contract as one entered into by the United States. Such contracts may be entered into by the United States either through a direct award by a Federal agency or through the exercise by another agency (whether governmental or private) of authority granted to it to procure services for or on behalf of a Federal agency. Thus, sometimes authority to enter into service contracts of the character described in the Act for and on behalf of the Government and on a cost-reimbursable basis may be delegated, for the convenience of the contracting agency, to a prime contractor which has the responsibility for all work to be done in connection with the operation and management of a Federal plant, installation, facility, or program, together with the legal authority to act as agency for and on behalf of the Government and to obligate Government funds in the procurement of all services and supplies necessary to carry out the entire program of operation. The contracts entered into by such a prime contractor with secondary contractors for and on behalf of the Federal agency pursuant to such delegated authority, which have such services as their principal purpose, are deemed to be contracts entered into by the United States and contracts with the Federal Government within the meaning of the Act. However, service contracts entered into by State or local public bodies with purveyors of services are not deemed to be entered into by the United States merely because such services are paid for with funds of the public body which have been received from the Federal Government as a grant under a Federal program. For example, a contract entered into by a municipal housing authority for tree trimming, tree removal, and landscaping for an urban renewal project financed by Federal funds is not a contract entered into by the United States and is not covered by the Service Contract Act. Similarly, contracts let under the Medicaid program which are financed by federally-assisted grants to the States, and contracts which provide for insurance benefits to a third party under the Medicare program are not subject to the Act.

§ 4.108 District of Columbia contracts.

Section 2(a) of the Act covers contracts (and any bid specification therefor) in excess of $2,500 which are “entered into by the * * * District of Columbia.” The contracts of all agencies and instrumentalities which procure contract services for or on behalf of the District or under the authority of the District Government are contracts entered into by the District of Columbia within the meaning of this provision. Such contracts are also considered contracts entered into with the Federal Government or the United States within the meaning of section 2(b), section 5, and the other provisions of the Act. The legislative history indicates no intent to distinguish District of Columbia contracts from the other contracts made subject to the Act, and traditionally, under other statutes, District Government contracts have been made subject to the same labor standards provisions as contracts of agencies and instrumentalities of the United States.


§ 4.109 [Reserved]

Covered Contracts Generally

§ 4.110 What contracts are covered.

The Act covers service contracts of the Federal agencies described in §§4.107–4.108. Except as otherwise specifically provided (see §§4.115 et seq.), all such contracts, the principal purpose of which is to furnish services in the United States through the use of service employees, are subject to its terms. This is true of contracts entered into by such agencies with States or their political subdivisions, as well as such contracts entered into with private employers. Contracts between a Federal or District of Columbia agency and another such agency are not within the purview of the Act; however, “subcontracts” awarded under “prime contracts” between the Small Business Administration and another Federal agency pursuant to various preferential set-aside programs, such as the 8(a) program, are covered by the
§ 4.111 Contracts “to furnish services.”

(a) “Principal purpose” as criterion. Under its terms, the Act applies to a “contract * * * the principal purpose of which is to furnish services * * *.” If the principal purpose is to provide something other than services of the character contemplated by the Act and any such services which may be performed are only incidental to the performance of a contract for another purpose, the Act does not apply. However, as will be seen by examining the illustrative examples of covered contracts in §§ 4.130 et seq., no hard and fast rule can be laid down as to the precise meaning of the term principal purpose. This remedial Act is intended to be applied to a wide variety of contracts, and the Act does not define or limit the types of services which may be contracted for under a contract the principal purpose of which is to furnish services. Further, the nomenclature, type, or particular form of contract used by procurement agencies is not determinative of coverage. Whether the principal purpose of a particular contract is the furnishing of services through the use of service employees is largely a question to be determined on the basis of all the facts in each particular case. Even where tangible items of substantial value are important elements of the subject matter of the contract, the facts may show that they are of secondary import to the furnishing of services in the particular case. This principle is illustrated by the examples set forth in § 4.131.

(b) Determining whether a contract is for “services”, generally. Except indirectly through the definition of service employee the Act does not define, or limit, the types of services which may be contracted for under a contract “the principal purpose of which is to furnish services”. As stated in the congressional committee reports on the legislation, the types of service contracts covered by its provisions are varied. Among the examples cited are contracts for laundry and dry cleaning, for transportation of the mail, for custodial, janitorial, or guard service, for packing and crating, for food service, and for miscellaneous housekeeping services. Covered contracts for services would also include those for other types of services which may be performed through the use of the various classes of service employees included in the definition in section 8(b) of the Act (see § 4.113). Examples of some such contracts are set forth in §§ 4.130 et seq. In determining questions of contract coverage, due regard must be given to the apparent legislative intent to include generally as contracts for services those contracts which have as their principal purpose the procurement of something other than the construction activity described in the Davis-Bacon Act or the materials, supplies, articles, and equipment described in the Walsh-Healey Act. The Committee reports in both the House and Senate, and statements made on the floor of the House, took note of the labor standards protections afforded by these two Acts to employees engaged in the performance of construction and supply contracts and observed: “The service contract is now the only remaining category of Federal contracts to which no labor standards protections apply” (H. Rept. 948, 89th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 1; see also S. Rept. 798, 89th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 1; daily Congressional Record, Sept. 20, 1965, p. 23497). A similar understanding of contracts principally for services as embracing contracts other than those for construction or supplies is reflected in the statement of President Johnson
Office of the Secretary of Labor

§ 4.112 Contracts to furnish services "in the United States."

(a) The Act and the provisions of this part apply to contract services furnished "in the United States," including any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Outer Continental Shelf lands as defined in the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Wake Island, and Johnston Island. The definition expressly excludes any other territory under the jurisdiction of the United States and any United States base or possession within a foreign country. Services to be performed exclusively on a vessel operating in international waters outside the geographic areas named in this paragraph would not be services furnished "in the United States" within the meaning of the Act.

(b) A service contract to be performed in its entirety outside the geographical limits of the United States as thus defined is not covered and is not subject to the labor standards of the Act. However, if a service contract is to be performed in part within and in part outside these geographic limits, the stipulations required by § 4.6 or § 4.7, as appropriate, must be included in the invitation for bids or negotiation documents and in the contract, and the labor standards must be observed with respect to that part of the contract services that is performed within these geographic limits. In such a case the requirements of the Act and of the contract clauses will not be applicable to the services furnished outside the United States.

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§ 4.113 Contracts to furnish services "through the use of service employees."

(a) Use of "service employees" in a contract performance. (1) As indicated in § 4.110, the Act covers service contracts only where "service employees" will be used in performing the services which it is the purpose of the contract to procure. A contract principally for services ordinarily will meet this condition if any of the services will be furnished through the use of any service employee or employees. Where it is contemplated that the services (of the kind performed by service employees) will be performed individually by the contractor, and the contracting officer knows when advertising for bids or concluding negotiations that service employees will in no event be used by the contractor in providing the contract services, the Act will not be deemed applicable to the contract and the contract clauses required by § 4.6 or § 4.7 may be omitted. The fact that the required services will be performed by municipal employees or employees of a State would not remove the contract from the purview of the Act, as this Act does not contain any exemption for contracts performed by such employees. Also, as discussed in paragraph (a)(3) of this section, where the services the Government wants under the contract are of a type that will require the use of service employees as defined in section 8(b) of the Act, the contract is not taken out of the purview of the Act by the fact that the manner in which the services of such employees are performed will be subject to the continuing overall supervision of bona fide executive, administrative, or professional personnel to whom the Act does not apply.

(2) The coverage of the Act does not extend to contracts for services to be performed exclusively by persons who are not service employees, i.e., persons who are bona fide executive, administrative or professional personnel as defined in part 541 of this title (see paragraph (b) of this section). A contract for medical services furnished by professional personnel is an example of such a contract.

(3) In addition, the Department does not require application of the Act to any contract for services which is performed essentially by bona fide executive, administrative, or professional employees, with the use of service employees being only a minor factor in the performance of the contract. However, the Act would apply to a contract for services which may involve the use of service employees to a significant or
substantial extent even though there is some use of bona fide executive, administrative, or professional employees in the performance of the contract. For example, contracts for drafting or data processing services are often performed by drafters, computer operators, or other service employees and are subject to the Act even though the work of such employees may be performed under the direction and supervision of bona fide professional employees.

4 In close cases involving a decision as to whether a contract will involve a significant use of service employees, the Department of Labor should be consulted, since such situations require consideration of other factors such as the nature of the contract work, the type of work performed by service employees, how necessary the work is to contract performance, the amount of contract work performed by service employees vis-a-vis professional employees, and the total number of service employees employed on the contract.

(b) "Service employees" defined. In determining whether or not any of the contract services will be performed by service employees, the definition of service employee in section 8(b) of the Act is controlling. It provides:

The term service employee means any person engaged in the performance of a contract entered into by the United States and not exempted under section 7, whether negotiated or advertised, the principal purpose of which is to furnish services through the use of service employees. The Act's labor standards will be observed in furnishing the required services. This obligation may not be relieved by shifting all or part of the work to another, and the prime contractor is jointly and severally liable with any subcontractor for any underpayments on the part of a subcontractor which would constitute a violation of the prime contract. The prime contractor is required to include the prescribed contract clauses (§§ 4.6–4.7) and applicable wage determination in all subcontracts. The appropriate enforcement sanctions provided under the Act may be invoked against both the prime contractor and the subcontractor in the event of failure to comply with any of the Act's requirements where appropriate under the circumstances of the case.

SPECIFIC EXCLUSIONS

§ 4.115 Exemptions and exceptions, generally.

(a) The Act, in section 7, specifically excludes from its coverage certain contracts and work which might otherwise come within its terms as procurements the principal purpose of which is to furnish services through the use of service employees.

(b) The statutory exemptions in section 7 of the Act are as follows:

1. Any contract of the United States or District of Columbia for construction, alteration, and/or repair, including painting and decorating of public buildings or public works;