

Additional Viewer Submitted Questions and Answers

Ability One

1. Are we required to purchase from Ability One before FSSI? How does the FSSI OS3 IDIQ contract ensure that items on the NIB procurement list are purchased appropriately?

FSSI OS3 supports the AbilityOne program. All FSSI OS3 contractors are AbilityOne certified distributors. All purchases off of FSSI OS3 meet AbilityOne and all other federal procurement mandates. OS3 contractors are prohibited from providing Essentially the Same (ETS) items as a substitute for AbilityOne items.

2. Can FSSI OS3 items be bought through your local Ability One stores on a Government facility?

Local base stores are not FSSI OS3 vendors. You can meet AbilityOne mandates by purchasing from FSSI OS3. All FSSI OS3 contractors are AbilityOne certified distributors and therefore meet all AbilityOne requirements including blocking Essentially The Same (ETS) as AbilityOne purchases.

Email

3. Is there a plan to combine GSA Advantage and DOD Email?

GSA and DOD personnel are currently discussing this issue.

OS2 vs OS3

4. Are there any differences in the ordering process between OS2 and OS3?

As in OS2, for OS3 we recommend purchasing your FSSI OS3 items from GSA Advantage. A new beneficial feature of OS3, which was not in OS2, is delivery order tier discounts for large dollar purchase orders calculated at checkout in Advantage. OS3 ordering procedures for large dollar orders fall under FAR Part 16 for OS3, not FAR Part 8 as in OS2.

5. My favorite OS2 vendor is not list as part of FSSI OS3. Can I still use them?

For a list of FSSI OS3 vendors, please visit gsa.gov/os3. OS3 was a full and open competition, and extensive competition was received. Not every proposal submitted received an award.

Meeting the Minimum

6. Is it ok to contact vendors directly to overwrite the minimum purchase requirement? It has been our agency's policy not to order supplies from vendors via phone .

You may contact vendors by phone, however, you should consult your agency's procurement policy regarding ordering specifics such as phone orders. You may also contact vendors via email. For vendor contact information, please visit gsa.gov/os3. The minimum order is \$100 however some OS3 have lower stated minimums. Federal purchasers are reminded that larger orders result in fewer administrative costs for both contractor, agency, and taxpayers.

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7. Our agency has remote offices with only one person assigned to the office (smaller than the 10 person example given in the presentation). Their office supply order would not meet the minimum order requirement unless they were to order more supplies than they need. Are they required to order off the FSSI contract, or are they able to purchase locally?

There are order minimums as low as \$25 from some vendors. If you cannot meet the \$25 order minimum, you may still make smaller purchases for a small fee. You should consult your agency's specific procurement policy or a supervisor regarding minimum order fees and non-FSSI purchases.

8. Should we attempt to consolidate orders and wait for \$100 or it is OK to not use FSSI?

There are order minimums as low as \$25 from some vendors. If you cannot meet the \$25 order minimum, you may still make smaller purchases for a small fee. It is best to consolidate orders so they are over \$100. You should consult your agency's specific procurement policy or a supervisor regarding minimum order fees and non-FSSI purchases.

Shipping/Delivery

9. Under GSA FSSI can you split an order to ship to 2 different locations?

Contractors are willing to accommodate customer requests. We recommend contacting them directly.

10. Why do vendors not ship when the order is received, with the exception of an item being back order?

Standard delivery is three to four business days ARO. You may contact the GSA if you cannot resolve a problem with a contractor.

11. How do I specify inside delivery using FSSI OS3?

Special instructions should be made clear on the order in a special note or remarks section. You may also wish to call/contact the contractor to confirm receipt of order and special instructions.

12. On delivery section, what does ARO mean?

After Receipt of Order (ARO) meaning the amount of time the contractor can begin to process your purchase request.

Requirements and Regulations

13. Is it now a requirement to order thru FSSI OS3 contracts? Are the OS3 IDIQ's mandatory to use for all office supplies?

Many federal agencies do have mandates for use of FSSI OS3, but you should consult your agency's specific procurement policy regarding FSSI OS3 mandates.

14. Do agencies need to get permission from the FSSI OS3 Contracting Officer before using this contract vehicle?

No.

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15. When ordering items from FSSI OS3 do you have to use the Reverse Auction process? Or do you have to use the process that your organization has in place?

For large dollar orders we recommend you use GSA Ebuy or GSA Reverse Auction. Please consult FAR 16.505(b) and your agency's specific procurement policy.

16. Let's say I have a dozen items to purchase. In looking for the lowest price, which is good for the taxpayer, I end up with 3 or 4 vendors. Is it ok to go with one vendor and pay slightly more, or do I need to stick with the lowest price and order from several vendors?

Please keep in mind that vendors do have order minimums ranging from \$25-\$100 dollars. Also keep in mind that additional Delivery Tier Order discounts begin at orders over \$300 for certain vendors. The responsibility of purchase selection remains with the federal purchaser.

17. Can you mix vendors from different CLIN's to fulfill an order for an item?

Yes, but please keep in mind that vendors do have order minimums ranging from \$25-\$100 dollars. Also keep in mind that additional Delivery Tier Order discounts begin at orders over \$300 for certain vendors. Each CLIN represents a separate contract.

18. Do we still need to conduct SAM searches before each purchase for FSSI OS3 vendors?

SAM verifications were conducted after receipt of proposals and immediately prior to contract award.

19. Is OS3 a GWAC or IDIQ?

FSSI is an Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) acquisition vehicle.

20. How would we get a vendor to become FSSI OS3 certified?

There will be on-ramping opportunities for additional vendors beginning 12-18 months from original contract award. Any future announcements will be publicly posted in FBO.gov.

"How to" in GSA Advantage and Troubleshooting

21. In GSA Advantage, how might a purchase cardholder share a shopping cart with another person so they may access and modify the list of items?

From the cart page in GSA Advantage, click on "Park Cart," then follow the instructions to share your cart with coworkers.

22. Please address the discrepancy related to situations where prices on GSA Advantage are higher than those listed on the vendor's direct site.

Please keep in mind that FSSI OS3 items meet all relevant federal procurement regulations and mandates. With this in mind, there may be similar items on the open market that do not meet these procurement mandates. As a result, it is recommended that federal customers use FSSI OS3 to ensure compliance with all federal mandates, acts, and orders.

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23. If I create a parked cart; is there any chance that those prices will change within those 2 weeks? In the past, when we have created an order at times the prices have changed by the time that we receive the bill.

We recommend that you park a cart for no longer than seven days, however, it is possible that prices could change in a shorter time than that.

24. How do I get an invoice after purchasing? I have been told that GSA Advantage does not give invoices.

If you are unable to download or copy your purchase order, we recommend a screenshot capture to record your transactions. Additionally, your packing slip received upon delivery should also be written evidence of the transaction with prices displayed.

25. Is there a way to use GSA Advantage without loading all the graphics and photos for those of us working with low bandwidth limitations?

Please visit the "Help" page on GSA Advantage for assistance with technical issues. Most users prefer the visual photo as a quick reference for description match.

26. I have problems on GSA Advantage finding toner cartridges. I enter the HP number and multiple lines of remanufactured cartridges come up. Is there a way to search for new versus remanufactured?

We recommend using the FSSI OS3 search filter on GSA Advantage. If you have trouble finding a specific item, we recommend consulting a vendor directly to see if they offer the item you are looking for. Keywords to look for are Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) or "compatible" will result in a brand name or equal search.

27. What if I cannot find the item I am looking for on FSSI OS3?

Please keep in mind that FSSI OS3 items meet all relevant federal procurement mandates. If you cannot find the item you are looking for we recommend considering a similar item.

Miscellaneous

28. When will this order process go into effect? What will happen to the items that are in stock?

FSSI OS3 is currently in effect. You may place orders via GSAAAdvantage! OS3 contractors provide direct delivery and have a wide array of office supplies.

29. How does this process connect to PCOLS?

The Purchase Card Online System is managed by the Department of Defense. Their website is <https://acc.dau.mil/pcols>. There is no direct interrelation except as the purchase card is an acceptable method of payment in OS3 transactions.

30. With 24 vendors, doesn't that restrict competition? How long is the period before new vendors are added to the contract?

The RFP for OS3 was posted on Fedbizopps.gov for all office supply vendors to review and submit proposals for a contract. Competition has already been conducted during the acquisition process resulting in the contract award of a diverse cadre to meet small business and achieve socio-

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economic goals for participating agencies. There will be on-ramping opportunities for additional vendors beginning 12-18 months from original contract award. Any future announcements will be publicly posted in FBO.gov. For more information on the benefits of OS3 and Strategic Sourcing, please visit gsa.gov/os3.

31. Why offer FSSI purchasing, from only the 21-24 contractors?

The Government wide Commodity Team consisting of representatives from major Government agencies decided 24 initial contracts was the right number. There will be on-ramping opportunities for additional vendors beginning 12-18 months from original contract award. Any future announcements will be publicly posted in FBO.gov.

FSSI OS3 offers agencies extremely competitive prices, data on what they are purchasing, and the ability to meet their small business and socioeconomic requirements.

