



Weekly Report August 4, 2017

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

“SBA Launches New HUBZONE Maps and Partners with U.S. Digital Service to Streamline and Enhance Online Services for Small Businesses”

U.S. Small Business Administration Press Release, July 31, 2017. Retrieved from sba.gov

The U.S. Small Business Administration announced that it has launched a new [Historically Underutilized Business Zones map](#). The HUBZone map is the first step in the modernization effort of SBA’s federal contracting programs. SBA has partnered with the U.S. Digital Service to streamline and enhance online services for small businesses. The new HUBZone map helps small businesses in urban and rural communities determine if they are eligible for participation in HUBZone’s program. It features the latest HUBZone designations, “Qualified Disaster Areas” and new features to improve usability and assist with HUBZone address assertions.

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

“2017 Service Contract Act Health and Welfare Fringe Benefit Changes”

Department of Labor Memorandum, July 25, 2017. Retrieved from wdol.gov

Effective August 1, 2017, the prevailing health and welfare fringe benefits issued under the SCA will increase to a rate of \$4.41 per hour. To comply with EO 13706, which applies to new contracts with the federal government that result from solicitations issued on or after January 1, 2017 (or that are awarded outside the solicitation process on or after January 1, 2017), an alternate health and welfare rate has been established that excludes the sick leave portion of the calculated health and welfare rate. The SCA health and welfare fringe benefits level for employees performing on contracts covered by EO 13706 will be \$4.13 per hour.

For helpful information about implementing these new rates, please read Nichole Atallah’s blog [“H&W is Increasing and Includes Offsets for Mandated Sick Leave. What Now?”](#)

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

“Evaluation of Existing Acquisition Regulations.”

Federal Register, July 31, 2017. GSA published a request in the Federal Register at 82 FR 24653, on May 30, 2017, seeking input on acquisition regulations, policies, standards, business practices and guidance issued by GSA. The comment period is extended to August 14, 2017, for interested parties to the review and submit comments on the request. [82 Fed. Reg. 35500](#).

CAPITOL HILL

“Risch, Shaheen: Small Business Committee Approves Six Bipartisan Bills.” *U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship Press Release*, August 2, 2017. Retrieved from sbc.senate.gov

- **S. 1428, Small Business Cyber Training Act of 2017**
The bill requires the Small Business Administration (SBA) to develop new cybersecurity counseling and training programs through the nationwide network of Small Business Development Centers to help small business owners prepare for cyber threats and recover when a cyber attack occurs.
- **S. 929, Invest in Rural Small Business Act of 2017**
The bill gives state governors the power to petition SBA to create a new HUBZone area in places where the unemployment rate is 120 percent of the national average. It also requires SBA to approve or deny a HUBZone application from a small business within 60 days and lowers the threshold of employees who must live in a HUBZone to 33 percent (from 35 percent).
- **S. 154, Small Business Relief from Disease Induced Economic Hardship Act of 2017**
The bill expands the definition of a disaster for which SBA may provide disaster assistance loans to include communicable diseases the federal government has issued a travel alert or travel warning. Disaster assistance loans could be used to mitigate the economic damage to small businesses caused by a disease induced travel alert or warning.
- **S. 650, Support Small Business R&D Act of 2017**
The bill requires SBA to create a program with the Internal Revenue Service to educate and train owners of small businesses and innovative startups about the availability of the federal R&D tax credit.
- **S. 690, HUBZone Investment Protection Act**
The bill increases the amount of time (from three to seven years) that a geographic area may temporarily keep its status as a HUBZone when the area no longer meets the program’s criteria (due to changing census data, for example).
- **S. 1038, Utilization of small businesses for federal contracts**
The bill directs SBA to conduct a comprehensive study on WOSB participation in multiple award contracts from the federal government and examine the participation of all other socioeconomic categories of small businesses, including service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses and those participating in the HUBZone program.

The House passed two bills relating to veteran owned and service disabled veteran owned businesses’ participation in VA contracts. The following bills will move to the Senate for consideration:

- [H.R. 2749](#) – Protecting Business Opportunities for Veterans Act of 2017: To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the oversight of contracts awarded by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to small business concerns owned and controlled by veterans, and for other purposes.
- [H.R. 2781](#) - Ensuring Veteran Enterprise Participation in Strategic Sourcing Act: To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to certify the sufficient participation of small business concerns owned and controlled by veterans and small business concerns owned by veterans with service-connected disabilities in contracts under the Federal Strategic Sourcing Initiative, and for other purposes.

OTHER NEWS

“NASA PROGRAM MAKES BUYING LEGIT IT EASIER.” *Nextgov Today*, July 31, 2017. Retrieved from nextgov.com

NASA has launched Established Authorized Reseller Program, a new program for its Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement vehicle (SEWP). The purpose of the new program is to help buyers using its governmentwide IT contract verify that the products they are buying are from legitimate sources. The program limits certain contracts to companies specifically authorized to re-sell technology products to the federal government. The program also allows the customers to determine when they want to use an authorized reseller. Non-authorized sellers, then, will be restricted from sending quotes for certain products if the original manufacturer already has an authorized reseller.

“THIS AGENCY CAN HELP FAST TRACK YOUR TECH ACQUISITIONS.” *Nextgov Today*, July 31, 2017. Retrieved from nextgov.com

The National Technical Information Service (NTIS) is able to secure faster technology procurement at federal agencies through its Joint Venture Partnership program authority. NTIS is able to pair federal agencies with vetted private-sector companies and organizations that best meet their technology needs, most commonly through an iterative and agile approach. Agencies utilizing this authority includes U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (UCIS) and Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General (HHS OIG).