



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Request for Personal Service Contractor

**United States Agency for International Development
Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance
Office of Food for Peace (FFP)**

Position Title: Surge Response Food for Peace Advisor / Surge Response Senior Food for Peace Advisor
Duty Office: DCHA/FFP
Solicitation Number: SOL-FFP-17-000003
Salary Level: GS-13 Equivalent (\$94,796 - \$123,234)
GS-14 Equivalent (\$112,021 - \$145,629)
(Incorporates a locality payment for Washington, D.C.)
Issuance Date: March 14, 2017
Closing Date: Open and continuous through September 1, 2017 with two (2) review periods
Closing Time: 4:00 P.M. EST

Breakdown of Review Periods:

Review Period 1: March 31, 2017, 4:00P.M. EST
Review Period 2: September 1, 2017, 4:00P.M. EST

Dear Prospective Applicants:

The United States Government (USG), represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Food for Peace (FFP), is seeking applications from qualified U.S. citizens to provide personal services as a Surge Response Food for Peace Advisor under a United States Personal Services Contract (USPSC), as described in the attached solicitation.

Submittals must be in accordance with the attached information at the place and time specified. Applicants interested in applying for this position **MUST** submit the following materials:

1. Complete resume. In order to fully evaluate your application, your resume must include: (see sample resume on ffpjobs.com website)

- (a) Paid and non-paid experience, job title, location(s), dates held (month/year), and hours worked per week for each position. Dates (month/year) and locations for all field experience must also be detailed. **Any experience that does not include dates (month/year), locations, and hours per week will not be counted towards meeting the solicitation requirements.**
- (b) Specific duties performed that fully detail the level and complexity of the work.
- (c) Names and contact information (phone/email) of your current and/or previous supervisor(s). Current and/or previous supervisors may be contacted for a reference.

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- (d) Education and any other qualifications including job-related training courses, job-related skills, or job-related honors, awards or accomplishments.
- (e) U.S. Citizenship

Your resume should contain sufficient information to make a valid determination that you fully meet the experience requirements as stated in this solicitation. This information should be clearly identified in your resume. Failure to provide information sufficient to determine your qualifications for the position will result in loss of full consideration.

- 2. Responses to the Quality Ranking Factors:** Each applicant's supplemental document must address the Quality Ranking Factors (QRFs) shown in the solicitation.
- 3. USPSC Application form AID 302-3:** Applicants are required to complete sections A through I. This form must be physically signed and scanned. **Electronic signatures will not be accepted.**

All USPSCs with a place of performance in the United States are required to have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) database prior to receiving an offer. You will be disqualified if you either fail to comply with this requirement or if your name appears on the excluded parties list. Registration information is available at www.sam.gov and further guidance will be provided to the selectee regarding DUNS and SAM registration.

Additional documents submitted will not be accepted. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered. FFP reserves the right to select additional candidates if vacancies become available during future phases of the selection process.

Applicants can expect to receive a confirmation email when application materials have been received. Applicants should retain for their records copies of all enclosures which accompany their applications. Your complete resume, scanned AID 302-3 form, and the supplemental document addressing the QRFs must be emailed to:

E-Mail Address: ffprecruitmentteam@usaid.gov

Any questions on this solicitation may be directed to FFP PSC Team via the email address provided above. Further guidance on applying, including an example resume can be found at www.ffpjobs.com.

This solicitation in no way obligates USAID to award a PSC contract, nor does it commit USAID to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of the application.

Sincerely,

Renee Newton
Contracting Officer

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1. **SOLICITATION NO.:** SOL-FFP-17-000003
2. **ISSUANCE DATE:** March 14, 2017
3. **CLOSING DATE/TIME FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS:** This solicitation is open and continuous through September 1, 2017. The following are the closing dates for each review period:
March 31, 2017, 4:00 P.M. EST
September 1, 2017, 4:00 P.M. EST

Candidates not selected during a previous review period must reapply in order to be considered for positions available in subsequent review periods.

4. **POSITION TITLE:** Surge Response Food for Peace Advisor / Surge Response Senior Food for Peace Advisor
5. **MARKET VALUE:** This position can be filled at either the GS-13 Equivalent (\$94,796 - \$123,234, Daily Rate: \$363.36 - \$471.40, Hourly Rate: \$45.42 - \$59.05) or GS-14 Equivalent (\$112,021 - \$145,629, Daily Rate: \$429.44 - \$558.24, Hourly Rate: \$53.68 - \$69.78) level, including Washington, D.C. locality pay, depending on the qualifications of the applicant. Final compensation will be negotiated within the listed market value and based upon the candidate's past salary, work history, and educational background. USAID/FFP reserves the right to place the applicant at the Grade level for which he/she is found qualified during the application process. **Salaries over and above the top of the pay range will not be entertained or negotiated.**

NOTE CONCERNING MARKET VALUE: The applicant(s) chosen for the position will be recommended for hire at the GS-13 or GS-14 commensurate with his/her overall experience, training, and qualifications as determined by the FFP Selection Committee.

6. **PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:** One (1) year base with four (4) one-year options based on obtaining at least a “fully successful” level of performance in the annual evaluation.
7. **PLACE OF PERFORMANCE:** Washington, D.C.

STATEMENT OF LIMITATIONS ON PERIOD AND PLACE OF PERFORMANCE: The purpose of this contract is to establish an employee/employer relationship with the contractor to perform services on a temporary, on-call, basis as a Surge Response Group (SRG) member. It is FFP’s intent to contract for these services for a maximum of 250 working days per calendar year.

The level of effort anticipated under this contract will be provided within the terms of this contract at times mutually agreed to by FFP and the contractor. Upon identification of a temporary need within the scope of work, FFP will contact the contractor and provide the following information:

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1. Date contractor is needed to report to FFP or assignment in the field;
2. Duration of Assignment
3. Place of Performance

8. SECURITY LEVEL REQUIRED: Secret level security clearance

9. AREAS OF CONSIDERATION: U.S. Citizen

10. STATEMENT OF WORK:

BACKGROUND

The Office of Food for Peace (FFP) in the U.S. Agency for International Development Bureau's for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) is the largest provider of food assistance in the world. FFP annually provides more than to \$2.5 billion of food assistance, including some 1.5 million tons or more of in-kind Title II food assistance valued at more than \$1.6 billion and reaching 46 million beneficiaries in 48 countries. Since 2010, FFP has complemented its provision of Title II in-kind food assistance with an Emergency Food Security Program (EFSP) utilizing at least \$300 million in International Disaster Assistance (IDA) funds annually, which allows for local and regional purchase of food outside of the United States and closer to the emergency setting, as well as market based approaches such as cash transfer or food voucher programs that facilitate access to food.

In addition to emergency response, FFP provides support for development food assistance programs which aim to address the underlying causes of food security. Taken together, the in kind and cash based programs provide an impressive array of tools to combat hunger and malnutrition overseas. Programming is facilitated by state of the art early warning systems, a changing in kind food assistance basket that includes more nutritious products, and a modern supply chain management system that allows for rapid movement of commodities. Programming approaches are evolving to focus increasingly on building the resilience of chronically vulnerable populations, especially those in arid lands who face increasing cycles of drought, and improving nutrition with a special focus on women and children under two.

Food for Peace works closely with many other parts of USAID, especially the Bureau for Food Security, which plays a key role in implementing the President's Feed the Future initiative, and the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance, which leads on disaster response around the world. Food for Peace employs a staff of over 100 in Washington and also has officers posted abroad.

More Information on FFP is available at:

<http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/agriculture-and-food-security/food-assistance>

INTRODUCTION

The Surge Response Group (SRG) is a FFP program to satisfy FFP's growing need for surge capacity to meet program requirements. In response to numerous emergencies, it became clear that FFP requires more staff to cover positions in Washington. FFP's SRG program will bring on board select candidates who can work on a part-time basis, for no more than 250 days per

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calendar year. Once hired and after initial orientation, the Food for Peace Advisor (Surge Response) may be assigned to serve as a Country Backstop Officer (CBO), technical or policy specialist, or to provide backstop coverage for deploying Washington staff. The incumbent will be expected to analyze food needs, recommend and implement food security strategies, provide technical assistance and guidance, or policy guidance and manage FFP food assistance programs carried out by implementing partners, predominantly Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs) and Public International Organizations (PIO) such as the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). In some cases, the Food Security Advisor (Surge Response) may be called upon to meet short-term needs overseas to serve on a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) or to augment a regional office or mission.

CORE FUNCTIONAL AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Food for Peace Advisor (Surge Response) will work primarily on specific ongoing or new FFP-funded emergency programs and initiatives. The full range of specific duties, some of which are in direct support of specific programs and some in support of general FFP office responsibilities, may include the following:

GS-13 Food for Peace Advisor

- Serve as primary point of contact for NGOs and Public International Organizations (PIO) such as the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) implementing FFP-funded programs, U.S. Government representatives, and others on FFP food assistance issues for the country assigned;
- Analyze and assess data from a variety of sources – including field assessments, technical data, early warning information, and reporting from USAID field staff, NGOs, and PIOs – to recommend appropriate food assistance programs;
- Monitor developments in assigned countries and programs or technical sectors to identify food assistance response options and/or policy issues related to food assistance, and make program or policy recommendations to FFP leadership;
- Review appeals and proposals for emergency programs;
- Draft and assemble documentation for program approval and funding;
- Contribute to the development of technical/sectoral or policy guidance as needed;
- Produce information products (e.g., updates and memoranda) on food security situations and FFP programs, provide briefings, and represent FFP in meetings and working groups with implementing agency staff, USAID colleagues, and representatives from other agencies;
- Provide policy recommendations related to implementation of emergency programs carried out by PIOs such as WFP and non-governmental organizations; Serve as FFP representative

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on the Bureau's Response Management Teams (RMT) or other coordinating mechanisms such as the DCHA's Crisis and Opening Action Coordination Team (COACT).

GS-14 Senior Food for Peace Advisor

- Serve as primary point of contact for NGOs and Public Information Organizations (PIO) such as the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) implementing FFP-funded programs, U.S. Government representatives, and others on FFP food assistance issues for the country assigned;
- Analyze and assess data from a variety of sources – including field assessments, technical data, early warning information, and reporting from USAID field staff, NGOs, and PIOs – to recommend appropriate food assistance programs;
- Monitor developments in assigned countries and programs to identify food assistance response options and/or policy issues related to food assistance, and make program or policy recommendations to FFP leadership;
- Evaluate programs through field visits, reporting by field staff, and information provided by implementing partners to maximize program effectiveness and ensure programs are being implemented in a manner consistent with policy and legislative guidelines;
- Lead the development of technical/sectoral and/or policy guidance and provide technical support as needed;
- Serve as FFP representative on the Bureau's Response Management Teams (RMT) or other coordinating mechanisms such as the DCHA's Crisis and Opening Action Coordination Team (COACT);
- Provide training on FFP program implementation, appropriating legislation and interpretation to incoming FFP staff;
- When required, assume higher representational responsibilities, potentially serving as Acting Team Leader and/or the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) or Contracting Officer Representative (COR);
- Supervise staff as delegated by the supervisor (i.e. Food for Peace Officers) and provide orientation, training and mentoring for staff.

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Additional Core Duties and Responsibilities

Program and Policy Coordination Officer (PTD):

- Participate in developing recommendations on a wide range of policy questions relating to the use of FFP food aid resources for emergency food programs.
- Perform review/analysis of PIOs policy and operational issues as they relate to the technical authority regarding the regulatory impact on sensitive or rapidly evolving programs related to emergency food assistance. As necessary and practicable, evaluate alternative agency strategies to make recommendations to ensure that the PIOs comply with USG accepted practices in delivering humanitarian assistance consistent with Agency food aid policy guidance and other guidelines.
- Advocate, interpret, and explain FFP emergency food program guidance and policy.
- Provide to FFP staff operational policy analysis for PIO proposal reviews to ensure that resources allocated for complex food assistance programs working in the areas of general relief meet program objectives.
- Consolidate interagency comments and draft initial U.S. position papers in response to PIO documents in preparation for formal sessions and informal consultations in close collaboration with USUN Missions.
- Closely review annual and/or biennium agreements with the PIOs to ensure that USG views on PIO costs for emergency food programs are understood and agreed to, e.g., issues of nomenclature.
- Maintain close working relations with the PIOs, discuss regularly FFP commitments, priorities, and policies, and maintain status reports of all USG donations in cash and in-kind contributions related to PIO operations.
- Provide support to the PTD Policy Team Leader, such a strategic planning and evaluation, as well as attend office, inter-agency, PIO, and NGO meetings and consultations.

Program Operations Specialist (POD):

1) Cost Estimates

- Provide financial analysis for food aid programs, recommending appropriate levels of commodities based on commodity and transport prices.
- Develop, regularly update, and communicate commodity price estimates.
- Review program budgets for appropriate use of FFP funding categories.
- Provide financial management technical assistance to WFP and PVOs based on commodity price and transport estimates and appropriate use of FFP funding categories.

2) Food Aid Supply Chain Management

- Manage the emergency food aid prepositioning process, to include overseeing facilities, allocating commodities from facilities to programs, and restocking facilities.
- Coordinate with inter- and intra-agency colleagues to manage and oversee the procurement of emergency food aid, including expedited procurement and the diversion of vessels to meet emergency food aid needs. Uses web-based IT procurement system to procure commodities.

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- Ensure commodity procurements are accomplished and that commodity quality and safety problems are identified and resolved.
- Advise managers on commodity procurement matters.
- Serve as an expert in analyzing the impact of existing or proposed procurement standards, regulations, and policies. Develop and implement new policies and procedures relating to commodity procurement and quality assurance.

3) Additional Responsibilities

- Prepares reports related to operational and logistics issues.
- Travel to prepositioning facilities to address logistics and operational problems.
- Provide technical input on funding priorities, review specific appeals and proposals, and serve on proposal review panels.
- Draft updates and memoranda, provide briefings on commodity procurement issues, and represent FFP in meetings and working groups with other USAID colleagues and representatives from other agencies.

Guidelines:

At the GS-13 level, the incumbent uses initiative and resourcefulness in developing new methods and proposed policy changes.

At the GS-14 level, judgment and ingenuity is required to interpret the intent of guidance and application to assigned responsibilities.

Pertinent sources of information consist of the Title II rules and regulations, The Farm Bill and the Foreign Assistance Act other legislative initiatives, FFP issued guidelines and information bulletins, International Disaster Assistance funds and USAID Agency and DCHA Bureau rules and regulations.

Supervisory Controls:

At the GS-13 and GS-14 levels, the incumbent will take direction from and report to the Surge Coordinator until activated, at which time she/he will be under the supervision of a FFP/Washington Division Chief or Team Leader, or a designated USAID staff member in the field. At the GS-13 level, the incumbent consults with supervisor to develop deadlines, projects and work to be completed. Incumbent is responsible for planning and carrying out assignments.

At the GS-14 level, the incumbent's supervisor will provide direction in terms of broadly defined program goals and objectives. The employee is expected to act independently with little direction and will have wide latitude for the exercise of independent judgment. The incumbent has greater latitude to carry out assignments, while still consulting with the Division Chief on policy interpretations. The incumbent keeps his/her supervisor informed of progress in the achievement of objectives and advised of potentially controversial matters. The supervisor will evaluate work for technical soundness and effectiveness in meeting work objectives. The incumbent will not supervise personnel but is expected to mentor new Food for Peace Officers.

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Complexity:

At the GS-13 and GS-14 level, duties vary that require different process, methods and substantial depth of analysis. The incumbent must work with a range of people from operations, technical, field staff, other bureaus within USAID and with the State Department and the Department of Agriculture.

The incumbent applies his/her depth and breadth of knowledge and experience to evaluate programs through field visits, reporting by field staff, and information provided by implementing partners to maximize program effectiveness and ensure programs are being implemented in a manner consistent with policy and legislative guidelines. The incumbent will be responsible for producing information products (e.g. updates and memoranda) on food security situations and FFP programs, provide briefings, and represent FFP in meetings and working groups with implementing agency staff, USAID colleagues, and representatives from other agencies.

Scope and Effect:

At the GS-13 level, work typically includes planning, organizing, directing, designing, and coordinating programs and/or projects, requiring creativity and support from others; or work entails conducting evaluations to determine the feasibility of various and advanced approaches to define concepts and criteria for future programs or to resolve major controversial problems in current programs. Work may require working as a team leader.

At the GS-14 level, incumbent is considered an expert in the field. Work performed includes isolating and defining unknown conditions and resolving critical problems or developing new theories affecting the work of other experts. Work typically requires formal responsibility for leading teams, guiding the work of others, and coordinating with other professional and technical staff.

Personal Contacts:

At the GS-13 level, contacts are with individuals or groups outside of USAID in a moderately unstructured setting.

At the GS-14 level, contacts are with high-ranking officials outside USAID at national or international levels in highly unstructured settings.

Purpose of Contacts:

At the GS-13 and GS-14 level, the incumbent analyzes food assistance needs, recommends and implements strategies, and manages food assistance programs undertaken by NGOs and Public International Organizations such as the WFP.

11. WORK ENVIRONMENT AND PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Work is primarily performed in an office setting. The requirement for field trip assignments to consult with cooperating sponsor managers of food assistance programs may expose the successful candidate to difficult working surroundings and security risks during the course of

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travel.

The work is generally sedentary and does not pose undue physical demands. During deployment on DARTs (if required), and during site visits, there may be some additional physical exertion including long periods of standing, walking over rough terrain, or carrying of moderately heavy items (less than 50 pounds).

12. START DATE: Immediately, once necessary clearances are obtained.

13. POINT OF CONTACT: See cover letter.

* **Application Process:** Applicants must indicate in their application the solicitation number to which they are applying and the salary grade to be considered for in their initial one-year base contract.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE POSITION

EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE REQUIRED FOR THIS POSITION

A. Minimum Qualifications:

At the GS-13 Level:

- A Bachelor's degree from an accredited U.S. or internationally recognized institution with significant study in, but not limited to, public health, agriculture, nutrition, food and agricultural economics, international development, humanitarian assistance, or other related field. The incumbent will have a total of at least seven (7) years of progressively responsible experience in humanitarian assistance and/or international development, of which three (3) years' experience must be related to food assistance. Two (2) years of overseas professional experience is required.

OR

- A Master's degree from an accredited U.S. or internationally recognized institution with significant study in, but not limited to, public health, agriculture, nutrition, food and agricultural economics, international development, humanitarian assistance, or other related field. The incumbent will have a total of at least six (6) years of progressively responsible experience in humanitarian assistance and/or international development, of which three (3) years' experience must be related to food assistance. Two (2) years of overseas professional experience is required.

At the GS-14 Level:

- A Bachelor's degree from an accredited U.S. or internationally recognized institution with significant study in, but not limited to, public health, agriculture, nutrition, food and agricultural economics, international development, humanitarian assistance, or other

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related field. The incumbent will have a total of at least nine (9) years of progressively responsible experience in humanitarian assistance and/or international development, of which five (5) years' experience must be related to food assistance. Two (2) years of overseas professional experience is required.

OR

- A Master's degree from an accredited U.S. or internationally recognized institution with significant study in, but not limited to, public health, agriculture, nutrition, food and agricultural economics, international development, humanitarian assistance, or other related field. The incumbent will have a total of at least eight (8) years of progressively responsible experience in humanitarian assistance and/or international development, of which five (5) years' experience must be related to food assistance. Two (2) years of overseas professional experience is required.

Applicants not meeting minimum qualifications will not be evaluated further.

B. Selection Factors: Applicants must possess the minimum qualifications for the position.

Applicants who do not meet all of the selection factors are considered NOT qualified for the position. Selection factors include:

- Applicant is a U.S. Citizen.
- Submission of a current and complete resume, with current contact information. See cover page for resume requirements. Experience that cannot be quantified will not be counted towards meeting the solicitation requirements.
- Supplemental document specifically addressing the Quality Ranking Factors (QRFs).
- USPSC Application form AID 302-3. Applicants are required to complete sections A through I. This form must be physically signed and scanned. Electronic signatures will not be accepted.
- Ability to obtain and maintain a SECRET level security clearance within six-months following offer acceptance.
- Ability to obtain a U.S. Department of State medical clearance within a six-month period.
- Must not appear as an excluded party in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov).

QUALITY RANKING FACTORS (QRFs)

Applicants who meet the Education/Experience requirements and Selection Factors will be further evaluated based on the Quality Ranking Factors (QRF) listed below. Applicants are strongly encouraged to address each of the factors on a separate sheet describing specifically and accurately the experience, training, and/or education they have that is relevant to each factor. Be sure to include your name and the announcement number at the top of each additional page.

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- Knowledge of the key policy and technical issues related to emergency food security programming in developing countries. (25 points)
- Demonstrated ability to review proposals, analyze budgets, manage U.S. Government or other agency financial agreements, and work through the USAID grant award process. (20 points)
- Demonstrated knowledge of the mode of operation among PVOs, UN Agencies, and USG agencies involved in development and/or humanitarian relief, and ability to work effectively across agencies on issues related to funding and program implementation. (15 points)
- Demonstrated skills in leading a team to accomplish programmatic objectives, develop staff skills, and appropriately delegate responsibilities. (5 points)
- Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing, including well developed social/interpersonal and problem-solving skills. (5 points)

Interview Performance: 30 points

Satisfactory Professional Reference Checks – Pass/Fail

Total Possible Points: 100

BASIS OF RATING: Applicants who meet the Education/Experience requirements and Selection Factors will be further evaluated based on scoring of the Quality Ranking Factor (QRF) responses. Those applicants determined to be competitively ranked will also be evaluated on interview performance and satisfactory professional reference checks. Failure to address the selection and/or quality ranking factors may result in your not receiving credit for all your pertinent experience, education, training, and/or awards.

FFP reserves the right to make additional selections from this solicitation. FFP also reserves the right to discontinue the solicitation and the acceptance of applications at any time.

The most qualified candidates may be interviewed and required to provide a writing sample and/or take a writing test. FFP will not pay for any expenses associated with the interviews. Professional references and academic credentials may be evaluated for applicants being considered for selection. FFP may select additional candidates from this solicitation to fill possible future vacant positions.

DOCUMENT SUBMITTALS

Where and How to Apply

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Applications must be **received** by the closing date and time specified in the cover letter via e-mail: ffprecruitmentteam@usaid.gov.

Qualified individuals are **required** to submit:

1. Complete resume. In order to fully evaluate your application, your resume must include:

- (a) Paid and non-paid experience, job title, location(s), dates held (month/year), and hours worked per week for each position. Dates (month/year) and locations for all field experience must also be detailed. **Any experience that does not include dates (month/year), locations, and hours per week will not be counted towards meeting the solicitation requirements.**
- (b) Specific duties performed that fully detail the level and complexity of the work.
- (c) Names and contact information (phone/email) of your current and/or previous supervisor(s). Current and/or previous supervisors may be contacted for a reference.
- (d) Education and any other qualifications including job-related training courses, job-related skills, or job-related honors, awards or accomplishments.
- (e) U.S. Citizenship

Your resume should contain sufficient information to make a valid determination that you fully meet the experience requirements as stated in this solicitation. This information should be clearly identified in your resume. Failure to provide information sufficient to determine your qualifications for the position will result in loss of full consideration.

2. Supplemental document specifically addressing the QRFs shown in the solicitation.

3. USPSC Application form AID 302-3. Applicants are required to complete sections A through I. This form must be physically signed and scanned. **Electronic signatures will not be accepted.**

The most qualified candidates may be interviewed and required to provide a writing sample. USAID will not pay for any expenses associated with the interviews. Professional references and academic credentials will be evaluated for applicants being considered for selection. USAID reserves the right to select additional candidates if vacancies become available during future phases of the selection process.

FFP reserves the right to make additional selections from this solicitation.

Additional documents submitted will not be accepted.

By submitting your application materials, you certify that all of the information on and attached to the application is true, correct, complete, and made in good faith. You agree to allow all information on and attached to the application to be investigated or used for references.

False or fraudulent information on or attached to your application may result in you being eliminated from consideration for this position, or being terminated after award, and may be punishable by fine or imprisonment.

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To ensure consideration of applications for the intended position, please reference the solicitation number on your application, and as the subject line in any email.

NOTE: If the full security application package is not submitted within 30 days after the Office of Security determines eligibility, the offer may be rescinded. If a Secret security clearance is not obtained within six months after offer acceptance, the offer may be rescinded.

NOTE: If the full medical clearance package is not submitted within two months after offer acceptance, the offer may be rescinded. If a Department of State medical clearance is not obtained within six months after offer acceptance, the offer may be rescinded.

To ensure consideration of applications for the intended position, please reference **the solicitation number and the position you are applying for** on your application, and as the subject line in any email

NOTE REGARDING GOVERNMENT OBLIGATIONS FOR THIS SOLICITATION

This solicitation in no way obligates USAID to award a PSC contract, nor does it commit USAID to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of the application.

NOTE REGARDING DATA UNIVERSAL NUMBERING SYSTEM (DUNS) NUMBERS AND THE SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT

All USPSCs with a place of performance in the United States are required to have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) database prior to receiving an offer. You will be disqualified if you either fail to comply with this requirement or if your name appears on the excluded parties list. The selectee will be provided with further guidance regarding DUNS and SAM registration.

For general information about DUNS Numbers, please refer to Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Clause 52.204-6, Data Universal Numbering System Number at https://www.acquisition.gov/far/current/html/52_200_206.html and FAR 52.204-7, System for Award Management at https://www.acquisition.gov/far/current/html/52_200_206.html or www.sam.gov.

Interested applicants are highly encouraged to initiate the registration process early in the application stage to avoid any delays during contract award.

LIST OF REQUIRED FORMS FOR PSCs

Forms outlined below can found at:

<http://www.usaid.gov/forms/> or at <http://www.forms.gov/bgfPortal/main.do>

- a) USPSC Application Form, (AID 302-3)
- b) Medical History and Examination Form (DS-6561).
- c) Questionnaire for Sensitive Positions (for National Security) (SF-86), or

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- d) Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions (SF-85).
- e) Finger Print Card (FD-258).
- f) Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9 Form).

These forms shall be completed ONLY upon the advice of the Contracting Officer that an applicant is the successful candidate for the job.

CONTRACT INFORMATION BULLETINS (CIBs) and ACQUISITION & ASSISTANCE POLICY DIRECTIVES (AAPDs) PERTAINING TO PSCs

CIBs and AAPDs contain changes to USAID policy and General Provisions in USAID regulations and contracts. Please refer to http://transition.usaid.gov/business/business_opportunities/cib/subject.html#psc to determine which CIBs and AAPDs apply to this contract.

AAPD 06-10 – PSC MEDICAL PAYMENT RESPONSIBILITY

AAPD No. 06-10 is hereby incorporated as Attachment 1 to the solicitation.

AAPD 15-02 LEAVE AND HOLIDAYS

AAPD No. 15-02 is hereby incorporated as Attachment 2 to the solicitation.

FAR 52.222-50 – COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

FAR Clause 52.222-50 is hereby incorporated as Attachment 3 to the solicitation.

BENEFITS/ALLOWANCES/TAXES:

As a matter of policy, and as appropriate, a USPSC is normally authorized the following benefits and allowances:

BENEFITS:

- a) Employer's FICA Contribution
- b) Contribution toward Health & Life Insurance
- c) Pay Comparability Adjustment
- d) Annual Increase (pending a satisfactory performance evaluation)
- e) Eligibility for Worker's Compensation
- f) Annual & Sick Leave

ALLOWANCES (if Applicable)*

The following allowances may be provided for PSCs located in foreign countries using rates prescribed under the Department of State Standardized Regulations (Government Civilian Foreign areas) available at <https://aoprals.state.gov/>:

- a) Temporary Lodging Allowance (Section 120).
- b) Living Quarters Allowance (Section 130).

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- c) Post Allowance (Section 220).
- d) Supplemental Post Allowance (Section 230).
- e) Separate Maintenance Allowance (Section 260).
- f) Education Allowance (Section 270).
- g) Education Travel (Section 280).
- h) Post Differential (Chapter 500).
- i) Payments during Evacuation/Authorized Departure (Section 600), and
- j) Danger Pay (Section 650).

* Standardized Regulations (Government Civilians Foreign Areas).

FEDERAL TAXES: USPSCs are required to pay Federal Income Taxes, FICA, and Medicare.

ALL QUALIFIED APPLICANTS WILL BE CONSIDERED REGARDLESS OF AGE, RACE, COLOR, SEX, CREED, NATIONAL ORIGIN, LAWFUL POLITICAL AFFILIATION, NON-DISQUALIFYING DISABILITY, MARITAL STATUS, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, AFFILIATION WITH AN EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATION, OR OTHER NON-MERIT FACTOR.

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ATTACHMENT 1

MEDICAL EXPENSE PAYMENT RESPONSIBILITY (OCTOBER 2006) (AAPD06-10)

(a) Definitions. Terms used in this General Provision are defined in 16 FAM 116 (available at <http://www.foia.state.gov/REGS/fams.asp?level=2&id=59&fam=0>). Note: personal services contractors are not eligible to participate in the Federal Employees Health Programs.

(b) The regulations in the Foreign Affairs Manual, Volume 16, Chapter 520 (16 FAM 520), Responsibility for Payment of Medical Expenses, apply to this contract, except as stated below. The contractor and each eligible family member are strongly encouraged to obtain health insurance that covers this assignment. Nothing in this provision supersedes or contradicts any other term or provision in this contract that pertains to insurance or medical costs, except that section (e) supplements General Provision 25. "MEDICAL EVACUATION (MEDEVAC) SERVICES."

(c) When the contractor or eligible family member is covered by health insurance, that insurance is the primary payer for medical services provided to that contractor or eligible family member(s) both in the United States and abroad. The primary insurer's liability is determined by the terms, conditions, limitations, and exclusions of the insurance policy. When the contractor or eligible family member is not covered by health insurance, the contractor is the primary payer for the total amount of medical costs incurred and the U.S. Government has no payment obligation (see paragraph (f) of this provision).

(d) USAID serves as a secondary payer for medical expenses of the contractor and eligible family members who are covered by health insurance, where the following conditions are met:

(1) The illness, injury, or medical condition giving rise to the expense is incurred, caused, or materially aggravated while the eligible individual is stationed or assigned abroad;

(2) The illness, injury, or medical condition giving rise to the expense required or requires hospitalization and the expense is directly related to the treatment of such illness, injury, or medical condition, including obstetrical care; and

(3) The Office of Medical Services (M/MED) or a Foreign Service medical provider (FSMP) determines that the treatment is appropriate for, and directly related to, the illness, injury, or medical condition.

(e) The Mission Director may, on the advice of M/MED or an FSMP at post, authorize medical travel for the contractor or an eligible family member in accordance with the General Provision 10, Travel and Transportation AAPD 06-10 PSC Medical Expense Payment Responsibility 6 Expenses (July 1993), section (i) entitled "Emergency and Irregular Travel and Transportation." In the event of a medical emergency, when time does not permit consultation, the Mission Director may issue a Travel Authorization Form or Medical Services Authorization Form DS-3067, provided that the FSMP or Post Medical Advisor (PMA) is notified as soon as possible following such an issuance. The contractor must promptly file a claim with his or her medevac insurance provider and repay to USAID any amount the medevac insurer pays for medical travel,

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up to the amount USAID paid under this section. The contractor must repay USAID for medical costs paid by the medevac insurer in accordance with sections (f) and (g) below. In order for medical travel to be an allowable cost under General Provision 10, the contractor must provide USAID written evidence that medevac insurance does not cover these medical travel costs.

(f) If the contractor or eligible family member is not covered by primary health insurance, the contractor is the primary payer for the total amount of medical costs incurred. In the event of a medical emergency, the Medical and Health Program may authorize issuance of Form DS-3067, Authorization for Medical Services for Employees and/or Dependents, to secure admission to a hospital located abroad for the uninsured contractor or eligible family member.

In that case, the contractor will be required to reimburse USAID in full for funds advanced by USAID pursuant to the issuance of the authorization. The contractor may reimburse USAID directly or USAID may offset the cost from the contractor's invoice payments under this contract, any other contract the individual has with the U.S. Government, or through any other available debt collection mechanism.

(g) When USAID pays medical expenses (e.g., pursuant to Form DS-3067, Authorization for Medical Services for Employees and/or Dependents), repayment must be made to USAID either by insurance payment or directly by the contractor, except for the amount of such expenses USAID is obligated to pay under this provision. The Contracting Officer will determine the repayment amount in accordance with the terms of this provision and the policies and procedures for employees contained in 16 FAM 521. When USAID pays the medical expenses, including medical travel costs (see section (e) above), of an individual (either the contractor or an eligible family member) who is covered by insurance, that individual promptly must claim his or her benefits under any applicable insurance policy or policies. As soon as the individual receives the insurance payment, the contractor must reimburse USAID for the full amount that USAID paid on the individual's behalf or the repayment amount determined by the Contracting Officer in accordance with this paragraph, whichever is less. If an individual is not covered by insurance, the contractor must reimburse USAID for the entire amount of all medical expenses and any travel costs the contractor receives from his/her medevac provider.

(h) In the event that the contractor or eligible family member fails to recover insurance payments or transfer the amount of such payments to USAID within 90 days, USAID will take appropriate action to collect the payments due, unless such failure is for reasons beyond the control of the USPSC/dependent. (i) Before departing post or terminating the contract, the contractor must settle all medical expense and medical travel costs. If the contractor is insured, he or she must provide proof to the Contracting AAPD 06-10 PSC Medical Expense Payment Responsibility 7 Officer that those insurance claims have been submitted to the insurance carrier(s) and sign a repayment agreement to repay to USAID any amounts paid by the insurance carrier(s).

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ATTACHMENT 2

**Authorization of Family and Medical Leave
for U.S. Personal Services Contractors (USPSCs) (AAPD 15-02)**

GP 5. LEAVE AND HOLIDAYS (DEC 2015) (Pursuant to class deviation #M/OAA-DEV-AIDAR-16-1c)

(a) Annual Leave

(1) The contractor is not entitled to annual leave if the period of performance of this contract is 90 days or less. If the contract period of performance is more than 90 days, the contractor shall earn annual leave as of the start date of the contract period of performance as specified in paragraph (a)(2) below.

(2) The contractor shall accrue annual leave based on the contractor's time in service according to the following table: Time in Service	Annual Leave (AL) Accrual Calculation
0 to 3 years	Four hours of leave for each two week period
over 3, and up to 15 years	Six hours of AL for each two week period (including 10 hours AL for the final pay period of a calendar year)
over 15 years	Eight hours of AL for each two week period

(4) With the approval of the Mission Director or cognizant AA, as appropriate, and if the circumstances warrant, a Contracting Officer may grant the contractor advance AL in excess of the amount earned, but in no case may the Contracting Officer grant advance AL in excess of the amount earned in one year or over the life of the contract, whichever is less. The contractor agrees to reimburse USAID for any outstanding balance of advance AL provided during the contractor's assignment under the contract.

(5) Applicants for PSC positions will provide evidence of their PSC and/or USG direct-hire service - civilian and/or military experience, as applicable, on their signed and dated application form required under USAID policy. By signing the appropriate form, the applicant attests to the accuracy of the information provided. Any applicant providing incorrect information is subject to the penalty provisions in the form. If required to satisfy due diligence requirements on behalf of the Contracting Officer, the contractor may be required to furnish evidence that verifies length of service, e.g., SF 50, DD Form 214, and/or signed contracts.

(b) Sick Leave. The contractor may use sick leave on the same basis and for the same purposes as USAID U.S. direct hire employees. Sick leave is earned at a rate not to exceed four (4) hours every two (2) weeks for a total of 13 work-days per year. Unused sick leave may be carried over under an extension or renewal of this contract with the same individual for the same work. Otherwise, sick leave will not be carried over from one post to another or from one contract to

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another. The contractor will not be compensated for unused sick leave upon completion of this contract.

(c) Home Leave.

(1) Home leave is leave earned for service abroad for use only in the U.S., its commonwealths, possessions and territories.

(2) A USPSC who has served at least two years overseas at the same USAID Mission, under the same contract, as defined in paragraph (c)(4) below, and has not taken more than 30 work days leave (annual, sick or LWOP) in the U.S. may be granted home leave in accordance with the following:

(i) if the USPSC returns to the same overseas post upon completion of home leave for an additional two (2) years under the same contract, the USPSC will receive home leave, to be taken at one time, for a period of 30 work days; or

if the USPSC returns to the same overseas post upon completion of home leave for such shorter period of not less than one year, as approved in writing by the Mission Director prior to the USPSCs departure on home leave, the USPSC will receive home leave, to be taken at one time, for a period of 30 work days.

(ii) if the USPSC is returning to a different USAID Mission under a USAID personal services contract immediately following completion of the USPSC's home leave, for an additional two (2) years under contract, or for such shorter period of not less than one (1) year, as approved by the Mission Directors of the "losing" and "gaining" Missions, the contractor will receive home leave, to be taken at one time, for a period of not more than 20 work days. When the PSC is returning to a different USAID Mission, the former Mission will pay for the home leave regardless of what country the PSC will be working in following the home leave;

(iii) if home leave eligibility is based on (c)(2)(ii) above, the USPSC must submit written verification to the losing Mission at the time home leave is requested that the USPSC has accepted a USAID personal services contract at another USAID Mission following completion of the home leave;

(iv) travel time by the most direct route is authorized in addition to the number of work days authorized for home leave;

(v) home leave must be taken in the U.S., its commonwealths, possessions or territories, and any days spent elsewhere will be charged to annual leave (AL.) If the PSC does not have accrued AL, the PSC will be placed on LWOP.

(vi) if the PSC does not complete the additional service required under (c)(2)(i) or (ii) (that the Contracting Officer finds are other than for reasons beyond the PSC's control), the cost of home leave, travel and transportation and any other related costs must be repaid by the PSC to the Government.

(3) Notwithstanding the requirement in paragraph (c)(2) above, that the USPSC must have served two (2) years overseas under personal services contract with the same Mission to be

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eligible for home leave, the USPSC may be granted advance home leave subject to all of the following conditions:

(i) Granting of advanced home leave would in each case serve to advance the attainment of the objectives of this contract; and

(ii) The USPSC has served a minimum of 18 months in the Cooperating Country under this contract; and

(iii) The USPSC agrees to return to the Cooperating Country to serve out the remaining time necessary to meet two (2) years of service overseas, plus an additional two (2) years under the current contract or under a new contract for the same or similar services at the same Mission. If approved in advance by the Mission Director, the USPSC may return to serve out any remainder of the two (2) year requirement for service overseas, plus an additional period of not less than one (1) year under the current contract or under a new contract for the same or similar services at the same Mission.

(4) The period of service overseas required under paragraph (c)(2), or paragraph (c)(3) above, will include the actual days in orientation in the U.S. (less language training). The actual days overseas begin on the date of arrival in the cooperating country inclusive of authorized delays en route. Allowable annual and sick leave taken while overseas, but not LWOP, shall be included in the required period of service overseas. An amount equal to the number of days of annual and sick leave taken in the U.S., its commonwealths, possessions or territories will be added to the required period of service overseas.

(5) Salary during the travel to and from the U.S., for home leave will be limited to the time required for travel by the most expeditious air route. Except for reasons beyond the USPSC's control as determined by the Contracting Officer, the USPSC must return to duty after home leave and complete the additional required service or be responsible for reimbursing USAID for payments made during home leave. Unused home leave is not reimbursable under this contract, nor can it be taken incrementally in separate time periods.

(6) Home leave must be taken at one time, and to the extent deemed necessary by the Contracting Officer, an USPSC in the U.S., on home leave may be authorized to spend not more than five (5) days in work status for consultation at USAID/Washington before returning to post. Consultation at locations other than USAID/Washington as well as any time in excess of five (5) days spent for consultation must be approved by the Mission Director or the Contracting Officer.

(d) Home Leave for Qualifying Posts (HLQP). USPSCs who ordinarily qualify for home leave and have completed a 12-month assignment at one of the USAID qualifying posts (currently Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan) are entitled to take ten (10) workdays of leave in addition to the home leave an USPSCs is normally entitled to under the contract in accordance with subparagraphs (c)(1) - (6) above. This additional home leave is provided pursuant to an amendment to the Foreign Service Act of 1980 signed by the President on June 15, 2006.

There is no requirement that an eligible USPSC take this additional leave; it is for optional use by the USPSC. If an eligible USPSC elects to take HLQP, the USPSC must take ten (10) workdays of home leave. If the USPSC is returning to the United States and not returning overseas to the same or different USAID Mission, HLQP will not apply.

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This new home leave policy is also extended to qualifying **Third-Country National PSCs (TCNPSCs)** who have an approved exception under AIDAR Appendix J, sec. 4(c)(2)(ii)(B), to apply specific provisions from AIDAR Appendix D, and whose contract includes this General Provision. However, TCNPSCs will be granted "country leave" vice home leave. The application, requirements, and restrictions will be the same as for USPSCs, but the time taken by a TCNPSC will be taken in the TCNPSC's home country or country of recruitment rather than in the United States, its commonwealths and territories.

(e) Holidays and Excused Absences. The contractor shall be entitled to all holidays and or excused absences granted by the USAID to U.S. direct-hire employees.

(f) Military Leave. Military leave of not more than 15 calendar days in any calendar year may be granted to a contractor who is a reservist of the U.S. Armed Forces. The contractor must provide advance notice of the pending military leave to the Contracting Officer or the Mission Director as soon as known. A copy of any such notice must be part of the contract file.

(g) Leave Without Pay (LWOP). LWOP may be granted only with the written approval of the Contracting Officer or Mission Director, unless a USPSC is requesting for such leave for family and leave purposes under paragraph (i) below.

(h) Compensatory Time. Compensatory time leave may be granted only with the written approval of the Contracting Officer or Mission Director in rare instances when it has been determined absolutely essential and used under those guidelines which apply to USAID U.S. direct-hire employees.

(i) Family and Medical Leave (FML)

(1) USAID provides family and medical leave (FML) for eligible USPSCs working within the U.S., or any Territories or possession of the United States, in accordance with Title I of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, as amended, and as administered by the Department of Labor under 29 CFR 825. USAID is also extending FML to eligible USPSCs working outside the U.S., or any Territories or possession of the U.S., in accordance with this paragraph (i) as a matter of policy discretion.

(2) FML only applies to USPSCs, not any other type of PSC.

(3) To be eligible for FML, a USPSC must have been employed (i) for at least 12 months by USAID; and (ii) for at least 1,250 hours of service with USAID during the previous 12-month period. The specific eligibility criteria and requirements are provided in USAID policy.

(4) In accordance with 29 CFR 825.200(a) and USAID policy, an eligible USPSC may take up to 12 workweeks of leave under FMLA, Title I, in any 12-month period for the following reasons:

- (a) The care of the USPSC's newborn child.
- (b) The care of the USPSC's newly placed adopted or foster care child.
- (c) The care of the USPSC's spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition.
- (d) The USPSC's own serious health condition.
- (e) A qualifying exigency arising from the USPSC's spouse, child or parent in active duty military status.
- (f) Other qualifying exigencies as determined by the Department of Labor.

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(5) In accordance with 29 CFR Part 825.207, the USPSC may take LWOP for FML purposes. However, the USPSC may choose to substitute LWOP with accrued paid leave, including accrued annual or sick leave, or compensatory time earned under this contract. If the USPSC does not choose to substitute accrued paid leave, the CO, in consultation with the USPSC's supervisor, may require the USPSC to substitute accrued paid leave for LWOP. The CO must verify the accuracy of the USPSC's accrued paid leave request and obtain the required certifications for approval of FML in accordance with the stated USAID policy.

(6) FML is not authorized for any period beyond the completion date of this contract.

(7) When requesting FML, the USPSC must demonstrate eligibility to the USPSC's supervisor by completing USAID's FML request forms, including certifications and other supporting documents required by USAID policy.

(8) The U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL's) [Wage and Hour Division \(WHD\) Publication 1420](#) explains the FMLA's provisions and provides information concerning procedures for filing complaints for violations of the Act.

(j) Leave Records. The contractor shall maintain current leave records for himself/herself and make them available, as requested by the Mission Director or the Contracting Officer.

[END PROVISION]

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ATTACHMENT 3

FAR 52.222-50 COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (FEB 2009)

(a) *Definitions.* As used in this clause—

“Coercion” means—

- (1) Threats of serious harm to or physical restraint against any person;
- (2) Any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that failure to perform an act would result in serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; or
- (3) The abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process.

“Commercial sex act” means any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person.

“Debt bondage” means the status or condition of a debtor arising from a pledge by the debtor of his or her personal services or of those of a person under his or her control as a security for debt, if the value of those services as reasonably assessed is not applied toward the liquidation of the debt or the length and nature of those services are not respectively limited and defined.

“Employee” means an employee of the Contractor directly engaged in the performance of work under the contract who has other than a minimal impact or involvement in contract performance.

“Forced Labor” means knowingly providing or obtaining the labor or services of a person—

- (1) By threats of serious harm to, or physical restraint against, that person or another person;
- (2) By means of any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause the person to believe that, if the person did not perform such labor or services, that person or another person would suffer serious harm or physical restraint; or
- (3) By means of the abuse or threatened abuse of law or the legal process.

“Involuntary servitude” includes a condition of servitude induced by means of—

- (1) Any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that, if the person did not enter into or continue in such conditions, that person or another person would suffer serious harm or physical restraint; or
- (2) The abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process.

“Severe forms of trafficking in persons” means—

- (1) Sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age; or
- (2) The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

“Sex trafficking” means the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act.

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(b) *Policy.* The United States Government has adopted a zero tolerance policy regarding trafficking in persons. Contractors and contractor employees shall not—

- (1) Engage in severe forms of trafficking in persons during the period of performance of the contract;
- (2) Procure commercial sex acts during the period of performance of the contract; or
- (3) Use forced labor in the performance of the contract.

(c) *Contractor requirements.* The Contractor shall—

- (1) Notify its employees of—
 - (i) The United States Government’s zero tolerance policy described in paragraph (b) of this clause; and
 - (ii) The actions that will be taken against employees for violations of this policy. Such actions may include, but are not limited to, removal from the contract, reduction in benefits, or termination of employment; and
- (2) Take appropriate action, up to and including termination, against employees or subcontractors that violate the policy in paragraph (b) of this clause.

(d) *Notification.* The Contractor shall inform the Contracting Officer immediately of—

- (1) Any information it receives from any source (including host country law enforcement) that alleges a Contractor employee, subcontractor, or subcontractor employee has engaged in conduct that violates this policy; and
- (2) Any actions taken against Contractor employees, subcontractors, or subcontractor employees pursuant to this clause.

(e) *Remedies.* In addition to other remedies available to the Government, the Contractor’s failure to comply with the requirements of paragraphs (c), (d), or (f) of this clause may result in—

- (1) Requiring the Contractor to remove a Contractor employee or employees from the performance of the contract;
- (2) Requiring the Contractor to terminate a subcontract;
- (3) Suspension of contract payments;
- (4) Loss of award fee, consistent with the award fee plan, for the performance period in which the Government determined Contractor non-compliance;
- (5) Termination of the contract for default or cause, in accordance with the termination clause of this contract; or
- (6) Suspension or debarment.

(f) *Subcontracts.* The Contractor shall include the substance of this clause, including this paragraph (f), in all subcontracts.

- (a) *Mitigating Factor.* The Contracting Officer may consider whether the Contractor had a Trafficking in Persons awareness program at the time of the violation as a mitigating factor when determining remedies. Additional information about Trafficking in Persons and examples of awareness programs can be found at the website for the Department of State’s Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons a <http://www.state.gov/g/tip>.