



FEDERAL ACQUISITION CERTIFICATION FOR PROGRAM AND PROJECT MANAGERS (FAC-P/PM)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Purpose.

The Federal Acquisition Certification for Program and Project Managers (FAC-P/PM) establishes general training and experience requirements for program and project managers in civilian agencies. The FAC-P/PM focuses on essential competencies needed for program and project managers; the program does not include functional or technical competencies, such as those for information technology, or agency-specific competencies.

2. Background.

The quality and effectiveness of the federal acquisition process depend on the development of a capable and competent workforce. The Services Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA, P.L. 108-136) expanded the definition of acquisition to include functions performed by program and project managers. Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) Policy Letter 05-01 Section 8(c) required the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) to make recommendations for a program and project management certification program. FAI partnered with 16 federal agencies across the federal spectrum to recommend the competencies and framework for the FAC-P/PM program.

3. Applicability.

The FAC-P/PM program applies to all executive agencies, except those subject to the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA, 10 U.S.C. §§ 1741-46). Members of the acquisition workforce are defined by agencies in accordance with requirements contained in Policy Letter 05-01. Acquisition is defined by SARA to include defining requirements, measuring contract performance, providing technical and management direction, and contracting.

The FAC-P/PM is recognized and accepted by, at a minimum, all civilian executive branch agencies. This certification is not mandatory for all program and project managers; however at a minimum, program and project managers assigned to programs considered major acquisitions must be senior level certified unless a waiver is granted by the appropriate agency official. The targeted completion date for this certification is one year from the date of assignment to the program or project. Major acquisitions are defined in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-11, Part 7, Exhibit 300. Agencies should consult with the appropriate agency personnel about what investments to consider major. For more information on the waiver process, see OMB memo dated April 25, 2007 on FAC-P/PM.

When identifying individuals to be certified under this program and other applicability requirements, the Chief Acquisition Officer (CAO) shall review the guidance provided in Policy Letter 05-01 and obtain concurrence from agency Chief Information Officers (CIOs), Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCOs), and Chief Financial Officers (CFOs) and others as appropriate. These certification requirements do not apply to Contracting Officer's Technical Representatives (COTRs) or Contracting Officer's Representatives (CORs).

4. Certification Program Oversight and Administration.

The FAI Board of Directors, in consultation with FAI, the Interagency Acquisition Career Management Committee (IACMC), the Chief Acquisition Officers Council (CAOC), the Chief Information Officers Council (CIOC) IT Workforce Committee, and other organizations as appropriate, shall provide general



program oversight and shall recommend program changes to the Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy to ensure the program reflects the needs of all civilian agencies. Changes to the program may be communicated formally through the CAOC or through other means depending on the significance of the change. FAI shall maintain the most current version of the FAC-P/PM on www.fai.gov. Essential FAI responsibilities for program administration are included below:

- develop and review competencies and training standards
- review agency programs as needed
- manage and analyze workforce information
- develop training blueprints to be used by agencies, vendors, or other organizations in assessing existing courses against these standards or developing new courses to satisfy the requirements of the FAC-P/PM

The certification process, including assessment of applications, will be managed by each agency. The agency Acquisition Career Manager (ACM) appointed by the CAO under Policy Letter 05-01, or designee, is responsible for administering the agency certification program, in accordance with this guidance and any subsequent guidance provided by OFPP or FAI. Authority for overseeing the agency FAC-P/PM program, resolving disputes, and granting certifications will be at the CAO or designee level. The CAO may delegate, in writing, certain functional responsibilities as needed to ensure effective and efficient management of this program within an agency.

Essential agency responsibilities for program administration are included below:

- identify and assess the program and project management acquisition workforce
- develop this workforce in accordance with the standards
- issue FAC-P/PMs
- monitor continuous learning achievement

5. General Information on the FAC-P/PM Requirements

a. General – The FAC-P/PM is based on essential competencies established by a cross-government, cross-functional working group. Certification is based on attaining competencies and experience associated with each of three levels and ensuring 80 hours of continuous learning is achieved every two years. The competencies and experience are cumulative across levels. An applicant can satisfy the competency requirements through successful completion of suggested training, completion of comparable education or certification programs, or demonstration of knowledge, skills, and abilities. Additional guidance can be found at www.fai.gov or through your agency Acquisition Career Manager

b. Competencies – The establishment of core competencies ensures the acquisition community develops common skills across the Federal spectrum. OFPP and Department of Defense retain responsibility for development and management of civilian and defense agency acquisition workforces respectively. The objective of the FAC-P/PM is to align a base of essential competencies across the Federal government's acquisition workforce. The current base of competencies for acquisition program and project managers will be maintained by FAI on www.fai.gov. These essential competencies will be updated periodically, expanded or otherwise modified to meet the current and future acquisition workforce requirements and emerging trends in the government's acquisition practices.

c. Certification Levels – FAC-P/PM will recognize three levels of certification—entry, mid-level/journeyman and senior/expert.

- 1) **Entry Level** – At this level, program and project managers should have:
 - Knowledge and skills to perform as a project team member.



- Ability to manage low-risk and relatively simple projects or to manage more complex projects under direct supervision of a more experienced manager.
- Overall understanding of project management practices including performance-based acquisition.
- Recognition of an agency's requirements development processes.
- Ability to define and construct various project documents, under supervision.
- Understanding of and involvement in the definition, initiation, conceptualization or design of project requirements.

Experience

At least one year of project management experience within the last five years. Project management experience includes experience constructing a work breakdown structure; preparing project analysis documents; tailoring acquisition documents to ensure that quality, effective, efficient systems or products are delivered; analyzing and/or developing requirements; monitoring performance; assisting with quality assurance; and budget development.

Training

Training at this level should be designed to develop the essential interpersonal and management competencies required of high-performing, successful program and project managers such as effective communication, conflict management, problem solving, and customer service.

2) Mid-Level/Journeyman – At this level, program and project managers should have:

- Knowledge and skills to manage projects or program segments of low to moderate risks with little or no supervision.
- Ability to apply management processes, including requirements development processes and performance-based acquisition principles, to support the agency's mission to develop an acquisition program baseline from schedule requirements, plan technology developments and demonstrations and apply agency policy on interoperability.
- Ability to identify and track actions to initiate an acquisition program or project using cost/benefit analysis.
- Ability to understand and apply the process to prepare information for a baseline review, and can assist in development of Total Ownership Cost (TOC) estimates.
- Ability to manage projects as well as program segments and distinguish between program and project work.

Experience

At least two years of program or project management experience within the last five years that includes experience at the entry level as well as experience performing market research, developing documents for risk and opportunity management, developing and applying technical processes and technical management processes, performing or participating in source selection, preparing acquisition strategies, managing performance based service agreements, developing and managing a project budget, writing a business case, and strategic planning.

Training

It is highly recommended that interactive training in these areas be designed to develop the essential interpersonal and management competencies required of high-performing, successful program and project managers such as team building, influencing/negotiating, decisiveness, partnering, and managing a diverse workforce.

3) Senior/Expert Level – At this level, program and project managers should have:

- Knowledge and skills to manage moderate to high-risk programs or projects that require significant acquisition investment and agency knowledge and experience.
- Ability to manage and evaluate a program and create an environment for program success.
- Ability to manage the requirements development process, overseeing junior-level team members in creation, development, and implementation.
- Expert ability to use, manage, and evaluate management processes, including performance-based management techniques
- Expert ability to manage and evaluate the use of earned value management as it relates to acquisition investments.



Experience

At least four years of program and project management experience on federal projects and/or programs, including managing and evaluating agency acquisition investment performance, developing and managing a program budget, building and presenting a successful business case, reporting program results, strategic planning, and high-level communication with internal and external stakeholders.

Training

It is highly recommended interactive training in these areas be designed to develop the essential interpersonal and management competencies required of high-performing, successful program and project managers such as strategic thinking, vision, and external awareness.

d. Continuous Learning – To maintain a FAC-P/PM, certified professionals are required to earn 80 continuous learning points (CLPs) of skills currency training every two years beginning the first fiscal year following the effective date of this memorandum. CLPs begin to accumulate on the date the individual is certified. Individuals are responsible for maintaining continuous learning records, and agency ACMs, or their designees, will monitor the continuous learning requirements to ensure certifications remain active.

Continuous learning activities related to program and project management activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Training activities, such as teaching, self-directed study, mentoring.
- Courses completed to achieve certification at the next higher level.
- Professional activities, such as attending/speaking/presenting at professional seminars/symposia/conferences, publishing and attending workshops.
- Educational activities, such as formal training, and formal academic programs.
- Experience such as developmental or rotation assignments.

e. Certification by a recognized organization – Civilian agencies will follow the determinations made by FAI as to which certifications by organizations outside the federal government are eligible for full or partial consideration under the FAC-P/PM. Information will be available at www.fai.gov.