contractors: Annual Update

On September 15, 2017, the Department of Labor published a **Notice** in the Federal Register to announce that, **beginning January 1, 2018, the Executive Order 13658 minimum wage rate is increased to \$10.35 per hour** (82 FR 43408).



This Executive Order minimum wage rate generally must be paid to workers performing work on or in connection with covered contracts. Additionally, beginning January 1, 2018, tipped employees performing work on or in connection with covered contracts generally must be paid a minimum cash wage of \$7.25 per hour.

#### SOURCES & Additional Reading:

- <https://www.dol.gov/whd/flsa/eo13658/index.htm>
- <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/09/15/2017-19668/establishing-a-minimum-wage-for-contractors-notice-of-rate-change-in-effect-as-of-january-1-2018>

## 2018 NDAA – Notable Provisions for Federal Contractors

On December 12, 2017, President Trump signed the fiscal year 2018 (FY18) National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) into law (Pub. L. 115-91). An annual defense policy bill, the NDAA is a critical piece of legislation for the contracting community because it provides the funding authority for programs and activities of the Department of Defense (DoD), the largest procurer of goods and services within the US government. In addition, the NDAA is a vehicle for encouraging in some cases, and requiring in others, changes to both DoD and government-wide procurement practices.



Following are some notable provisions of the 2018 NDAA for federal contractors. (See our list of "Sources & Additional Reading" below for even more information).

### Enhanced Debriefings

Section 818 of the NDAA directs the Secretary of Defense to revise the Defense Supplement to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (DFARS) to provide additional post-award debriefing rights to offerors. Specifically, Section 818 provides disappointed offerors with the opportunity to submit additional, follow-up questions within two business days of a post-award debriefing. The agency is required to answer these questions, in writing, within five business days of receipt.

### Use of e-Commerce Portals

Section 846 of the 2018 NDAA requires DoD to establish e-commerce portals "for the purposes of enhancing competition, expediting procurement, enabling market research, and ensuring reasonable pricing of commercial products."

regulations that took effect 12/31/17 (and that we've been reporting on throughout 2017). Remember to contact the PTAC for info, assistance & guidance – more & more updated info & resources are becoming available that we are happy to share with our clients!

## 2018 NDAA Makes Big Changes to HUBZone Program

The 2018 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) made some significant changes to the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone) Program.

Most of the changes will not take effect until January 1, 2020, but one important change is effective immediately: the current HUBZone maps will be "frozen" and will not change until at least January 1, 2020. This means that areas that currently are designated as HUBZone (or in redesignated status) will remain HUBZones until 2020.

### READ MORE AT:

<http://www.pilieromazza.com/2018-ndaa-makes-big-changes-to-hubzone-program>

...And please contact the PTAC for help with your HUBZone questions.

## QUICK UPDATES State:

### DGS SB & SDB Certification Period Extended to 2 Years

Effective in 2017, the Pennsylvania Department of General Services (DGS) Bureau of Diversity, Inclusion & Small Business Opportunities (BDISBO) extended the eligibility period of firms certified in the Small Business Contracting Program from one to two years.

All firms certifying or recertifying as a Small Business (SB) or Small

This provision will require DoD to contract with multiple commercial online marketplaces for the procurement of certain commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) products. These marketplaces must provide procurement oversight controls, including the ability to screen suppliers and products to ensure compliance with existing laws. The measure also requires the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) to report to Congress on small business participation in the marketplaces.

It is unclear how marketplace acquisitions will comply with mandatory sourcing obligations such as the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act, the Berry Amendment, or the Buy American Act, or how these transactions will affect DoD's small business goals.

While the potential impact of this program is significant, Section 846 contemplates the rollout of this program to occur over several years and limits eligible purchases to those not exceeding the simplified acquisition threshold. Additionally, at this point, the willingness of private e-commerce portals to participate in this program remains to be seen.

The General Services Administration (GSA) has 90 days to implement "phase I" of Section 846, under which GSA must develop a plan and schedule for creating e-commerce portals.

*To assist GSA and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in drafting the Phase I implementation plan, interested parties are invited to submit written comments -- See the article below for information.*

### Other Notable Provisions

The 2018 NDAA includes a provision requiring the administrator of the Small Business Administration (SBA) to conduct a study and submit a report to Congress on the utilization of small businesses (WOSBs, HUBZones, 8(a)s, and Service Disabled Veterans) with respect to Multiple Award Contracts (MACs).

Section 811 modifies the requirements for providing cost and pricing data.

Sections 805 and 806 increase the simplified acquisition threshold to \$250,000 and the micro-purchase threshold to \$10,000.

Section 832 prohibits DoD from using a lowest price technically acceptable source selection process for the engineering and manufacturing development contract of a major defense acquisition program.

The Act also includes changes to the HUBZone program – see article in the column to the left.

#### SOURCES & Additional Reading:

- <https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/the-2018-ndaa-in-detail-what-64904/>
- <http://www.mondaq.com/unitedstates/x/659458/Government+Contracts+Procurement+PPP/What+Defense+Contractors+Should+Expect+Important+Changes+in+the+2018+NDAA>
- <https://www.wileyrein.com/newsroom-articles-NDAA-for-Fiscal-Year-2018-Includes-Acquisition-Reforms-that-Present-Potential-Risks-and-Benefits-for-Federal-Contractors.html>
- <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/hr2810/summary>
- <http://www.aptac-us.org/media/NDAA-F18-final.pdf>

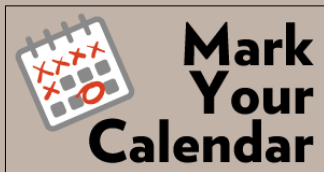


Diverse Business (SDB) on or after July 25, 2017 will be granted an expiration date of two years upon the successful submittal of the SB application.

All certifications will expire on the last day of the month of expiration.

More info at <http://www.dgs.pa.gov/Businesses/Small%20Diverse%20Business%20Program/Documents/2-Year%20Expiration%20Notice.pdf>

Feel free to contact the PTAC with any questions on the Commonwealth's SB/SDB program.



## UPCOMING NATIONAL EVENTS that may be of interest:

### DLA Land & Maritime's Training, Knowledge & Opportunities (TKO) Seminars

Offered quarterly—

**2018 DATES:** March 13-14; May 15-16; September 11-12; November 6-7

**Location:** Columbus, OH

**Event website:**

<https://tko.dla.mil/>

The TKO Seminars offer 2 days of sessions on teaching vendors how to start doing business with the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA). Vendors will be informed on how to find open solicitations, how to submit a quote through the DLA Internet Bid Board System (DIBBS), the procedures for viewing/downloading drawings, how to use Wide Area Workflow/iRAP to get paid, and more.

## GSA Invites Industry Comment by Jan. 9 on Upcoming e-Commerce Portals



In an effort to create a new online market for government contracts, the General Services Administration (GSA) has invited industry to comment on the development and design of e-commerce portals for commercial procurements.

GSA's request for comments was published on December 15, 2017. This comment period provides a valuable opportunity for contractors to advise GSA on what regulations and business practices should apply to e-commerce portals, which will likely serve as a platform for billions of dollars' worth of government business.

**GSA and OMB are encouraging respondents to submit comments before the public meeting on January 9, 2018**, as the submissions will help GSA and OMB prepare informed questions for the public meeting discussions. All comments must be submitted by January 16, 2018 to allow the government to take them into account before drafting the Phase I implementation plan.

**For more information and instruction on how to submit comments, please visit the following webpages:**

- <https://interact.gsa.gov/blog/commercial-e-commerce-portal-request-written-comments>
- <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/12/15/2017-26964/procurement-through-commercial-e-commerce-portals>

#### SOURCES:

- <http://gtpac.org/tag/ndaa/>
- <https://www.insidegovernmentcontracts.com/2017/12/7399/>

## Upcoming Regional Events



Watch for Northwest Commission PTAC events at <http://nwpaptac.ecenterdirect.com/events>

### PA DGS and PennDOT Disparity Study Public Meeting

**Date:** January 31, 2018

**Time:** 9:00a – 2:00p

**Location:** Erie City Hall, 626 State Street, Erie

The Pennsylvania Department of General Services (DGS) and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) are holding Disparity Study Public Meetings across PA this month. This is an opportunity for DBEs and other Diverse and Small businesses to provide testimony on experiences with contracting and doing business with the Commonwealth and PennDOT. *(A public meeting will also be held in Pittsburgh on Jan. 30)*

**NOTE:** This is not a NW Commission PTAC event; **for more information, please email [PAdisparitystudy@BBCresearch.com](mailto:PAdisparitystudy@BBCresearch.com)** and/or visit the [Commonwealth of PA Disparity Study webpage](#).

**All sessions are held at DLA Land and Maritime, located in Columbus, Ohio free of charge.** The only costs attendees may incur is lodging, food and transportation.

Visit the [event website](#) for details and registration.

### **NASA Midwest Business Conference**

**Dates:** July 17-18, 2018  
**Location:** Ohio University, Athens, OH  
**Event website:** TBA

Attention contractors in OH, PA, WV & KY: NASA is working with multiple PTACs to organize one centrally-located event that will include NASA Industry Day, networking, and matchmaking sessions. Look for more details & event announcements coming soon.

### **28<sup>th</sup> Annual Government Procurement Conference**

**Date:** April 19, 2018  
**Location:** Washington, DC  
**Event website:**  
[www.fbcinc.com/procurement](http://www.fbcinc.com/procurement)

Mark your calendars for Thursday, April 19, 2018 to join hundreds of small businesses, prime contractors and government agencies looking for new business and partnership opportunities.

Visit [www.fbcinc.com/procurement](http://www.fbcinc.com/procurement) for updates.

External links provided within this issue of *PTAC TALK* do not constitute an endorsement by the Northwest Commission or the Northwest Commission's PTAC of the opinions, products or services presented, or any sites linked to it.

### **Proposal Preparation Training**

*2-PART WEBINAR SERIES*

**Dates:** February 21 & 22, 2018  
**Times:** TBA  
**Location:** Webinar

Learn how to read a federal government solicitation and prepare a proposal in a way that is both compliant and competitive. This free 2-part course will provide you with the knowledge of understanding the components of solicitations used by the government, steps on preparing a request for proposal (RFP), making a bid/no bid decision and importance of past performance.

This webinar series is intended to be an introductory to intermediate level course. Presented by Robyn Young, Government Contracting Manager at the Northwest Commission PTAC. Sponsored by the Small Business Administration (SBA) Pittsburgh District Office.

Full details & registration information coming soon to <https://nwptac.ecenterdirect.com/events/>.



**SAVE THE DATE:**  
***Dynamic Networking for Small Business returns to Erie in 2018!***

**DATE:** June 27, 2018  
**TIME:** TBD  
**LOCATION:** Ambassador Banquet and Conference Center, Erie

**Dynamic Networking for Small Business** (“DyNet”) is a day-long matchmaking & training event offering small businesses the opportunity to network directly with government agencies and large prime contractors.

This networking event makes a multitude of small business resources available to busy entrepreneurs all in one location and is an outstanding opportunity to encourage small business growth and success.

**Stay tuned for more announcements in the coming weeks!**



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