



# Bulletin

## Federal Prompt Payment Act

### INTRODUCTION

The federal government has enacted rules mandating prompt payment to its contractors and vendors. The Federal Prompt Pay Act (PPA) assesses late interest penalties against federal agencies in certain instances including when it pays construction contractors working on federal government construction projects after a payment due date.

The PPA is found in 31 U.S. Code Section 3901, et seq. and the rules implementing the PPA are found in the Code of Federal Regulations at section 5 CFR Part 1315. Subsection 1315.14 contains requirements specific to payments on federal construction projects. Additionally, the federal construction contract clauses reflecting the PPA in federal construction contracts are found at FAR § 52.232-27 (set forth in its entirety below).

These regulations govern payment terms between the government and its construction contractors, as well as between those contractors and their lower tier subcontractors.

### PROPER INVOICE

The time within which the government must pay its contractor starts ticking from the government's receipt of the contractor's "proper" invoice. Thus, the most common way a contractor undermines the benefits of the PPA is by failing to submit a proper invoice.

Under FAR 52.232-27, a **proper invoice** includes:

(i) Name and address of the contractor.  
Be sure the firm name on the invoice matches that on the contract.

(ii) Invoice date and invoice number.  
The invoice date establishes when the invoice was prepared and dispatched should any disputes arise later with respect to the date of receipt of the invoice. The PPA defines receipt of invoice as the "... date on which the place or person designated by the agency to first receive such invoice actually receives such invoice." The invoice receipt date then prevails over the date of the invoice to establish when the payment clock begins. There are two exceptions to this general rule: if a time discount is offered, and if the agency fails to date-stamp the invoice upon receipt. In both these cases, the invoice date is used to start the payment clock.

(iii) Contract number or other authorization for work or services performed (including order number and contract line item number). The contract number helps the government match contract data against invoice data. Without this information the invoice might be declared defective.

(iv) Description of work or services performed. The data in this portion of the invoice should be compatible with comparable data of the contract.

(v) Delivery and payment terms. Include the discount for prompt payment terms, if applicable.

(vi) Name and address of contractor official to whom payment is to be sent. This must be the same as that in the contract or in a proper notice of assignment.

(vii) Name, title, phone number, and mailing address of person to notify in the event of a defective invoice. The government has a duty to promptly notify the contractor if the invoice is deemed defective, but the contractor must include individual's contact information in the invoice.

(viii) For progress payments, substantiation of the amounts requested and certification. Progress payments are typical under federal construction contracts. Per FAR 52.232-5, the contractor's progress payment application must include a very specific certification (see full FAR language below) as well as:

- 1) An itemization of the amounts requested related to the various elements of work specified in the contract;
- 2) A listing of the amount included for work performed by each subcontractor under the contract;

- 3) A listing of the total amount for each subcontract under the contract;
- 4) A listing of the amounts previously paid to each subcontractor under the contract; and
- 5) Additional supporting data and detail in a form required by the contracting officer.

(ix) Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN). The contractor must include its TIN on the invoice if required elsewhere in the contract. TIN information is also required to make electronic funds transfer payments.

(x) Electronic funds transfer (EFT) banking information. The contractor must include EFT banking information on the invoice if required elsewhere in the contract or other applicable regulation or requirement. Note: *the government can waive the requirement to pay by EFT*.

(xi) Any other information or documentation required by the contract. Carefully review the contract and note any other substantiating documentation or information that is required. Most federal contracts will require a specific invoice form be used. Typically, a request for progress payment on a federal project will be on Form SF 1443 "Contractor's Request for Progress Payment."

## **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE AND RECEIVING REPORTS**

The government should date-stamp the contractor's invoice on the day it is received. Thereafter, the government has seven days to determine if it disputes that the invoice is proper (i.e. adheres to the above standards), or is defective. The agency must return to the contractor any payment request which is defective within seven days

after receipt, along with a statement identifying the defects. The payment clock does not begin until the contractor resubmits a proper invoice. Per section 1315.14(a)(3), when computing an interest penalty owed the contractor, the government must take into account any untimeliness in its notification to the contractor of an improper invoice.

Once the government receives a proper invoice, it will process a receiving report or other government documentation authorizing payment and indicating that there was no disagreement over progress payment amount, quantity, quality, or contractor compliance with any contract provision.

## **INTEREST PAYMENTS**

The due date for making progress payments under the PPA is 14 days after the government notes receipt of a proper request for progress payment. However, if the government fails to note the actual date it received the request for progress payment, the payment due date is 14 days after the date of the contractor's proper request for progress payment. Under the PPA, final payment is due 30 days after invoice and final acceptance. (Note that a contract may specify longer periods to afford the government a practicable opportunity to fully inspect the work and to determine the adequacy of the contractor's performance).

If payment is not timely made, the government should pay an interest penalty automatically, without request from the contractor. The government's remittance must show the invoice amount, the interest, and the interest rate used to compute the interest penalty. The PPA interest rate is published semiannually by the Department of Treasury, in the *Federal*

*Register* on or about each January 1 and July 1.

If the contractor becomes aware that the government has overpaid on a contract invoice payment, the contractor must remit the overpayment amount to the payment office cited in the contract along with a description of the overpayment. The contractor may owe the government interest on such overpayments.

## **LOWER-TIER SUBCONTRACT PAYMENTS**

The PPA requires contractors to pay subcontractors and suppliers within seven days of receipt of payment from the government. Subcontractors must similarly make prompt payment to their lower tier subcontractors and suppliers.

The PPA requires the contractor to include provisions in its subcontracts expressing PPA requirements and the interest obligation assumed by the contractor for late payments to its subcontractors. Similarly, subcontractors must include such clauses in their lower tier subcontracts.

Nothing in the PPA precludes the government or contractor for withholding retention. However, contractors must be sure not to include in their invoice to the government any retention withheld from their subcontractors. The PPA specifically prohibits any subcontractor retention in the contractor's progress payment request. Likewise, a subcontractor may not requisition for retention amounts it withholds from its lower tier subcontractors.

The contractor may not invoice the government for any other amounts it does not intend to pass on immediately to its subcontractor. If the contractor intends to withhold funds from a

subcontractor, it may do so provided it properly notifies the subcontractor and the government. Under FAR 52.232-27(d), if cause exists to withhold payment from a subcontractor, the contractor must give notice to the subcontractor (with a copy to the government) of the amount withheld, reasons for the withholding, and remedial actions the subcontractor must take to take to get paid. If payment is not made and is otherwise due, the subcontractor can recover interest on the unpaid amount.

Note also that should a contractor decide to withhold monies from a subcontractor that it has already invoiced the government, the contractor must furnish the government notice of such withholding in accordance with FAR 52.232-27 (e). In this situation, the contractor may need to reimburse the government for interest during the period it withholds such sums from the subcontractor.

## CONCLUSION

As described above, the key to timely payments on federal government projects is careful submission of proper requests for progress payments and/or invoices. Though this bulletin focused on the federal regulations, the states have passed similar laws governing state and local projects. Thus, on state and local projects, standards similar to those described above will likely be in place. For a survey of prompt pay laws by state, see *Fifty State Survey of Prompt Payment Acts for Construction Contracts*,

<http://www.eckertseamans.com/%5Cfile%5Cpdf%5Calerts%5CPromptPaymentActManual2012.pdf> ©Eckert Seamans Cherin Mellott, LLC. Revised 4/10/2012

**The information in this bulletin should not be construed as legal advice. Contact your local counsel for specific legal advice regarding the information contained in this bulletin.**

## FAR Clauses:

### 52.232-5 Payments under Fixed-Price Construction Contracts.

(a) *Payment of price.* The Government shall pay the Contractor the contract price as provided in this contract.

(b) *Progress payments.* The Government shall make progress payments monthly as the work proceeds, or at more frequent intervals as determined by the Contracting Officer, on estimates of work accomplished which meets the standards of quality established under the contract, as approved by the Contracting Officer.

(1) The Contractor's request for progress payments shall include the following substantiation:

(i) An itemization of the amounts requested, related to the various elements of work required by the contract covered by the payment requested.

(ii) A listing of the amount included for work performed by each subcontractor under the contract.

(iii) A listing of the total amount of each subcontract under the contract.

(iv) A listing of the amounts previously paid to each such subcontractor under the contract.

(v) Additional supporting data in a form and detail required by the Contracting Officer.

(2) In the preparation of estimates, the Contracting Officer may authorize material delivered on the site and preparatory work done to be taken into consideration. Material delivered to the Contractor at locations other than the site also may be taken into consideration if—

(i) Consideration is specifically authorized by this contract; and

(ii) The Contractor furnishes satisfactory evidence that it has acquired title to such material and that the material will be used to perform this contract.

(c) *Contractor certification.* Along with each request for progress payments, the Contractor shall furnish the following certification, or payment shall not be made: (However, if the Contractor elects to delete paragraph (c)(4) from the certification, the certification is still acceptable.)

I hereby certify, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that—

(1) The amounts requested are only for performance in accordance with the specifications, terms, and conditions of the contract;

(2) All payments due to subcontractors and suppliers from previous payments received under the contract have been made, and timely payments will be made from the proceeds of the payment covered by this certification, in accordance with subcontract agreements and the requirements of Chapter 39 of Title 31, United States Code;

(3) This request for progress payments does not include any amounts which the prime contractor intends to withhold or retain from a subcontractor or supplier in accordance with the terms and conditions of the subcontract; and

(4) This certification is not to be construed as final acceptance of a subcontractor's performance.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Title)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

(d) *Refund of unearned amounts.* If the Contractor, after making a certified request for progress payments, discovers that a portion or all of such request constitutes a payment for performance by the Contractor that fails to conform to the specifications, terms, and conditions of this contract (hereinafter referred to as the "unearned amount"), the Contractor shall—

(1) Notify the Contracting Officer of such performance deficiency; and

(2) Be obligated to pay the Government an amount (computed by the Contracting Officer in the manner provided in paragraph (j) of this clause) equal to interest on the unearned amount from the 8th day after the date of receipt of the unearned amount until—

(i) The date the Contractor notifies the Contracting Officer that the performance deficiency has been corrected; or

(ii) The date the Contractor reduces the amount of any subsequent certified request for progress payments by an amount equal to the unearned amount.

(e) *Retainage.* If the Contracting Officer finds that satisfactory progress was achieved during any period for which a progress payment is to be made, the Contracting Officer shall authorize payment to be made in full. However, if satisfactory progress has not been made, the Contracting Officer may retain a maximum of 10 percent of the amount of the payment until satisfactory progress is achieved. When the work is substantially complete, the Contracting Officer may retain from previously withheld funds and future progress payments that amount the Contracting Officer considers adequate for protection of the Government and shall release to the Contractor all the remaining withheld funds. Also, on completion and acceptance of each separate building, public work, or other division of the contract, for which the price is stated separately in the contract, payment shall be made for the completed work without retention of a percentage.

(f) *Title, liability, and reservation of rights.* All material and work covered by progress payments made shall, at the time of payment, become the sole property of the Government, but this shall not be construed as—

(1) Relieving the Contractor from the sole responsibility for all material and work upon which payments have been made or the restoration of any damaged work; or

(2) Waiving the right of the Government to require the fulfillment of all of the terms of the contract.

(g) *Reimbursement for bond premiums.* In making these progress payments, the Government shall, upon request, reimburse the Contractor for the amount of premiums paid for performance and payment bonds (including coinsurance and reinsurance agreements, when applicable) after the Contractor has furnished evidence of full payment to the surety. The retainage provisions in paragraph (e) of this clause shall not apply to that portion of progress payments attributable to bond premiums.

(h) *Final payment.* The Government shall pay the amount due the Contractor under this contract after—

(1) Completion and acceptance of all work;

(2) Presentation of a properly executed voucher; and

(3) Presentation of release of all claims against the Government arising by virtue of this contract, other than claims, in stated amounts, that the Contractor has specifically excepted from the operation of the release. A release may also be required of the assignee if the Contractor's claim to amounts payable under this contract has been assigned under the Assignment of Claims Act of 1940 (31 U.S.C. 3727 and 41 U.S.C. 15).

(i) *Limitation because of undefinitized work.* Notwithstanding any provision of this contract, progress payments shall not exceed 80 percent on work accomplished on undefinitized contract actions. A "contract action" is any action resulting in a contract, as defined in FAR Subpart 2.1, including contract modifications for additional supplies or services, but not including contract modifications that are within the scope and under the terms of the contract, such as contract modifications issued pursuant to the Changes clause, or funding and other administrative changes.

(j) *Interest computation on unearned amounts.* In accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3903(c)(1), the amount payable under paragraph (d)(2) of this clause shall be—

(1) Computed at the rate of average bond equivalent rates of 91-day Treasury bills auctioned at the most recent auction of such bills prior to the date the Contractor receives the unearned amount; and

(2) Deducted from the next available payment to the Contractor.

#### **52.232-27 Prompt Payment for Construction Contracts.**

Notwithstanding any other payment terms in this contract, the Government will make invoice payments under the terms and conditions specified in this clause. The Government considers payment as being made on the day a check is dated or the date of an electronic funds transfer. Definitions of pertinent terms are set forth in sections 2.101, 32.001, and 32.902 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation. All days referred to in this clause are calendar days, unless otherwise specified. (However, see paragraph (a)(3) concerning payments due on Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays.)

(a) Invoice payments—

(1) *Types of invoice payments.* For purposes of this clause, there are several types of invoice payments that may occur under this contract, as follows:

(i) Progress payments, if provided for elsewhere in this contract, based on Contracting Officer approval of the estimated amount and value of work or services performed, including payments for reaching milestones in any project.

(A) The due date for making such payments is 14 days after the designated billing office receives a proper payment request. If the designated billing office fails to annotate the payment request with the actual date of receipt at the time of receipt, the payment due date is the 14th day after the date of the Contractor's payment request, provided the designated billing office receives a proper payment request and there is no disagreement over quantity, quality, or Contractor compliance with contract requirements.

(B) The due date for payment of any amounts retained by the Contracting Officer in accordance with the clause at 52.232-5, Payments Under Fixed-Price Construction Contracts, is as specified in the contract or, if not specified, 30 days after approval by the Contracting Officer for release to the Contractor.

(ii) Final payments based on completion and acceptance of all work and presentation of release of all claims against the Government arising by virtue of the contract, and payments for partial deliveries that have been accepted by the Government (*e.g.*, each separate building, public work, or other division of the contract for which the price is stated separately in the contract).

(A) The due date for making such payments is the later of the following two events:

(1) The 30th day after the designated billing office receives a proper invoice from the Contractor.

(2) The 30th day after Government acceptance of the work or services completed by the Contractor. For a final invoice when the payment amount is subject to contract settlement actions (*e.g.*, release of claims), acceptance is deemed to occur on the effective date of the contract settlement.

(B) If the designated billing office fails to annotate the invoice with the date of actual receipt at the time of receipt, the invoice payment due date is the 30th day after the date of the Contractor's invoice, provided the designated billing office receives a proper invoice and there is no disagreement over quantity, quality, or Contractor compliance with contract requirements.

(2) *Contractor's invoice.* The Contractor shall prepare and submit invoices to the designated billing office specified in the contract. A proper invoice must include the items listed in paragraphs (a)(2)(i) through (a)(2)(xi) of this clause. If the invoice does not comply with these requirements, the designated billing office must return it within 7 days after receipt, with the reasons why it is not a proper invoice. When computing any interest penalty owed the Contractor, the Government will take into account if the Government notifies the Contractor of an improper invoice in an untimely manner.

(i) Name and address of the Contractor.

(ii) Invoice date and invoice number. (The Contractor should date invoices as close as possible to the date of mailing or transmission.)

(iii) Contract number or other authorization for work or services performed (including order number and contract line item number).

(iv) Description of work or services performed.

- (v) Delivery and payment terms (*e.g.*, discount for prompt payment terms).
  - (vi) Name and address of Contractor official to whom payment is to be sent (must be the same as that in the contract or in a proper notice of assignment).
  - (vii) Name (where practicable), title, phone number, and mailing address of person to notify in the event of a defective invoice.
  - (viii) For payments described in paragraph (a)(1)(i) of this clause, substantiation of the amounts requested and certification in accordance with the requirements of the clause at 52.232-5, Payments Under Fixed-Price Construction Contracts.
  - (ix) Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN). The Contractor shall include its TIN on the invoice only if required elsewhere in this contract.
  - (x) Electronic funds transfer (EFT) banking information.
    - (A) The Contractor shall include EFT banking information on the invoice only if required elsewhere in this contract.
    - (B) If EFT banking information is not required to be on the invoice, in order for the invoice to be a proper invoice, the Contractor shall have submitted correct EFT banking information in accordance with the applicable solicitation provision (*e.g.*, 52.232-38, Submission of Electronic Funds Transfer Information with Offer), contract clause (*e.g.*, 52.232-33, Payment by Electronic Funds Transfer—Central Contractor Registration, or 52.232-34, Payment by Electronic Funds Transfer—Other Than Central Contractor Registration), or applicable agency procedures.
    - (C) EFT banking information is not required if the Government waived the requirement to pay by EFT.
  - (xi) Any other information or documentation required by the contract.
- (3) *Interest penalty.* The designated payment office will pay an interest penalty automatically, without request from the Contractor, if payment is not made by the due date and the conditions listed in paragraphs (a)(3)(i) through (a)(3)(iii) of this clause are met, if applicable. However, when the due date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the designated payment office may make payment on the following working day without incurring a late payment interest penalty.
- (i) The designated billing office received a proper invoice.
  - (ii) The Government processed a receiving report or other Government documentation authorizing payment and there was no disagreement over quantity, quality, Contractor compliance with any contract term or condition, or requested progress payment amount.
  - (iii) In the case of a final invoice for any balance of funds due the Contractor for work or services performed, the amount was not subject to further contract settlement actions between the Government and the Contractor.
- (4) *Computing penalty amount.* The Government will compute the interest penalty in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget prompt payment regulations at 5 CFR Part 1315.
- (i) For the sole purpose of computing an interest penalty that might be due the Contractor for payments described in paragraph (a)(1)(ii) of this clause, Government acceptance or approval is deemed to occur constructively on the 7th day after the Contractor has completed the work or services in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract. If actual acceptance or approval occurs within the constructive acceptance or approval period, the Government will base the determination of an interest penalty on the actual date of acceptance or approval. Constructive acceptance or constructive approval requirements do not apply if there is a disagreement over quantity, quality, or Contractor compliance with a contract provision. These requirements also do not compel Government officials to accept work or services, approve Contractor estimates, perform contract administration functions, or make payment prior to fulfilling their responsibilities.
  - (ii) The prompt payment regulations at 5 CFR 1315.10(c) do not require the Government to pay interest penalties if payment delays are due to disagreement between the Government and the Contractor over the payment amount or other issues involving contract compliance, or on amounts temporarily withheld or retained in accordance with the terms of the contract. The Government and the Contractor shall resolve claims involving disputes, and any interest that may be payable in accordance with the clause at FAR 52.233-1, Disputes.
- (5) *Discounts for prompt payment.* The designated payment office will pay an interest penalty automatically, without request from the Contractor, if the Government takes a discount for prompt payment improperly. The Government will calculate the interest penalty in accordance with the prompt payment regulations at 5 CFR Part 1315.
- (6) *Additional interest penalty.*
- (i) The designated payment office will pay a penalty amount, calculated in accordance with the prompt payment regulations at 5 CFR Part 1315 in addition to the interest penalty amount only if—
    - (A) The Government owes an interest penalty of \$1 or more;
    - (B) The designated payment office does not pay the interest penalty within 10 days after the date the invoice amount is paid; and
    - (C) The Contractor makes a written demand to the designated payment office for additional penalty payment, in accordance with paragraph (a)(6)(ii) of this clause, postmarked not later than 40 days after the date the invoice amount is paid.
  - (ii)(A) The Contractor shall support written demands for additional penalty payments with the following data. The Government will not request any additional data. The Contractor shall—
    - (1) Specifically assert that late payment interest is due under a specific invoice, and request payment of all overdue late payment interest penalty and such additional penalty as may be required;
    - (2) Attach a copy of the invoice on which the unpaid late payment interest was due; and
    - (3) State that payment of the principal has been received, including the date of receipt.
  - (B) If there is no postmark or the postmark is illegible—
    - (1) The designated payment office that receives the demand will annotate it with the date of receipt provided the demand is received on or before the 40th day after payment was made; or
    - (2) If the designated payment office fails to make the required annotation, the Government will determine the demand's validity based on the date the Contractor has placed on the demand, provided such date is no later than the 40th day after payment was made.

(b) *Contract financing payments.* If this contract provides for contract financing, the Government will make contract financing payments in accordance with the applicable contract financing clause.

(c) *Subcontract clause requirements.* The Contractor shall include in each subcontract for property or services (including a material supplier) for the purpose of performing this contract the following:

(1) *Prompt payment for subcontractors.* A payment clause that obligates the Contractor to pay the subcontractor for satisfactory performance under its subcontract not later than 7 days from receipt of payment out of such amounts as are paid to the Contractor under this contract.

(2) *Interest for subcontractors.* An interest penalty clause that obligates the Contractor to pay to the subcontractor an interest penalty for each payment not made in accordance with the payment clause—

(i) For the period beginning on the day after the required payment date and ending on the date on which payment of the amount due is made; and

(ii) Computed at the rate of interest established by the Secretary of the Treasury, and published in the *Federal Register*, for interest payments under section 12 of the Contract Disputes Act of 1978 (41 U.S.C. 611) in effect at the time the Contractor accrues the obligation to pay an interest penalty.

(3) *Subcontract clause flowdown.* A clause requiring each subcontractor to—

(i) Include a payment clause and an interest penalty clause conforming to the standards set forth in paragraphs (c)(1) and (c)(2) of this clause in each of its subcontracts; and

(ii) Require each of its subcontractors to include such clauses in their subcontracts with each lower-tier subcontractor or supplier.

(d) *Subcontract clause interpretation.* The clauses required by paragraph (c) of this clause shall not be construed to impair the right of the Contractor or a subcontractor at any tier to negotiate, and to include in their subcontract, provisions that—

(1) *Retainage permitted.* Permit the Contractor or a subcontractor to retain (without cause) a specified percentage of each progress payment otherwise due to a subcontractor for satisfactory performance under the subcontract without incurring any obligation to pay a late payment interest penalty, in accordance with terms and conditions agreed to by the parties to the subcontract, giving such recognition as the parties deem appropriate to the ability of a subcontractor to furnish a performance bond and a payment bond;

(2) *Withholding permitted.* Permit the Contractor or subcontractor to make a determination that part or all of the subcontractor's request for payment may be withheld in accordance with the subcontract agreement; and

(3) *Withholding requirements.* Permit such withholding without incurring any obligation to pay a late payment penalty if—

(i) A notice conforming to the standards of paragraph (g) of this clause previously has been furnished to the subcontractor; and

(ii) The Contractor furnishes to the Contracting Officer a copy of any notice issued by a Contractor pursuant to paragraph (d)(3)(i) of this clause.

(e) *Subcontractor withholding procedures.* If a Contractor, after making a request for payment to the Government but before making a payment to a subcontractor for the subcontractor's performance covered by the payment request, discovers that all or a portion of the payment otherwise due such subcontractor is subject to withholding from the subcontractor in accordance with the subcontract agreement, then the Contractor shall—

(1) *Subcontractor notice.* Furnish to the subcontractor a notice conforming to the standards of paragraph (g) of this clause as soon as practicable upon ascertaining the cause giving rise to a withholding, but prior to the due date for subcontractor payment;

(2) *Contracting Officer notice.* Furnish to the Contracting Officer, as soon as practicable, a copy of the notice furnished to the subcontractor pursuant to paragraph (e)(1) of this clause;

(3) *Subcontractor progress payment reduction.* Reduce the subcontractor's progress payment by an amount not to exceed the amount specified in the notice of withholding furnished under paragraph (e)(1) of this clause;

(4) *Subsequent subcontractor payment.* Pay the subcontractor as soon as practicable after the correction of the identified subcontract performance deficiency, and—

(i) Make such payment within—

(A) Seven days after correction of the identified subcontract performance deficiency (unless the funds therefor must be recovered from the Government because of a reduction under paragraph (e)(5)(i) of this clause; or

(B) Seven days after the Contractor recovers such funds from the Government; or

(ii) Incur an obligation to pay a late payment interest penalty computed at the rate of interest established by the Secretary of the Treasury, and published in the *Federal Register*, for interest payments under section 12 of the Contract Disputes Act of 1978 (41 U.S.C. 611) in effect at the time the Contractor accrues the obligation to pay an interest penalty;

(5) *Notice to Contracting Officer.* Notify the Contracting Officer upon—

(i) Reduction of the amount of any subsequent certified application for payment; or

(ii) Payment to the subcontractor of any withheld amounts of a progress payment, specifying—

(A) The amounts withheld under paragraph (e)(1) of this clause; and

(B) The dates that such withholding began and ended; and

(6) *Interest to Government.* Be obligated to pay to the Government an amount equal to interest on the withheld payments (computed in the manner provided in 31 U.S.C. 3903(c)(1)), from the 8th day after receipt of the withheld amounts from the Government until—

(i) The day the identified subcontractor performance deficiency is corrected; or

(ii) The date that any subsequent payment is reduced under paragraph (e)(5)(i) of this clause.

(f) *Third-party deficiency reports—*

(1) *Withholding from subcontractor.* If a Contractor, after making payment to a first-tier subcontractor, receives from a supplier or subcontractor of the first-tier subcontractor (hereafter referred to as a "second-tier subcontractor") a written notice in accordance with the Miller Act (40 U.S.C. 3133), asserting a deficiency in such first-tier subcontractor's performance under the



contract for which the Contractor may be ultimately liable, and the Contractor determines that all or a portion of future payments otherwise due such first-tier subcontractor is subject to withholding in accordance with the subcontract agreement, the Contractor may, without incurring an obligation to pay an interest penalty under paragraph (e)(6) of this clause—

(i) Furnish to the first-tier subcontractor a notice conforming to the standards of paragraph (g) of this clause as soon as practicable upon making such determination; and

(ii) Withhold from the first-tier subcontractor's next available progress payment or payments an amount not to exceed the amount specified in the notice of withholding furnished under paragraph (f)(1)(i) of this clause.

(2) *Subsequent payment or interest charge.* As soon as practicable, but not later than 7 days after receipt of satisfactory written notification that the identified subcontract performance deficiency has been corrected, the Contractor shall—

(i) Pay the amount withheld under paragraph (f)(1)(ii) of this clause to such first-tier subcontractor; or

(ii) Incur an obligation to pay a late payment interest penalty to such first-tier subcontractor computed at the rate of interest established by the Secretary of the Treasury, and published in the *Federal Register*, for interest payments under section 12 of the Contracts Disputes Act of 1978 (41 U.S.C. 611) in effect at the time the Contractor accrues the obligation to pay an interest penalty.

(g) *Written notice of subcontractor withholding.* The Contractor shall issue a written notice of any withholding to a subcontractor (with a copy furnished to the Contracting Officer), specifying—

(1) The amount to be withheld;

(2) The specific causes for the withholding under the terms of the subcontract; and

(3) The remedial actions to be taken by the subcontractor in order to receive payment of the amounts withheld.

(h) *Subcontractor payment entitlement.* The Contractor may not request payment from the Government of any amount withheld or retained in accordance with paragraph (d) of this clause until such time as the Contractor has determined and certified to the Contracting Officer that the subcontractor is entitled to the payment of such amount.

(i) *Prime-subcontractor disputes.* A dispute between the Contractor and subcontractor relating to the amount or entitlement of a subcontractor to a payment or a late payment interest penalty under a clause included in the subcontract pursuant to paragraph (c) of this clause does not constitute a dispute to which the Government is a party. The Government may not be interpleaded in any judicial or administrative proceeding involving such a dispute.

(j) *Preservation of prime-subcontractor rights.* Except as provided in paragraph (i) of this clause, this clause shall not limit or impair any contractual, administrative, or judicial remedies otherwise available to the Contractor or a subcontractor in the event of a dispute involving late payment or nonpayment by the Contractor or deficient subcontract performance or nonperformance by a subcontractor.

(k) *Non-recourse for prime contractor interest penalty.* The Contractor's obligation to pay an interest penalty to a subcontractor pursuant to the clauses included in a subcontract under paragraph (c) of this clause shall not be construed to be an obligation of the Government for such interest penalty. A cost-reimbursement claim may not include any amount for reimbursement of such interest penalty.

(l) *Overpayments.* If the Contractor becomes aware of a duplicate contract financing or invoice payment or that the Government has otherwise overpaid on a contract financing or invoice payment, the Contractor shall—

(1) Remit the overpayment amount to the payment office cited in the contract along with a description of the overpayment including the—

(i) Circumstances of the overpayment (*e.g.*, duplicate payment, erroneous payment, liquidation errors, date(s) of overpayment);

(ii) Affected contract number and delivery order number if applicable;

(iii) Affected contract line item or subline item, if applicable; and

(iv) Contractor point of contact.

(2) Provide a copy of the remittance and supporting documentation to the Contracting Officer.

NOTE: The FAR's are updated periodically. Please check the most recent version which can be found at:

<https://www.acquisition.gov/far/current/html/FARTOCP52.html#wp372482>