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Eric Adams
Mayor

TO: Mayor Eric Adams
Comptroller Brad Lander
City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams

FROM: The Procurement Policy Board (PPB)

DATE: June 9, 2023

SUBJECT: Professional Standards for Agency Contracting Officers:
Calendar Year 2021

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to §311 of the New York City Charter, the Procurement Policy Board is required to issue an annual report setting forth the professional standards for agency contracting officers adopted by the Mayor, including any applicable certification process.

The New York City Procurement Training Institute (PTI) was established by way of Executive Order 38 of 1992 in order to provide training and education programs to City personnel in professional skills necessary for the procurement of goods, services, and construction by City agencies. Executive Order 121 of 2008 charged the Mayor's Office of Contract Services (MOCS) with developing guidelines, as appropriate, for professional qualifications for the City's senior procurement staff. MOCS' training program was created with the goal of ensuring that the agencies are regularly trained on the best practices in procurement methods and policies.

TRAINING PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In 2021, MOCS continued to strengthen and develop the PTI training program and build the foundation of a web-based training platform ProTIP (Procurement Training Institute Portal) which went live in January 2020. MOCS continues to provision senior procurement staff with access to ProTIP to utilize the various resources available. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the city continued its focus on the health and safety of its workers and inhabitants. MOCS continued to make procurement and PASSPort (Procurement and Sourcing Solutions Portal) trainings, including e-courses and webinar recordings, and learning resources available to all senior procurement personnel of Mayoral Agencies, including Agency Chief Contracting Officers (ACCOs) and Deputy Agency Chief Contracting Officers (DACCOs).

The PASSPort trainings assisted procurement professionals in effectively and efficiently navigating the platform in order to process their agency's procurements. MOCS prioritized training procurement professionals in PASSPort as the main hub of the City's procurement process, supplemented by ongoing technical assistance for each agency – from procurement planning to contracting. MOCS continued to publish and update PASSPort system user learning resources including job aids, guides, e-courses and webinar recordings. All PASSPort learning resources for City Agency users are published on BuyWise.

Additionally, MOCS continued to provide procurement policy changes and updates during the Monthly Procurement Leaders Meetings, including guest speakers from other City Agencies presenting on a variety of procurement-related topics. Examples of topics presented in 2021 include, but are not limited to, general PASSPort functionality updates and enhancements, MOCS' new inquiry submission protocols via the MOCS Service Desk, M/WBE policy updates, Data Warehouse (Introduction), Executive Order 64 overview, Contract Management Actions (CMAs), and Award Inflighting. MOCS also offers a wealth of online resources regarding the procurement process, including procurement policies and procurement methods, which are made available to agency staff on MOCS' updated BuyWise page.

MOCS is continuing to strengthen its training process and intends to better align its standards with industry-recognized requirements and expanding course offerings going forward.

TRAINING COURSE DEVELOPMENT:

Since 2019, MOCS has been working with vendor NIGP to create computer-based trainings and provide those trainings on ProTIP. All senior procurement personnel of Mayoral agencies continue to have the opportunity to take MOCS' online courses on procurement.

MOCS continues to work towards modernizing the approach to procurement training and develop more virtual procurement related trainings so procurement professionals may have easy access to a variety of courses online. Within ProTIP, public procurement professionals can partake in a growing library of eLearning courses available on-demand to enrich and deepen their general procurement knowledge.

Especially critical since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and with the new and improved learning resources MOCS can bring to the City, MOCS continues to create more self-directed online trainings, live trainings, as well as learning materials for procurement professionals and expects to provide a variety of course offerings online.

Online courses also offer public procurement professionals the freedom to complete their course load on their own time and provide a way to further their procurement skills remotely while the City undergoes changes due to the pandemic.

MANDATORY TRAINING: PROCUREMENT 101 AND ETHICS IN PROCUREMENT

There are two mandatory courses that procurement professionals must take: “Procurement 101” and “Ethics: A Crash Course for NYC Public Procurement Professionals.” First, the “Procurement 101” course is an introductory course provides an overview of the procurement environment including key stakeholders, industries, requirements for selecting methods, and an understanding of the basic steps in the procurement process from planning to registration.

Second, “Ethics: A Crash Course for NYC Public Procurement Professionals” is essential for ACCOs, DACCOs, and senior procurement staff to ensure that public procurement professionals are highly trained and held to a high degree of excellence. Public employees have the responsibility to uphold the City’s underlying procurement policy related to ethics. PPB Rule § 1-03(a) requires that all public employees responsible for the expenditure of taxpayer dollars take the appropriate measures to ensure that their conduct does not violate the public trust placed in them.

The Ethics course reinforces the City’s procurement policy by educating participants on the core ethical concepts arising in the procurement context such as accountability for compliance, conflicts of interest avoidance, confidentiality and openness in government. The course also explores the historical evolution of the Mayor’s procurement authority. Through use of interactive and creative problem-solving techniques, the Ethics course teaches participants how to identify and address ethical issues that might arise in today’s procurement world. This course is now a computer-based training that is easily accessible to all procurement professionals.

INDICATORS

By the end of the calendar year 2021, 283 Citywide procurement staff were provisioned access to ProTIP and a total of 607 e-courses were completed by 122 provisioned users. 91 ProTIP users completed Procurement 101 e-course and 75 users completed the Ethics e-course.

Furthermore, over 160 participants typically attend MOCS’ Monthly Procurement Leaders Meeting, including all ACCOs and DACCOs who are expected to attend and pass on the information to their procurement staff.