### PROGRAM 2525-S
**CONTRACT PERIOD:** February 1, 2022 through January 31, 2023 plus 1 option year

**TITLE:** VA Mailers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>BASIS OF AWARD</th>
<th>Action Mailing Corp., Liberty, MO</th>
<th>Alcom Printing LLC, Hamburg, NY</th>
<th>Gamble Print &amp; Marketing Solutions, LLC, St. Louis, MO</th>
<th>Kessler Creative, Jacksonville, FL</th>
<th>St. Louis Presort, St. Louis, MO</th>
<th>The Print House, Brooklyn, NY</th>
<th>GPO EST.</th>
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Reviewed by: CS
U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE
Chicago regional Office

GENERAL TERMS, CONDITIONS, AND SPECIFICATIONS

For the Procurement of

VA Mailers

as requisitioned from the U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) by the

Department of Veterans Affairs

Single Award

BID OPENING: Bids shall be opened at 2 p.m. prevailing Chicago, IL time on February 9, 2022.

BID SUBMISSION: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the physical office will NOT be open. Based on this, bidders MUST submit email bids to bidschicago@gpo.gov for this solicitation. See also “ADDITIONAL EMAILED BID SUBMISSION PROVISIONS” below.

No other method of bid submission will be accepted at this time.

The program number “2525-S” and bid opening date “February 9, 2022” must be specified in the subject line of the emailed bid submission. Bids received after “2:00 p.m. Central” on the bid opening date specified above will not be considered for award.

ADDITIONAL EMAILED BID SUBMISSION PROVISIONS: The Government will not be responsible for any failure attributable to the transmission or receipt of the emailed bid including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Illegibility of bid.
2. Emails over 10 MB may not be received by GPO due to size limitations for receiving emails.
3. The bidder’s email provider may have different size limitations for sending email; however, bidders are advised not to exceed GPO’s stated limit.
4. When the email bid is received by GPO, it will remain unopened until the specified bid opening time. Government personnel will not validate receipt of the emailed bid prior to bid opening. GPO will use the prevailing time (specified as the local time zone) and the exact time that the email is received by GPO’s email server as the official time stamp for bid receipt at the specified location.

BIDDER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE: Unless specific written exception is taken, the bidder, by signing and submitting a bid, agrees with and accepts responsibility for all certifications and representations as required by the solicitation and GPO Contract Terms – Publication 310.2.

When responding by email, fill out and return one copy of all pages in “SECTION 4. – SCHEDULE OF PRICES,” including initialing/signing where indicated. Valid electronic signatures will be accepted in accordance with the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act, § 2. Electronic signatures must be verifiable of the person authorized by the company to sign bids.
NOTE: Bidder must use the exact bid pages in “SECTION 4. – SCHEDULE OF PRICES,” and MUST NOT substitute their own bid formatting in their submitted bid. Substitution may result in a determination of the bid as non-responsive.

**CONTRACT TERM:** The term of this contract is for the period beginning **Date of Award and ending January 31, 2023**, plus up to 1 optional 12-month extension period that may be added in accordance with the “Option to Extend the Contract Term” clause in this contract.

**NOTE:** This is a new GPO Term Contract Program.

**INFORMATION:** For questions about these specifications contact Chuck Szopo at 312-353-3916 x6 or cszopo@gpo.gov. Questions about these specifications should be forwarded at least 1 workday before the Bid Deadline, in order to be addressed prior to bid submission.

Email requests for new award information (available approximately 2 weeks after bid opening) to GPO Chicago Front Desk at kdodson@gpo.gov.

**Doing Business with GPO Customer Services during the Coronavirus Pandemic:**

Contractors should continue performance on contracts. Contractors must continue to fully comply with the terms and conditions of these contracts. Deliveries, proof approvals, and press sheet inspections for agencies may be impacted. It is requested that contractors contact a Government employee at the delivery location to confirm their availability to receive prior to shipping.

Schedules and other adjustments will be made in accordance with GPO Contract Terms. Caution should be used to safeguard all products should any delivery delays be imposed by the Government.

As a reminder, contractors must furnish contract compliance information required in accordance with GPO Contract Terms, Contract Clause 12: Notice of Compliance With Schedules.

Contractors should immediately contact your GPO contract administrator(s) and/or contracting officer(s) to identify impacted orders if any delay is anticipated, including temporarily closure of a production facility or the planned suspension of any services.

If you have any questions on a particular contract, please contact the Customer Services contract administrator and/or contracting officer for your contract (best method of communicating with them is via email). Office team e-mail addresses can be found at [https://www.gpo.gov/how-to-work-with-us/agency/services-for-agencies/procurement-services-team](https://www.gpo.gov/how-to-work-with-us/agency/services-for-agencies/procurement-services-team).
SECTION 1. - GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

GPO CONTRACT TERMS: Any contract which results from this Invitation for Bid will be subject to the applicable provisions, clauses, and supplemental specifications of GPO Contract Terms (GPO Publication 310.2, effective December 1, 1987 (Rev. 1-18) and GPO Contract Terms, Quality Assurance Through Attributes Program for Printing and Binding (GPO Publication 310.1, effective May 1979 (revised September 2019).


DOING BUSINESS WITH GPO: Contractors wishing to do business with the GPO are referred to the GPO web site http://www.gpo.gov/how-to-work-with-us/vendors/programs-for-vendors, where one can register as a GPO contractor using the ‘GPO Contractor Connection’ link in accordance with the furnished instructions on this page.

NOTE: Prospective and existing GPO contractors are to note that as of January 1, 2008, all contractors seeking to do business with GPO must first complete and thereafter maintain the accuracy of their GPO Contractor Connection registration with the following mandatory taxpayer information boxes: “EIN/TIN #” Employer Identification Number of Taxpayer Identification Number); “Subject to Backup Withholding” (See IRS Form W-9, available for download at http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf). GPO will withhold payment of invoices for work completed by any contractor who fails to provide this tax data in GPO Contractor Connection. Such invoices will be declared ineligible for payment until all requirements for payment, including providing this tax data in GPO Contractor Connection, have been satisfied.

PREDOMINANT PRODUCTION FUNCTION: The predominant production function is the printing and addressing. The predominant production function may NOT be sub-contracted.

QUALITY ASSURANCE LEVELS AND STANDARDS: The following levels and standards shall apply to these specifications:

Product Quality Levels:
(a) Printing Attributes – Level III.
(b) Finishing Attributes – Level III.

Inspection Levels (from ANSI/ASQC Z1.4):
(a) Non-destructive Tests – General Inspection Level I.
(b) Destructive Tests – Special Inspection Level S-2.

Specified Standards: The specified standards for the attributes requiring them shall be:

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<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Specified Standard</th>
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<tr>
<td>P-7. Type Quality and Uniformity</td>
<td>Electronic Files / Approved Proofs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-9. Solid and Screen Tint Color Match</td>
<td>Pantone Matching System</td>
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PREADWARD SURVEY: In order to determine the responsibility of the prime contractor or any subcontractor, the Government reserves the right to conduct an on-site preaward survey at the contractor’s/subcontractor's facility or to require other evidence of technical, production, managerial, financial, and similar abilities to perform, prior to the award of a contract. As part of the financial determination, the contractor in line for award may be required to provide one or more of the following financial documents:

1) Most recent profit and loss statement
2) Most recent Balance Sheet
3) Statement of cash flows
4) Current official bank statement
5) Current lines of credit (with amounts available)
6) Letter of commitment from paper supplier(s)
7) Letter of commitment from any subcontractor

The documents will be reviewed to validate that adequate financial resources are available to perform the contract requirements. Documents submitted will be kept confidential and used only for the determination of responsibility by the Government. Failure to provide the requested information in the time specified by the Government may result in the Contracting Officer not having adequate information to reach an affirmative determination of responsibility.

ADDITIONAL PREAWARD SURVEY REQUIREMENTS: Any contractor being considered for award of this program must submit the following detailed plans during the preaward survey (due diligence) process, prior to award of this contract. These proposed plans are subject to review and approval by the Government, and award will not be made prior to approval of same.

The contractor MUST NOT provide this information with their submitted bid, but must instead provide this information only upon request from the GPO contract administrator.

All requested materials and documentation must be provided within 2 workdays of request.

Production Plan: The contractor will be required to provide documentation to demonstrate how orders placed against this program will be produced. Information required must include, but is not limited to, an equipment list, breakdown of production steps and required labor, cost breakdowns, subcontractor information, sample invoice, shippers to be utilized, etc.

a. A listing of all production equipment and equipment capacities to be utilized on this contract.
b. The production capacity currently being utilized on this equipment.
c. The capacity that is available for managing and producing the volume of work products identified within this contract.
d. If new equipment is to be utilized, the documentation of the purchase order, source, delivery schedule and installation dates are required.

Security Control Plan: The contractor will be required to provide documentation to demonstrate compliance with the “Security and Privacy” section of these specifications. The contractor shall provide a security plan that addresses all aspects of physical and logical data file handling, processing and transfer, including publication and all associated mail handling as required. The security plan will address employee requirements for security training, background investigations, and credit checks. The security plan will address inventory controls, network security, visitor controls and applicable miscellaneous aspects of production. The security plan shall Meet or exceed the mandated VA security requirements and be approved by a designated VA Information Security Officer and the Privacy Officer.

The contractor shall review the security plan at least quarterly and update it as soon as changes are indicated. The security plan will be maintained throughout the life of the contract. After acceptance of the security plan, the contractor shall inform the VA representative in writing, within seven (7) calendar days of changes made to the document.

The proposed Security Control Plan must address the following:

Materials – The way that all accountable materials will be handled throughout all phases of production. This plan shall also include the method of disposal of all production waste materials in accordance with VA directive 6371 and the NIST publication 800-88.
Disposal of Waste Materials – The contractor is required to demonstrate how all waste materials used in the production of sensitive VA records will be definitively destroyed (ex. burning, pulping, shredding, macerating, or other suitable similar means). Electronic Records must be definitively destroyed in a manner that prevents reconstruction. Definitively destroying the records means the material cannot be reassembled and used in an appropriate manner in violation of law and regulations. Sensitive records are records that are national security classified or exempted from disclosure by statute, including the Privacy Act or regulation.

If the contractor selects shredding as a means of disposal, it is preferred that a cross cut shredder be used. If a strip shredder is used, the strips must not exceed one-quarter inch. The contractor must provide the location and method planned to dispose of the material. The plan must include the names of all contract officials responsible for the plan and describe their duties in relationship to the waste material plan.

Production Area – The contractor must provide a secure area(s) for the processing and storage of data for the mailer items, either a separate facility dedicated to this product, or a walled-in limited access area within the contractor’s existing facility. Access to the area(s) shall be limited to security-trained employees involved in the production of the mailers.

Part of the Security Control Plan shall include a floor plan detailing the area(s) to be used, showing existing walls, equipment to be used, and the printing and finishing locations.

Quality Control Plan: The contractor shall provide and maintain, within his own organization, an independent quality assurance organization of sufficient size and expertise to monitor the operations performed, and inspect the products of each operation to a degree and extent that will ensure the Government’s quality assurance, inspection, and acceptance provisions are met. The contractor shall perform, or have performed, the process controls, inspections and tests required to substantiate that the products provided under this contract conform to the specifications and contract requirements. The contractor shall describe in detail their quality control/quality assurance plan describing how, when, and by whom the plans will be performed.

The plan must provide for periodic samplings to be taken during the production run, a control system that will detect defective, missing, or mutilated pieces, and the actions to be taken by the contractor when defective/missing/mutilated pieces are discovered. These actions must be consistent with the requirements found in GPO Contract Terms (GPO Publication 310.2, effective December 1, 1987, (Rev. 6-01)) and any updates thereafter. A recovery system is required to replace all defective, missing, or mutilated pieces. This control system may use a unique sequential number to aid in the recovery program which has to be maintained in order to recover any missing or damaged pieces. These pieces must be reprinted and 100% accountability must be maintained throughout the run. The contractor must ensure that there are no missing or duplicated pieces.

The plan must include examples and a detailed description of all quality control samples and their corresponding inspection reports or logs the contractor will keep to document the quality control inspections performed on each run. The plan must provide for a complete audit trail (i.e., it must be possible to locate any piece of mail at any time from the point it leaves the press, up to and including the point at which the mail is delivered to a USPS facility). An explanation of the contractor’s sequential numbering system is required to understand the audit trail required for each and every piece.

Note: The Government will not, as a routine matter, request that the contractor produce individual pieces in transit within the plant, however, the contractor must demonstrate that they have an audit trail established that has the ability to comply with this type of request if and when the need arises.
The quality control plan must also include examples of the documentation and a detailed description of the random samples that document all of the contractor’s activities. Furthermore, the plan must include the names of all quality assurance officials and describe their duties in relationship to the quality control plan. The plan must include a detailed description of the number and types of inspections that will be performed as well as the records maintained documenting these activities.

The quality control plan must account for the number of pieces mailed for each order, including days when no pieces are mailed.

The Government will periodically verify that the contractor is complying with the approved quality control plan through on-site examinations and/or requiring copies of the contractor’s quality assurance records and quality assurance random copies.

**Quality Control Sample Plan:** The plan must provide a description of how the contractor will create quality control samples for periodic samplings to be taken during the production run and provide for backup and rerunning in the event of an unsatisfactory sample. The plan shall contain control systems that will detect defective, missing, or mutilated pieces.

The plan should include the sampling interval the contractor intends to utilize. The contractor will be required to create a quality control sample from each file, to be drawn from the production stream. Mailers samples should be in unsealed envelopes with contents inserted. Mailer number and file date must be indicated on each sample. The contractor must maintain samples as indicated in the contract specifications.

The plan shall detail the actions to be taken by the contractor when defective/missing/mutilated items are discovered. These actions must be consistent with the requirements found in GPO Contract Terms (GPO Publication 310.2, effective December 1, 1987, (Rev. 6-01)) or any updates thereafter.

**Verification of Production and Mailing Plan:** The contractor will be responsible for validating the integrity of every item produced in all phases of printing, packaging, and mailing and to ensure all mailpieces were correctly entered into the United States Postal System.

Mailpiece Integrity shall be defined as follows: Each mailpiece shall include all components (and only those components) intended for the designated recipient as contained in the print files received from VA.

The contractor is responsible for providing the automated print integrity control systems and processes required to prevent the commingling of mailer items intended for different recipients into a completed package. The contractor’s printing process must have automated systems that include coding and scanning technology capable of:

1. Validating the count of items in a set.
2. Validating the sequence of items in a set.
3. Validating the sequence of sets in a production batch.
4. Interrupting production if variances are detected.

Mailing integrity shall be defined as follows: All records received from the VA that are designated for printing were printed, inserted (if applicable) and entered correctly into the U.S. Postal System.

The contractor is responsible for providing the automated inserted mailpiece tracking/reporting systems and processes required to validate that 100% of all records received from VA which are designated for printing were printed, inserted (if applicable), and mailed correctly. The contractor’s inserting equipment must have automated systems that include coding and scanning technology capable of:

1. Reconciling letter counts and quantity counts from VA provided files to print order control totals provided by VA; reporting variances.
2. Uniquely identifying each Product Types within a print order.
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3. Unique identifier to be scanned after insertion to ensure all products are present and accounted for.
4. Tracking and reporting all products produced and mailed within a print order at the Product Type level.
5. Identifying and reporting all missing products that were lost or spoiled during production within a print order.
6. Generating a new production file for all missing products.
7. Tracking and reporting all products that were reproduced and mailed within a print order at the Product Type level.
8. Reconciling the total of all products produced and mailed within a print order to the control totals provided by VA; reporting all variances.
9. Reconciling the total of all products mailed to mailing totals contained on Postal Entry Forms within a print order; reporting all variances.
10. Generating a final automated summary report which provides information that all mail pieces have been scanned, after insertion, verifying that all pieces for each mail package and file date are accounted for after contents are inserted, and event information on any spoiled or missing pieces verifying that they were scanned and accounted for. A copy of the summary report must be submitted with the matching GPO 712 form(s).

The contractor must generate an automated audit report when necessary showing the tracking of all products throughout all phases of production for each mailpiece. This audit report will contain all information identified above for each phase of printing, packaging, and mailing.

All product tracking/reporting data must be retained in electronic form for 120 calendar days after mailing, and must be made available to VA for auditing of contractor performance upon request. The contractor must maintain quality control samples, inspection reports, and records for a period of no less than 120 calendar days subsequent to the date of the check tendered for final payment by the GPO. The Government will periodically verify that the contractor is complying with the approved quality control plan through on-site examinations and/or requesting copies of the contractor’s quality assurance records and quality assurance random copies.

Unique Identification Number Plan: Unique identifying numbers will be used to track each individual product, thereby providing 100% accountability. This enables the contractor to track each product through completion of the project. The contractor may create their own sequence number and run date to facilitate their presorting and inserting process but must maintain the original Unique ID (UID) for Management Information (MI) reporting.

Recovery System: A recovery system will be required to ensure all defective, missing, or mutilated pieces detected are identified, reprinted, and replaced. The contractor’s recovery system must use unique sequential alpha/numeric identifiers assigned to each piece (including quality control samples) to aid in the recovery and replacement of any defective/missing/mutilated pieces, and must be capable of tracking and/or locating any individual piece of mail from the time it leaves the press, up to and including when it is off-loaded to the USPS facility. An explanation of the contractor’s sequential numbering system is required to understand the audit trail required for each and every piece.

Note: The Government will not, as a routine matter, request that the contractor produce individual pieces in transit within the plant, however, the contractor must demonstrate they will have an audit trail established that has the ability to comply with this type of request if and when the need arises.

Material Handling and Inventory Control: This plan should explain in detail how the following materials will be handled: incoming raw materials; work-in-progress materials; quality control inspection materials; USPS inspection materials; and all outgoing materials cleared for USPS pickup/delivery.

Personnel Plan: This plan should include a description of the training programs employees will be given to familiarize them with the requirements of this program. If employees have current and adequate security clearances, please note.

Postage Plan: Contractor must provide a postage cost breakout during the certification. The VA will pay the postage and furnish the permit information to the contractor. The mail class will be the VA’s mail anywhere permit/1090.
POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS:

After award, the contractor may be required to have a post-award phone conference call with Government personnel from the VA and/or GPO, and additionally will be required to produce various PDF proofs for approval prior to beginning production of the first GPO Form 2511 Print Order.

Actual print production begins upon completion of these certifications.

Required post-award implementation and certification of VA security requirements (shown below) must be completed within 10 workdays after Date of Award, or completed by another documented VA-approved date.

- All applicable contractor employees must successfully complete VA Cyber Security Awareness training and annual refresher training as required.
- Contractor shall provide to the VA points of contact and the GPO contract administrator a copy of the training certificates produced at the completion of each training session, for each applicable employee within ten (10) workdays of notification of contract award and annually thereafter, as required.
- All applicable contractor employees must successfully complete any additional cyber security or privacy training, as required.

GOVERNMENT IN PLANT INSPECTIONS: The Government reserves the right to have Government representative(s) inspect any operation, including the security controls and privacy practices implemented by the contractor under this contract at the start of production, and/or at any time during production. The Government may conduct an inspection with 10 workdays notice, or on short notice, or unannounced, in the event of a security incident or at any other time. The contractor’s full cooperation is required.

SECURITY AND PRIVACY REQUIREMENTS:

Confidentiality of Information: Information regarding any individual is of a confidential nature and may be used only for the purposes of producing the requirements of this contract. All materials containing confidential information, including but not exclusive to Government furnished data, imaged forms, and scrap, must be handled so that information does not have any unauthorized use. All scrap generated with any information regarding any individual person must be shredded, incinerated, otherwise destroyed beyond recognition. Any media (files, disks, etc.) produced by the VA and sent to the contractor MUST be returned to the VA upon completion of the specific order. Contractor must return this material via an overnight delivery service to prevent theft or accidental use.

All contractors and contractor personnel shall be subject to the Federal laws, regulations, standards and VA Directives and Handbooks, regarding information system security as delineated in this contract. Contractors must follow policies and procedures outlined in VA Directive 6500, Information Security Program and its handbooks to ensure appropriate security controls are in place.

Protection of Confidential Information:

(a) The contractor shall restrict access to all confidential information obtained from the Department of Veterans Affairs in the performance of this contract to those employees and officials who need it to perform the contract. Employees and officials who need access to confidential information for performance of the contract will be determined at the Post-Award Conference between the Contracting Officer and the responsible contractor representative.
(b) The contractor shall process all confidential information obtained from VA in the performance of this contract under the immediate supervision and control of authorized personnel, and in a manner that will protect the confidentiality of the records in such a way that unauthorized persons cannot retrieve any such records.
(c) The contractor shall inform all personnel with access to the confidential information obtained from VA in the performance of this contract of the confidential nature of the information and the safeguards required to protect this information from improper disclosure.

(d) For knowingly disclosing information in violation of the Privacy Act, the contractor and the contractor employees may be subject to the criminal penalties as set forth in 5 U.S.C Section 552a (i)(1), which is made applicable to contractors by 5 U.S.C. 552a (m)(1) to the same extent as employees of the VA. For knowingly disclosing confidential information as described in section 1106 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1306), the contractor and contractor’s employees may also be subject to the criminal penalties as set forth in that provision.

(e) The contractor shall assure that each contractor employee with access to confidential information knows the prescribed rules of conduct, and that each contractor employee is aware that he/she may be subject to criminal penalties for violations of the Privacy Act.

(f) All confidential information obtained from VA for use in the performance of this contract shall, at all times, be stored in an area that is physically safe from unauthorized access.

(g) The Government reserves the right to conduct on-site visits to review the contractor’s documentation and in-house procedures for protection of confidential information.

**VA Information Custodial Requirements:**

1. Information made available to the contractor by VA for the performance and/or administration of this contract or information developed by the contractor in performance and/or administration of the contract shall be used only for those purposes and shall not be used in any other way without the prior written agreement of the Contracting Officer. This clause expressly limits the contractor’s rights to use data as described in Rights in Data - General, Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 52.227-14(d) (1).

2. Information generated by a contractor as a part of the contractor’s normal business operations, such as medical records created in the course of providing treatment, is subject to a review by the Office of General Counsel (OGC) to determine if the information is the property of VA and subject to VA policy. If the information is determined by OGC to not be the property of VA, the restrictions required for VA information will not apply.

3. VA information will NOT be commingled with any other data on the contractor’s information systems/media storage systems in order to ensure VA requirements related to data protection and media sanitization can be met. VA also reserves the right to conduct IT resource inspections to ensure data separation and on-site inspection of information destruction/media sanitization procedures to ensure they are in compliance with VA policy requirements.

4. Prior to termination or completion of this contract, the contractor will not destroy information received from VA or gathered or created by the contractor in the course of performing this contract without prior written approval by VA. Any data destruction done on behalf of VA by a contractor must be done in accordance with National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) requirements as outlined in VA Directive 6300, Records and Information Management and its Handbook 6300.1 Records Management Procedures, and applicable VA Records Control Schedules. These Directives are available at: [http://www1.va.gov/vapubs/](http://www1.va.gov/vapubs/).

5. The contractor will receive, gather, store, back up, maintain, use, disclose and dispose of VA information only in compliance with the terms of the contract and applicable Federal and VA information confidentiality and security laws, regulations and policies. Applicable Federal information security regulations include all Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) and Special Publications (SP) issued by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). If Federal or VA information confidentiality and security laws, regulations and policies become applicable to the VA information or information systems after execution of the contract, or if NIST issues or updates applicable FIPS after execution of this contract, the parties agree to negotiate in good faith to implement the information confidentiality and security laws, regulations and policies, including FIPS or SP, in this contract.

6. Contractors collecting, storing, or disseminating personal identifiable information (PII) or protected health information (PHI) data must conform to all pertinent regulations, laws, and VA directives related to privacy. Contractors must provide access for VA privacy reviews and assessments and provide appropriate documentation as directed.
Note: Personally identifiable information is defined as any information which can be used to distinguish or trace and individual’s identity, such as their name, social security number, Veterans identification number, biometric records, etc., alone or when combined with other personal or identifying information which is linked or linkable to a specific individual, such as date and place of birth, mother’s maiden name, etc.

7. The contractor shall not make copies of VA information except as necessary to perform the terms of the agreement or to preserve electronic information stored on contractor electronic storage media for restoration in case any electronic equipment or data used by the contractor needs to be restored to an operating state.

8. If VA determines that the contractor has violated any of the information confidentiality, privacy, and security provisions of the contract, it shall be sufficient grounds for the Government to terminate the contract for default or terminate for cause under the GPO Printing Procurement Regulations (GPO Publication 305.3).

9. If a Veterans Health Administration (VHA) contract is terminated for cause, the associated business associate agreement (BAA) will also be terminated and appropriate actions taken in accordance with VHA Handbook 1600.01 Business Associates.

10. Contractor will store, transport or transmit VA sensitive information in an encrypted form, using a VA-approved encryption application that meets the requirements of NIST’s FIPS 140-2 standard.

11. The contractor’s firewall and Web services security controls, if applicable, shall meet or exceed VA’s minimum requirements. VA directives are available on the VA directives Web site at http://www1.va.gov/vapubs/.

12. Except for uses and disclosures of VA information authorized by this contract for performance of the contract, the contractor may use and disclose VA information only in two other situations: (1) in response to a qualifying order of a court of competent jurisdiction; or, (2) with VA’s prior written approval. The contractor will refer all requests for, demands for production of, or inquiries about, VA information and information systems to VA for response.

13. Notwithstanding the provision above, the contractor shall NOT release medical quality assurance records protected by 38 U.S.C. 5705 or records pertaining to drug addiction, sickle cell anemia, alcoholism or alcohol abuse, or infection with human immunodeficiency virus protected under 38 U.S.C. 7332 under any circumstances, including in response to a court order, and shall immediately refer such court orders or other inquiries to VA for response.

14. The contractor will not use technologies banned in VA in meeting the requirements of the contract (e.g., Bluetooth enabled devices).

Security Incident Investigation:

1. The term “security incident” means an event that has, or could have, resulted in unauthorized access to, loss of, or damage to VA assets or sensitive information, or an action that breaches VA security procedures. The contractor shall immediately notify the GPO and VA representative and simultaneously, the designated ISO/Privacy Officer for the contract of any known or suspected security/privacy incidents, or any unauthorized disclosure of sensitive information, including that contained in system(s) to which the contractor has access.

2. To the extent known by the contractor, the contractor’s notice to GPO and VA will identify the information involved, the circumstances surrounding the incident (including to whom, how, when, and where the VA information/assets were placed at risk or compromised), and any other information that the contractor considers relevant.

3. The contractor will simultaneously report the incident to the appropriate law enforcement entity(ies) of jurisdiction, including the GPO and VA Offices of the Inspector General and Security and Law Enforcement, in instances of theft or break-in or other criminal activity. The contractor and its employees will cooperate with VA and any law enforcement authority responsible for the investigation and prosecution of any possible criminal law violation(s) associated with any incident. The contractor will cooperate with VA in any civil litigation to recover VA information, obtain monetary, or other compensation from a third party for damages arising from any incident, or obtain injunctive relief against any third party arising from, or related to, the incident.

4. To the extent practicable, the contractor shall mitigate any harmful effects on individuals whose VA Information was accessed or disclosed in a security incident. In the event of a data breach with respect to any VA sensitive information processed or maintained by the contractor under the contract, the contractor is responsible for liquidated damages to be paid to VA.
5. If a security incident (as described above) occurs at the contractor’s facility, the actual damage to the Government for the incident will be difficult or impossible to determine. Therefore, pursuant to the “Liquidated Damages” clause (GPO Contract Terms, Publication 310.2), in lieu of actual damages, the contractor shall pay to the Government as fixed, agreed, and liquidated damages for each record, or part thereof, involved in the incident, the amount set forth below. Liquidated damages will be assessed against that record, or part thereof, which has been compromised. Liquidated damages will not be assessed against that record or part thereof that has not been compromised. The amount of damages will be computed at $37.50 per record, or part thereof, compromised; provided that the minimum amount of liquidated damages shall not be less than $5.00 for the entire order and not more than 50% of the total value of the entire order. The total damages assessed against a contractor shall in no case exceed 50% of the total value of the entire order. Payment of an order will be withheld until evidence of steps taken to prevent the recurrence of a security incident has been taken.

Security Training:

1. All contractor employees requiring access to VA sensitive information shall complete the following before being granted access to VA sensitive information:
   - Sign and acknowledge understanding of, and responsibilities for, compliance with the Contractor Rules of Behavior (Attachment A) relating to access to VA information and information systems;
   - Successfully complete VA Cyber Security Awareness training and annual refresher training as required including return of completion certificates for the Government record;
   - Successfully complete any additional cyber security or privacy training, as required for VA personnel with equivalent information system access.

2. The contractor shall provide to the GPO contract and VA points of contact a copy of the training certificates for each applicable employee (for the required training as stated above) within ten (10) workdays of notification of contract award and annually thereafter, as required. These online courses are located at the following web site: https://www.tms.va.gov.

3. Failure to complete this mandatory training within the timeframe required will be grounds for suspension or termination of all physical and/or electronic access privileges and removal from work on the contract until such time as the training is completed.

SAFEGUARD MEASURES FOR PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION (PII) DATA:
VA policies require documentation that PII data sent to contractor remains secure while projects are in progress and is eventually destroyed in such a way that it cannot be retrieved or restored after being deleted from the contractor’s hard drives/systems.

PRIVACY ACT NOTIFICATION: This procurement action requires the contractor to do one or more of the following: design, develop, or operate a system of records on individuals to accomplish an agency function in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974, Public Law 93-579, December 31, 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a) and applicable agency regulations. Violation of the Act may involve the imposition of criminal penalties. For “PRIVACY ACT” purposes, “agency” refers to the VA. PRIVACY ACT

(a) The contractor agrees:
   (1) to comply with the Privacy Act of 1974 and the rules and regulations issued pursuant to the Act in the design, development, or operation of any system of records on individuals in order to accomplish an agency function when the contract specifically identifies (i) the system or systems of records and (ii) the work to be performed by the contractor in terms of any one or combination of the following: (A) design, (B) development, or (C) operation;
   (2) to include the solicitation notification contained in this contract in every solicitation and resulting subcontract and in every subcontract awarded without a solicitation when the statement of work in the proposed subcontract requires the design, development, or operation of a system of records on individuals to accomplish an agency function; and
   (3) to include this clause, including this paragraph (3), in all subcontracts awarded pursuant to this contract which require the design, development, or operation of such a system of records.
(b) In the event of violations of the Act, a civil action may be brought against the agency involved where the violation concerns the design, development, or operation of a system of records on individuals to accomplish an agency function, and criminal penalties may be imposed upon the officers or employees of the agency where the violation concerns the operation of a system of records on individuals to accomplish an agency function. For purposes of the Act when the contract is for the operation of a system of records on individuals to accomplish an agency function, the contractor and any employee of the contractor is considered to be an employee of the agency.

(c) The terms used in this clause have the following meanings:
   1. “Operation of a system of records” means performance of any of the activities associated with maintaining the system of records including the collection, use, and dissemination of records.
   2. “Record” means any item, collection or grouping of information about an individual that is maintained by an agency, including, but not limited to, his education, financial transactions, medical history, and criminal or employment history and that contains his name, or the identifying number, symbol, or other identifying particular assigned to the individual, such as a finger or voice print or a photograph.
   3. “System of records” on individuals means a group of any records under the control of any agency from which information is retrieved by the name of the individual or by some identifying number, symbol, or other identifying particular assigned to the individual.

CRIMINAL SANCTIONS: It is incumbent upon the contractor to inform its officers and employees of the penalties for improper disclosure imposed by the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552a. Specifically, 5 U.S.C. 552a (i)(1) which is made applicable to contractors by 5 U.S.C. 552a (m)(1), provides that any officer or employee of an agency, who by virtue of his/her employment of official position, has possession of or access to agency records which contain individually identifiable information, the disclosure of which is prohibited by the Privacy Act or regulations established there under, and who knowing that disclosure of the specific material is prohibited, willfully discloses the material in any manner to any person or agency not entitled to receive it, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and fined not more than $10,000.00.

QUALITY CONTROL (QC): Production items should be produced in accordance with all established quality control checks and procedures to ensure that the imaged forms and letters are accurate. Any quality control checks and requirements established such as the use of review sheets, unique mark, tray checks, insertion checks and envelope sealing must be adhered to at all times.

Copies of Imaging, Mailing Receipts and Status Reports: Contractor is required to provide copies of all pages of all mailing receipts (GPO Form 712, PS Form 3600-R or equivalents) to the VA. These reports should also include the actual date mailed, quantity deemed unqualified for mailing with a separate description of problems making them un-mailable, and quantities of statements requiring reprinting. Additionally, any other pertinent information should be provided or as requested by the Government.

Contractor is responsible for reviewing all factors which could affect mail acceptance including ensuring that:
- The Post Office location for the mailings is familiar with Government permit imprint mail.
- Specific requirements for mail using a Government permit imprint are met, including requirements which may affect the wording of the permit imprint and/or requirements that require additional paperwork and account set up prior to the mailing being accepted by the Postal Service.
- Problems are resolved sufficiently before the start of mailing such that delays in mailing do not occur.

QUALITY CONTROL SAMPLE PULLS: The contractor will be required to pull one (1) test sample for every 1,000 mailers. For orders placed with a quantity of less than 1,000 copies, contractor must pull 1 random test sample. These samples are a duplicate of an addressee, and the contractor is responsible for ensuring that the actual mailing for that addressee mails.

For Quality Control Sample Pulls, the mailers must be complete – all required items printed/imaged, bound/constructed, and inserted in accordance with these specifications.
Quality Control Sample Pulls for an order must be signed and dated by the contractor operator and placed in the contractor’s secure archive for one (1) year from the order delivery date. These samples do not deliver to the VA unless requested.

Upon request from the Government, Quality Control Sample Pulls must be shipped within one (1) workday via overnight shipping at the contractor’s expense, to the requesting Government point of contact.

The Quality Control Sample Pulls are in addition to the total quantity ordered. No additional charges will be allowed.

**OPTION TO EXTEND THE CONTRACT TERM:** The Government has the option to extend the term of this contract for a period of 12 months by written notice to the contractor not later than 30 days before the contract expires. If the Government exercises this option, the extended contract shall be considered to include this clause, except, the total duration of the contract may not exceed 1 year as a result of, and including, any extension(s) added under this clause. Further extension may be negotiated under the “Extension of Contract Term” clause. See also “Economic Price Adjustment” for periodic pricing revision.

**EXTENSION OF CONTRACT TERM:** At the request of the Government, the term of any contract resulting from this solicitation may be extended for such period of time as may be mutually agreeable to the GPO and the contractor.

**ECONOMIC PRICE ADJUSTMENT:** The pricing under this contract shall be adjusted in accordance with this clause, provided that in no event will any pricing adjustment be made that would exceed the maximum permissible under any law in effect at the time of the adjustment. There will be no adjustment for orders placed during the first period specified below. Pricing will thereafter be eligible for adjustment during the second and any succeeding performance period(s). For each performance period after the first, a percentage figure will be calculated as described below and that figure will be the economic price adjustment for that entire next period. Pricing adjustments under this clause are not applicable to reimbursable postage or transportation costs, or to paper, if paper prices are subject to adjustment by separate clause elsewhere in this contract.

For the purpose of this clause, performance under this contract will be divided into successive periods. The first period will extend from Date of award to January 31, 2023, and the second and any succeeding period(s) will extend for 12 months from the end of the last preceding period, except that the length of the final period may vary. The first day of the second and any succeeding period(s) will be the effective date of the economic price adjustment for that period.

Pricing adjustments in accordance with this clause will be based on changes in the seasonally adjusted “Consumer Price Index For All Urban Consumers - Commodities Less Food” (Index) published monthly in the CPI Detailed Report by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The economic price adjustment will be the percentage difference between Index averages as specified in this paragraph. An index called the variable index will be calculated by averaging the monthly Indexes from the 12-month interval ending three (3) months prior to the beginning of the period being considered for adjustment. This average is then compared to the average of the monthly Indexes for the 12-month interval ending November 1, 2021, called the base index. The percentage change (plus or minus) of the variable index from the base index will be the economic price adjustment for the period being considered for adjustment.

The Government will notify the contractor by contract modification specifying the percentage increase or decrease to be applied to invoices for orders placed during the period indicated. The contractor shall apply the percentage increase or decrease against the total price of the invoice less reimbursable postage or transportation costs and separately adjusted paper prices. Payment discounts shall be applied after the invoice price is adjusted.

If the Government exercises an option, the extended contract shall be considered to include this economic price adjustment clause.
ASSIGNMENT OF JACKETS, PURCHASE AND PRINT ORDERS: A GPO jacket number will be assigned and a purchase order issued to the contractor to cover work performed. The purchase order will be supplemented by an individual “print order” for each job placed with the contractor. The print order, when issued, will indicate the quantity to be produced and any other information pertinent to the particular order.

ORDERING: Items to be furnished under the contract shall be ordered by the issuance of print orders by the Government. Orders may be issued under the contract from Date of Award and ending January 31, 2023 plus for such additional period(s) as the contract is extended. All print orders issued hereunder are subject to the terms and conditions of the contract. The contract shall control in the event of conflict with any print order. A print order shall be “issued” for purposes of the contract, when it is either deposited in the U.S. Postal Service mail or otherwise furnished to the contractor in conformance with the schedule.

The security and confidentiality of Government legal documents handled and stored by the contractor during the execution of this contract are of critical importance. Should the preaward survey reveal a security deficiency that jeopardizes or otherwise compromises the secure and confidential operation of this contract as specified herein, the Government reserves the right to declare the contractor non-responsible if such a deficit cannot be remedied by the contractor in a timely fashion and at no additional expense to the Government.

REQUIREMENTS: This is a requirements contract for the items and for the period specified herein. Shipment/delivery of items or performance of work shall be made only as authorized by orders issued in accordance with the clause entitled “Ordering”.

The quantities of items specified herein are estimates only, and are not purchased hereby. Except as may be otherwise provided in this contract; if the Government’s requirements for the items set forth herein do not result in orders in the amounts or quantities described as “estimated”, it shall not constitute the basis for an equitable price adjustment under this contract. The Government shall not be required to purchase from the contractor, requirements in excess of the limit on total orders under this contract, if any.

Orders issued during the effective period of this contract and not completed within that time are to be completed by the contractor within the time specified in the order. The rights and obligations of the contractor and the Government respecting those orders shall be governed by the terms of this contract to the same extent as if completed during the effective period of this contract.

When production covered by this contract is required before the dates specified under this contract, and the contractor will not accept the accelerated schedule, the Government may procure this requirement from another source for that accelerated schedule.

The Government may issue orders which provide for shipment/delivery to, or performance at, multiple destinations.

Subject to any limitations elsewhere in this contract, the contractor shall furnish to the Government all items set forth herein which are called for by print orders issued in accordance with the “Ordering” clause of this contract.

OPTIONS: Whenever an option is indicated in the specifications, it is the Government’s option, not the contractor’s, unless it is specifically stated otherwise.

PAYMENT: Submitting invoices for payment via the GPO fax gateway (if no samples are required) utilizing the GPO barcode coversheet program application is the most efficient method of invoicing. Instruction for using this method can be found at the following web address:


NOTE: In addition, contractor is required to email delivery receipts and final invoice in PDF format to originator of each GPO Form 2511 print order. All documents should be in one PDF file. Originator’s email address will be found at the bottom of each GPO Form 2511 print order. Subject line of the email will be the print order number.

**CONTRACTOR MUST ITEMIZE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT TO MATCH THE SCHEDULE OF PRICES FORMAT. FAILURE TO ITEMIZE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCHEDULE OF PRICES MAY RESULT IN DELAYED PAYMENT.**

NOTE: Use of the Secure Server Workspace (SFTP): Print orders, artwork, distribution lists and all furnished materials will be provided via the Secure Server Workspace. When required, PDF soft proofs must be sent via the Secure Server Workspace. All reports, postal receipts, etc. must be archived on the Secure Server Workspace. Use of this workspace must be supplemented by timely email notifications from the contractor to the VA points of contact below, or other contacts as designated by the VA through email, notation on the GPO Form 2511 Print Order, or other means, in order to document the upload or download of all critical documents.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Brian Mano, Production Manager
Email: brian.mano@va.gov

Courtesy Copy of Invoice: Contractor is required to upload a copy of each print order invoice voucher (including postal statements) to the VA secure online workspace within two workdays of fax submission to GPO FMCE.

**RECEIPTS FOR DELIVERY:** Contractor must furnish their own receipts for delivery, and postal statements for mailing, as suitable. These receipts must include the GPO jacket, program and print order numbers, total quantity shipped and/or delivered, number of cartons and quantity per carton; date delivery made; and signature of the Government agent accepting delivery. Original copy of these receipts or other acceptable proof must accompany the contractor’s voucher for payment.

NOTE: Number of pieces listed on the postal receipts MUST match the number of recipients in the supplied distribution lists, with an accounting for undeliverables, etc.

**CONTRACTOR’S INVOICE FOR PAYMENT MUST BE ITEMIZED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCHEDULE OF PRICES. FAILURE TO ITEMIZE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCHEDULE OF PRICES MAY RESULT IN DELAYED PAYMENT.**
SECTION 2. - SPECIFICATIONS

SCOPE: These specifications cover the secure production of Letters and addressed envelopes, requiring such operations as pickup of furnished materials, electronic prepress, proofs, address list processing, printing in black only for the letters and 1 pantone for the envelopes with variable data personalization on the envelopes, trimming, envelope construction, collating, inserting, addressing, mailing and sample delivery.

TITLE: Mailers.

Although this is an option year contract, all estimates, averages, etc. are based on one year’s production.

FREQUENCY OF ORDERS: Orders are anticipated to be approximately 1 per week.

QUANTITY: Orders will be approximately 6,500 mailed sets.

Each set will include:
One Letter, static printing – black ink only.
One Envelope (with inside security tint), with pantone 541 blue static printing and black variable data printing (addresses).

All quantities mailed are +/- NONE after list processing. It is the contractor’s responsibility to produce any additional quantities required for samples and spoilage at no additional charge to the Government.

It is anticipated the agency will place orders within 1 week after award.

TRIM SIZE AND NUMBER OF PAGES:

Letters: 8.5 x 11” folded to 3-2/3 x 8.5”– face only.
Non-Window Envelopes: 4-1/8 (plus flap) x 9.5” – face of envelope with inside security tint after construction.

GOVERNMENT TO FURNISH:

Secure Server Workspace (SFTP): Contractor is required to create and maintain a Secure Server Workspace (Contractor-Hosted Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP) Server) for upload and download of documents related to this program, such as artwork, mail lists, reports, etc. The Contractor must be able to accept files electronically via a contractor-hosted Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP) server. Appropriate login instructions and protocol must be provided at the time of award. Print orders, artwork, distribution lists and all furnished materials may/will be provided by the agency via the Secure Server Workspace. When required, PDF soft proofs must be sent via the Secure Server Workspace. All reports, postal receipts, etc. must be archived on the Secure Server Workspace. Use of this workspace must be supplemented by timely email notifications from the contractor to the VA points of contact, in order to document the upload or download of all critical documents.

Artwork: High resolution artwork files will be uploaded by the VA agency to the Secure Server Workspace. Electronic media will be generated using Adobe Creative Suite and Microsoft Office applications. At the Government’s option, files may be provided via other electronic method such as via email, downloadable link, etc. Artwork files for static text matter/artwork will be furnished immediately after contract award and are to be held for re-use throughout the term of the contract. In the event that any of the static text matter/artwork changes, new files will be furnished to the contractor.

The static text matter and artwork for all items will be furnished as Adobe Acrobat print ready PDF files. In some instances MS Word files may be supplied. All fonts will be embedded. The contractor is cautioned that the furnished fonts are the property of the Government and/or its contractors. All furnished fonts are to be eliminated from the contractor’s archive immediately after completion of the contract.
A black and white VA logo will be provided for use on the envelopes in the upper left corner.

Distribution Lists: One per order, ASCII or MS Excel file(s) will be supplied for distribution lists and will include the variable data and template information for each addressee. These files will be transferred to the Secure Server Workspace for retrieval by the contractor. At the Government’s option, lists may be provided via other electronic method such as via downloadable link, etc.

Print Order (GPO Form 2511): Print orders will generally be sent via email. At the Government’s option, print orders may be furnished as a hard copy, a faxed copy, or by SFTP. Contractor must be able to accept via email.

DATA RIGHTS: All data and materials furnished and/or produced in the performance of this contract shall be the sole property of the Government. The contractor agrees not to assert rights or to establish any claim to such data/materials in whole or in part in any manner or form, or to authorize others to do so, without prior written consent of the Contracting Officer.

FONTS: Any fonts provided are the property of the ordering VA and are provided for use on this contract only. Using the furnished fonts on any job other than the one for which the fonts were submitted violates copyright law. All fonts should be eliminated from contractor's archive immediately after completion of the production run.

CONTRACTOR TO FURNISH: All materials and operations, other than those listed under “Government to Furnish,” necessary to produce the product(s) in accordance with these specifications.

EXAMINATION OF FURNISHED MATERIAL: Contractor must immediately upon receipt perform a basic check (preflight) of the furnished media and publishing files to assure accurate output of the required reproduction image. Additional charges or extensions in schedule will not be allowed due to contractor’s failure to thoroughly examine material.

ELECTRONIC PREPRESS: Prior to image processing, the contractor shall perform a basic check (preflight) of the furnished media and publishing files to assure accurate output of the required reproduction image. Any errors, media damage or data corruption that might interfere with proper file imaging must be reported to the VA and cszopo@gpo.gov in sufficient time to comply with the shipping schedule. The contractor shall create or alter any necessary trapping, set proper screen angles and screen frequency, and define file output selection for the imaging device being utilized. Furnished files must be imaged as necessary to meet the assigned quality level. Contractor must maintain the latest version of all programs and operating systems used in this contract as well as maintain backwards-compatibility.

Contractor may occasionally be required to perform minor prepress adjustments such as adjusting pages in furnished electronic files as needed to ensure adequate margins, converting colors, adding bleeds, and/or perform other similar prepress adjustments. In order to make these adjustments, contractor may be required to revise either supplied PDFs or native files. Prior to making revisions, the contractor shall copy the furnished files and make all changes to the copy.

These required electronic prepress operations must be provided at no additional charge to the Government.

TYPESETTING: It is anticipated that the VA will provide all artwork, including any adjustments for author alterations. Occasionally, orders may require the contractor to perform type or content corrections to furnished artwork, such as correcting misspellings. The contractor must match specified or existing typefaces and sizes as ordered. Acceptance of any similar alternate typeface is at the discretion of the VA.

Separate charges will be allowed for these operations in the “SCHEDULE OF PRICES.”
DIGITAL DELIVERABLES: The VA must always have returned to them the most up-to-date versions of all files related to this program, in the same format as furnished, with additional formats provided as suitable or as requested. If changes are made to the artwork and/or the list files that are furnished (during the proofing stage, at upon request, or per the specifications), the contractor must upload to the secure online workspace, or at the Government’s option, create a CD with all changes incorporated therein for return to the VA after completion of the order.

PDF PROOFS AND PDF ADDRESSING SAMPLE PROOFS:

AT THE START OF THE CONTRACT.

PDF proofs and addressing PDF samples may be required at the start of the contract. Proofs must allow the VA to confirm how the variable data will look (display the name merge, etc.).

Email 20 addressing PDF proofs at the start of the contract. Any contractor-applied codes or barcodes must be included for VA review and approval. Approved addressing format/style must be maintained throughout the contract, or must be re-approved if contractor desires revisions.

Contractor to submit one "Press Quality" PDF "soft" proof (for content only) using the same Raster Image Processor (RIP) that will be used to produce the final printed product. PDF proof will be evaluated for text flow, image position, and color breaks. Proof will not be used for color match.

A copy of the GPO Print Order Form 2511 and PDF addressing samples. Email tracking information after shipping any of these items to brian.mano@va.gov. Contractor must confirm receipt of these items by calling: Brian Mano at the VA at Office: 202-461-5002 or Mobile: 202-430-0011.

AT THE START OF PRODUCTION.

After proof approval at the start of the contract, usually NO proofs will be required for each mailing. The contractor will be responsible for performing all necessary proofreading to ensure that the final product is in conformity with the copy/data submitted. The contractor will be responsible for reporting immediately to the VA and GPO if there are any discrepancies or concerns with furnished materials.

On occasion, for an individual print order, PDF proofs may be ordered, usually as indicated on the GPO Form 2511 print order.

PDF proofs should be uploaded to the Secure Server Workspace. The contractor must email all VA and GPO points of contact a notification of the upload. Contractor must confirm receipt of PDF proofs by calling: Brian Mano at the VA – Office: 202-461-5002 or Mobile: 202-430-0011.

PDF proofs, if ordered, will be withheld not more than 2 workdays. PDF proof approval will be made by the VA.

Contractor must not print prior to receipt of an “OK to Print/Mail”.

Contractor to submit "Press Quality" PDF "soft" proofs (for content only) using the same Raster Image Processor (RIP) that will be used to produce the final printed product. PDF proofs will be evaluated for text flow, image position, and color breaks. PDF proofs will not be used for color match.

If any contractor's errors are serious enough in the opinion of the GPO to require revised proofs, the revised proofs are to be provided at no expense to the Government. No extra time can be allowed for this reproofing; such operations must be accomplished within the original production schedule allotted in the specifications.
AUTHOR’S ALTERATIONS: Author’s alterations (AA’s) may occur occasionally during the proofing stage. At the Government’s option, changes may be supplied by the VA or requested from the contractor. It is anticipated that most AA’s will be supplied by the VA.

Author’s alterations (AA’s) proofs shall be PDF proofs.

Author’s alterations performed by the contractor will be charged at the regular contract rates for System Timework per the “SCHEDULE OF PRICES”. Charges for making AA’s will not be honored unless the invoice voucher that is submitted to GPO is supported by documentation and written approval by the VA of all changes. The contracting officer has the final determination related to any requested charges.

Contractor must not print prior to receipt of an “OK to Print/Mail”.

STOCK:


Color of paper furnished shall be of a uniform shade. The GPO Contracting Officer reserves the right to reject any order printed on paper the color of which materially differs from JCP standards.


Envelopes: JCP Code* V20: White Writing Envelope, Basis Weight 17 x 22”, Basis Weight 24lb.

PRINTING, INKS AND MARGINS:

At contractor’s option, the static-only items (products that will not require variable imaging at any time) may be produced via conventional offset or digital printing provided that Quality Level III standards are maintained. Final output must be a minimum of 150-line screen and at a minimum resolution of 2400 x 2400 x 1 dpi or 600 x 600 x 8 bit depth technology. Digital device must have a RIP that provides an option for high quality color matching such as Device Links Technology and/or ICC Profiles.

Letters: Face prints black type and line matter with logo/seal, no bleeds and adequate gripper.

Envelopes:

Print face in Pantone 541 blue ink – VA seal (no return address) and permit block – type and line matter, must meet USPS requirements, and VA requirements for font, layout etc. VA seal artwork, will be furnished by the VA or contractor to pick up from their files. Permit number to be provided by the agency. The envelope shall accept printing without feathering or penetrating to the reverse side.

Envelopes require a security tint printed on the inside (back - before construction) in black ink. Contractor may use their own design but must guarantee that the product will ensure complete opacity and prevent show through of any material contained therein.

Personalized Envelopes:

Static Printing: The static information on the Personalized Envelopes print face only in Pantone 541 Blue– type and line matter.
Personalization: Each Envelope has one variable data field (4-5 lines) in black ink. Data files for the variable data personalized information will be furnished in an Excel file. The variable data field will be: “Recipient address”.

Accuracy of Imaged items: A form must be produced for each data file. 100% of the records must be properly imaged and mailed. No improper forms may be distributed. No duplicate forms may be distributed. No damaged forms may be distributed. Contractor must guarantee 100% accuracy. Contractor must have a method for verifying that all records are correctly imaged and a plan for regenerating any that are un-imaged, incorrectly imaged, damaged, or destroyed. This must include methods for determining what records have been imaged to insure the imaging of all forms, tracking all forms, determining missing or damaged forms, insuring that damaged forms and test forms are not mailed, regenerating forms that are missing or damaged, and insuring that duplicate forms are not generated or mailed. Additionally, contractor must have a specific plan for guaranteeing that incorrectly imaged statements or duplicate statements, produced for whatever reason (tests, makeready, spoilage, etc.) are not mailed and are destroyed by a process that renders them unreadable, such as by shredding or incineration.

Damaged letters: Contractor must maintain a record of all damaged imaged forms and a record of when these forms were regenerated. These records will be required to be provided to the VA upon request.

Secure Destroy: Contractor to use the USPS “Secure Destroy” feature to handle any mail pieces that are ultimately undeliverable even after all necessary presorts.

INVENTORY: It is recommended that the contractor request a forecast from the VA on possible changes to artwork before printing large quantities of any item for inventory storage/future use.

Envelopes: If copy is changed during the term of the contract, the contractor must comply with the new requirement, and cannot exhaust previous stock. The contractor must produce a new supply of envelopes using the current valid copy of the envelopes.

IDENTIFICATION MARKINGS: Identification markings such as register marks, ring folios, rubber stamped jacket numbers, commercial identification marks of any kind, etc., except GPO imprint, form number, and revision date, carried on copy or film, must not print on finished product.

BINDING OPERATIONS:

**Letters:**
Trim 4 sides – Fold to 3.66 x 8.5 using 2 parallel wrap-around folds with face in. Fold parallel to the grain. Cracking on the folds will not be acceptable and may result in rejection.

**Envelope:**
Envelope construction is open side. Style of flap is at contractor’s option. Side or diagonal seams construction is at contractor’s option. Once the style and construction of the envelopes is approved by the VA, the furnished envelopes must stay the same throughout the contract. Flap must be fully gummed.

It is the contractor’s responsibility to assure that the correct item is inserted into each envelope. Contractor must have quality control measures in place that ensure that the correct item is inserted in the correct addressed Envelope. After inserting, seal envelope securely. Any loosening of the seals prior to opening by the recipient may result in order rejection.
LIST PROCESSING, SORTING, ADDRESSING, ETC. IN ACCORDANCE WITH UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE (USPS) REGULATIONS:

Mail Rate: All mailed pieces must meet all USPS requirements and must mail using the VA anywhere mailing permit/1090.

Addressing: All recipient addressing will be located on the face of the Envelope. Address each envelope in black ink. Addressing must follow all postal regulations including those for typography/fonts, print quality, reflectance, barcode location, clear zones, etc. Inkjet or labels at contractor's option. All imaged addresses must be complete and include the recipient’s name and complete mailing address. Addresses in the United States or as otherwise applicable, must have the zip + 4 barcode.

Furnished Distribution Lists: The vendor will be supplied Data files, which will require list processing and VA approval of cleaned list prior to printing.

List Processing: Contractor will be required to do all sorting and CASS Certification to obtain the maximum postage discount allowed by the USPS in accordance with appropriate USPS rules and regulations, including the USPS Domestic Mail Manual and Postal Bulletins in effect at the time of the mailing. Contractor will be required to run the furnished distribution lists for each order through the National Change of Address (NCOA) service database to verify addresses are NCOA certified. All related costs to perform these operations must be included in submitted bid pricing. No additional reimbursement will be authorized.

An output file containing the rejected names and addresses must be provided to the VA along with the reject code or some explanation for reason of rejection. The output containing the names and addresses of those records retained after NCOA cleaning (i.e. cleared for mailing) must be provided to VA. The contents of the processed address file must be approved/verified by VA before proceeding to printing. To do this the output file must be uploaded to the VA secure server workspace along with an email notification, so that the VA can verify that the vendor has received the full contents of the address file.

Bad Addresses, Mailed Quantity and Secure Destroy: The contractor must provide to the VA a list of any addresses that NCOA and USPS deem undeliverable so that the VA can make a determination of further handling. Any mail that is deemed deliverable by USPS and mail software but is still refused or ultimately undelivered, the VA would like those pieces to be destroyed using the USPS “Secure Destroy” service. The VA will then require a listing of all mailpieces that were destroyed via “Secure Destroy.” Once the final adjusted quantity is known, contractor must forward the final quantity to the VA point of contact brian.mano@gpo.gov and cc to the GPO contract administrator at fnnguren@gpo.gov. The GPO Print Order Form 2511 must reflect the final mailed count, and the contractor’s submitted invoice must reflect the final mailed count as would match the submitted postal statements.

Non-USPS Postage (Invalids): It is anticipated that a small quantity of mailings may contain mailing addresses deemed invalid (unqualified) by the U.S. Postal Service (may not qualify for the imprint). Contractor must notify the VA of any such non-qualifying pieces. At the Government’s option, the contractor may be required to overnight these pieces to the VA at the contractor’s expense. Orders which result in mailings of less than 200 pieces or less than 50 pounds may require the contractor to apply the appropriate postage to each mailing. Contractor will be reimbursed for postage by submitting a properly completed Postal Service Certificate of Mailing with the invoice for billing.

Quality Control Codes: Contractor will be allowed to insert a matching code in the address block if desired. The matching code must not interfere with any other information or affect the piece being accepted by the Postal Service. The size of the matching code must be inconspicuous and in a smaller typeface than the other information. Matching codes, if used, must appear on proofs and addressing samples. Contractor must provide the information as to the type of code to be used and what it indicates.
Mailing Permit and Postage Account: The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will supply a mail anywhere permit number. The contractor is responsible for working with their local postal facility to ensure the permit is established with their facility.

Postal Service Forms and Other Requirements: Contractor must generate all bag tags, tray labels, etc. and is required to do all bagging, traying, sorting, etc. for this class of mail and level of sortation. Contractor must generate and accurately complete all required Postal Service forms.

The contractor is cautioned that mailing permit imprint may be used only for the purpose of mailing material produced under this contract.

The contractor is responsible for all costs incurred in transporting the mailers to the U.S. Postal Service facility.

Certificate of Conformance: When using Permit Imprint Mail the contractor must complete the current version of GPO Form 712 - Certificate of Conformance, and the appropriate mailing statement or statements supplied by USPS. A fillable GPO Form 712 Certificate of Conformance can be found at https://www.gpo.gov/how-to-work-with-us/vendors/forms-and-standards.

All copies mailed must conform to the appropriate regulations in the U.S. Postal Service manuals for “Domestic Mail” or “International Mail” as applicable.

PACKING, LABELING AND MARKING: Items must be packed suitably to ensure protection from contamination and damage resulting from handling, storage or shipping. Pack to protect corners. No loose items in cartons are permitted.

Inner Packaging: Include sufficient inner packaging in submitted price. Ensure sufficient inner packaging to ensure no damage occurs during shipping.

Any items damaged during production or shipping may be required to be re-fulfilled in an expedited manner, including expedited handling, expedited production, and expedited shipping.

Refer to Labeling and Marking Specifications (GPO Form 905). See GPO Contract Terms Booklet, Publication 310.2., and any updates thereto, for more information.

All expenses incidental to packing and labeling must be borne by the contractor.

GPO SAMPLES: Every GPO Form 2511 Print Order will require Compliance Samples to be sent to the GPO contract administrator for quality review. Mark package with Program number and Print Order number. GPO samples are to be shipped at the same time as the scheduled mailing and cannot be deducted from the total quantity ordered. It is not required that GPO samples be addressed. Un-addressed/un-sealed items are acceptable. Deliver sample copies by the most economical method. No additional charge will be allowed for these samples.

GPO “VERIFICATION OF DELIVERY”: Contractor MUST email mailing/delivery verification information to VerifyChicago@gpo.gov WITHIN 24 HOURS OF DELIVERY. Enter Program and Print Order numbers in the subject line, and in the body of the message indicate the method of mailing/shipment and the delivery date. If a contract specifies a shipping method of f.o.b. contractor’s city (at government’s expense), enter the date of mailing/shipment. If a contract specifies f.o.b. destination (at contractor’s expense), enter the date of delivery. If a contract specifies a combination of both methods, include all shipping and delivery dates. Failure to provide this information for each print order may result in delayed payment of invoices.
DISTRIBUTION:

Mailing of any order must NOT commence until “OK to Print/Mail” approval is given by the VA.

See “LIST PROCESSING, SORTING, ADDRESSING, ETC. IN ACCORDANCE WITH UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE (USPS) REGULATIONS” for additional information.

Mail f.o.b. contractor’s city:

One set mails to each good furnished delivery address, via agency’s furnished permit

Approximate Mailing Address Breakdown:
Domestic destinations: 98%
HI/AK destinations: 1%
International destinations (country 1, country 2, country 3): 1%

Due to security requirements, a sample of a mailing list for this program will NOT be available for review during the Invitation for Bid process.

All expenses incidental to overnight delivery services, picking up and returning materials must be borne by the contractor.

NOTICE OF USPS CONTACT INFORMATION: Within 2 weeks prior to the first scheduled mailing date, the contractor must provide the VA with the name, address, phone number, fax number, and a contact person at the post office(s) where the mailing will be accepted. Email brian.mano@va.gov

DROP SHIPPING: If using drop shipping, Post Office locations must be identified during the preaward survey. Any changes after award must be approved by the VA and GPO.

USPS INFORMED DELIVERY SERVICES AND TRACKING: The agency intends to utilize USPS Informed Delivery services that are offered in connection with the agency’s USPS CAPS/EPS account. Contractor may be required to provide serial number ranges to the agency and/or to the USPS in relation to this advanced delivery tracking and/or will be required to provide all other additional related types of account administration in support of the use of these services.

NOTIFICATION OF COMPLETION OF MAILING: Upon completion of each order, the contractor must complete the following steps:

Contractor MUST include the GPO print order number in either the “JOB ID or Customer Reference ID” field on the postal receipt so the agency can identify the charges in their USPS account

Within 1 workday: Upload the postage receipts, tracking numbers, and other finalized paperwork for each GPO Form 2511 Print Order to the SFTP server workspace for agency access. The print order number must be clearly indicated.

Within 1 workday: Email a notification to the VA agency point of contact brian.mano@va.gov (with cc to GPO contract administrator). The subject line of the email shall be “Distribution Notice for Program 2525-S, P.O. GXXXX, Jacket XXX-XXX, Print Order XXXXX.” The notice must provide all applicable shipment tracking numbers and mailing information.

Deliver f.o.b. destination (at contractor’s expense) via traceable means:

Deliver any samples when requested to:
RETURN OF GOVERNMENT FURNISHED MATERIALS: Upon completion of each order, any furnished materials must be packed separately and returned to the same address indicated for delivery of proofs in “DISTRIBUTION” unless otherwise indicated on the GPO Print Order Form 2511 or by the VA, and shall be marked with program number, print order number, jacket number and requisition number.

All expenses incidental to returning furnished materials must be borne by the contractor.

SCHEDULE: Adherence to this schedule must be maintained. Contractor must not start production of any job prior to receipt of the individual print order (GPO Form 2511).

NOTE: Use of the Secure Server Workspace (SFTP): Print orders, artwork, distribution lists and all furnished materials will be provided via the Secure Server Workspace. When required, PDF soft proofs must be sent via the Secure Server Workspace. All reports, postal receipts, etc. must be archived on the Secure Server Workspace. Use of this workspace must be supplemented by timely email notifications from the contractor to all VA and GPO points of contact, in order to document the upload or download of all critical documents.

No definite schedule for notification of availability of furnished materials can be predetermined.

The following schedule begins the workday after notification of the availability of print order and furnished material. The workday after notification will be the first workday of the schedule.

AT THE START OF THE CONTRACT:

PDF proofs and PDF addressing proofs: Contractor to produce at the start of the contract, and additionally when ordered and/or upon changes to any item.

Upon receipt of artwork, PDF proofs and PDF addressing samples will be required to be emailed to the VA within 3 work days.

VA will approve within 5 work days.

REGULAR ORDER PROCESSING:

Upon receipt of the printer order when PDF proofs are requested, PDF proofs and PDF addressing samples will be required to be emailed to the VA within 1 work day.
Complete production, from list sorting, to printing and inserting, to dropping with the post office, MUST occur within 5 workdays.

When author’s alterations are made, the schedule will be extended by one (1) additional workday.

No extension will be made when new proofs are required due to printer’s errors.

Unscheduled material such as shipping documents, receipts or instructions, delivery lists, labels, etc., will be furnished with each order or shortly thereafter. In the event such information is not received in due time, the contractor will not be relieved of any responsibility in meeting the shipping schedule because of failure to request such information.
SECTION 3. - DETERMINATION OF AWARD

The Government will determine the lowest bid by applying the prices offered in the “Schedule of Prices” to the following units of production which are the estimated requirements to produce one (1) year’s requirements under this contract. These units do not constitute, nor are they to be construed as, a guarantee of the volume of work which may be ordered for a like period of time.

The following item designations correspond to those listed in the “Schedule of Prices”.

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SECTION 4. - SCHEDULE OF PRICES

Bids offered are f.o.b. contractor’s city and f.o.b. destination.

Bidder must make an entry in each of the spaces provided, in the category or categories for which bids are submitted. Bidder may bid in one category and no-bid the other categories. Bids submitted with any obliteration, revision, or alteration of the order and manner of submitting bids, may be declared nonresponsive.

An entry of NC (No Charge) shall be entered if bidder intends to furnish individual items at no charge to the Government.

Bids submitted with NB (No Bid) or blank spaces for an item within the category that a bidder is bidding on may be declared nonresponsive.

The Contracting Officer reserves the right to reject any offer that contains prices for individual items of production (whether or not such items are included in the Determination of Award) that are inconsistent or unrealistic in regard to other prices in the same offer or to GPO prices for the same operation if such action would be in the best interest of the Government.

The contractor is cautioned not to perform any operation(s) or produce any product(s) for which a price has not been offered under the contract. Further, the contractor is not to accept print orders which are outside the scope of the contract. Any changes made to the print order MUST be confirmed in writing by the Contracting Officer, Chicago GPO. If such orders are placed, and no Modification is received from the Chicago GPO, the contractor is to notify GPO Chicago immediately. Failure to do so may result in nonpayment.

CONTRACTOR MUST INVOICE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCHEDULE OF PRICES. FAILURE TO ITEMIZE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCHEDULE OF PRICES MAY RESULT IN DELAYED PAYMENT.

All billing submitted to the GPO shall be based on the most economical method of production.

Fractional parts of 1000 will be prorated at the Per 1000 rate.

I. COMPLETE PRODUCT (except for Item II. “PROOFS AND AUTHOR’S ALTERATIONS”): Prices quoted shall include the cost of all required materials and operations, including but not limited to: printing, paper, trimming, folding, envelope construction, addressing, and all packing/mailing material and operations, as necessary for the complete production, mailing and delivery of the items listed, in accordance with these specifications.

Regardless of the number of copies run, contractor will be allowed only one (1) “Makeready and/or Setup” charge for each item ordered.

NOTE: VA will pay postage via a Government furnished permit.
I. COMPLETE PRODUCT: (Continued)

(A) Letters (face only):

(1) Makeready and/or Setup……… per item………………………… $___________________

(2) Running ……………………… per 1,000 copies ……………. $___________________

(B) Envelope (with personalization):

(1) Makeready and/or Setup……… per item………………………… $___________________

(2) Running ……………………… per 1,000 copies ……………….. $___________________

II. PDF PROOFS AND AUTHOR’S ALTERATIONS: Any charge made under “System timework” must be supported by a statement outlining in detail the operation for which payment is claimed. In case of dispute, the Contracting Officer reserves the right to be the final judge as to the operations and/or number of hours chargeable.

(A) PDF proofs…………………………………per each order………… $____________________

(B) System timework/typesetting (AA’s)………..per hour……….……......$____________________

__________________________________________

(Initials)

(COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THIS PAGE WITH YOUR BID)
LOCATION OF POST OFFICE: All mailing will be made from the ___________________________,
Post Office located at Street Address__________________________________________________.
City_____________________________________, State____________, Zip Code__________________.

DISCOUNTS: Discounts are offered for payment as follows: __________ Percent, _________calendar days. See Article 12 “Discounts” of Solicitation Provisions in GPO Contract Terms (Publication 310.2).

AMENDMENT(S): Bidder hereby acknowledges amendment(s) number(ed) ____________________

BID ACCEPTANCE PERIOD: In compliance with the above, the undersigned agree, if this bid is accepted within_________ calendar days (60 calendar days unless a different period is inserted by the bidder) from the date for receipt of bids, to furnish the specified items at the price set opposite each item, delivered at the designated points(s), in exact accordance with specifications.

NOTE: Failure to provide a 60-day bid acceptance period may result in expiration of the bid prior to award.

BIDDER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE: Unless specific written exception is taken, the bidder, by signing and submitting a bid, agrees with and accepts responsibility for all certifications and representations as required by the solicitation and GPO Contract Terms-Publication 310.2. When responding by fax or mail, fill out and return one copy of all pages in “SECTION 4. –SCHEDULE OF PRICES,” including initialing/signing where indicated.

Failure to sign the signature block below may result in the bid being declared non-responsive.

Bidder

__________________________________________________________________________________

(Contractor Name) (GPO State & Contractor’s Code)
__________________________________________________________________________________

(Street Address)
__________________________________________________________________________________

(City – State – Zip Code)

By

__________________________________________________________________________________

(Printed Name, Signature, and Title of Person Authorized to Sign this Bid) (Date)
__________________________________________________________________________________

(Person to be Contacted) (Telephone Number) (Email)

(Initials)

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C O M P L E T E A N D S U B M I T T H I S P A G E W I T H Y O U R B I D