PART 2115 - CONTRACTING BY NEGOTIATION

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 8716; 40 U.S.C. 486(c); 48 CFR 1.301.

Source: 58 FR 40375, July 28, 1993, unless otherwise noted.

2115.070 Negotiation authority.

2115.071 Specific retention periods: Contract clause.

Subpart 2115.1 - Source Selection Processes and Techniques

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Parent topic: SUBCHAPTER C - CONTRACTING METHODS AND CONTRACT TYPES

2115.070 Negotiation authority.

The authority to negotiate FEGLI Program contracts is conferred by 5 U.S.C. 8709.

2115.071 Specific retention periods: Contract clause.

Unless the contracting officer determines that there exists a compelling reason to include only the contract clause specified by FAR 52.215-2, “Audit - Negotiation,” the contracting officer shall also insert the clause at 2152.215-70 in all FEGLI Program contracts.

Subpart 2115.1 - Source Selection Processes and Techniques

2115.170 Applicability.

FAR subpart 15.1 has no practical application to the FEGLI Program because prospective contractors (insurance companies) are considered for inclusion in the FEGLI Program in accordance with criteria provided in 5 U.S.C. chapter 87, LIFAR 2109.7001, and LIFAR 2115.370.

Subpart 2115.2 - Solicitation and Receipt of Proposals and Quotations

2115.270 Applicability.

(a) FAR subpart 15.2 has no practical application to the FEGLI Program because 5 U.S.C. chapter 87 exempts the FEGLI Program from competitive bidding.

(b) OPM will announce any opportunities to submit applications to provide life insurance through the FEGLI Program in insurance industry periodicals and other publications as deemed appropriate by OPM. The announcement will contain information on the address to which requests for application packages should be submitted and on deadline dates for submission of completed applications.

(c) Eligible contractors (i.e., qualified life insurance companies) are identified in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 8709. Prospective contractors voluntarily come forth in accordance with procedures provided in section 2115.370.

(d) OPM may approve one or more life insurance companies that, in its judgment, are best qualified to provide life insurance coverage to Federal enrollees.

Subpart 2115.3 - Source Selection

2115.370 Applicability.

FAR subpart 15.3 has no practical application to the FEGLI Program because prospective contractors (insurance companies) are considered for inclusion in the FEGLI Program in accordance with criteria provided in 5 U.S.C. chapter 87, LIFAR 2109.7001, and the following:

(a) Applications must be signed by an individual with legal authority to enter into a contract on behalf of the company for the dollar level of claims and expenses anticipated.

(b) Applications will be reviewed for evidence of substantial compliance in the following areas:

(1) *Management:* Stable management with experience pertinent to the life insurance industry and, in particular, large group management; sufficient operating experience to enable OPM to evaluate past and expected future performance.

(2) *Marketing:* Past ability to attract and retain large group contracts; steady or increasing amount of group life insurance in force.

(3) *Legal expertise:* Demonstrated competence in researching, compiling, and implementing various Federal and State laws that may impact payment of benefits; ability to defend legal challenges to payment of benefits.

(4) *Financial condition:* Establishment of firm budget projections and demonstrated success in keeping costs at or below those projections on a regular basis; evidence of the ability to sustain operations in the future and to meet obligations under the contract OPM might enter into with the company; adequate reserve levels; assets exceeding liabilities.

(5) *Establishment of office:* Ability to establish an administrative office capable of assessing, tracking, and paying claims.

(6) *Internal controls:* Ability to establish and maintain a system of internal control that provides reasonable assurance that the payment of claims and other expenses will be in compliance with legal, regulatory, and contractual guidelines; funds, property, and other FEGLI Program assets will be safeguarded against waste, loss, unauthorized use, or misappropriation; and revenues and expenditures applicable to FEGLI Program operations will be properly recorded and accounted for to permit the preparation of timely and accurate financial reporting and to maintain accountability over assets.

Subpart 2115.4 - Contract Pricing

2115.402 Policy.

Pricing of FEGLI Program premium rates is governed by 5 U.S.C. 8707, 8708, 8711, 8714a, 8714b, and 8714c. FAR subpart 15.4 will be implemented by applying cost analysis policies and procedures. To the extent that reasonable or good faith actuarial estimates are used for pricing, such estimates will be deemed acceptable and, if inaccurate, will not constitute defective pricing.

2115.404-70 Profit.

(a) *Risk charge.*

(1) Section 8711(d) of title 5, United States Code, provides for payment of a risk charge to FEGLI Program contractors as compensation for the risk assumed under the FEGLI Program. It is appropriate to pay such a charge when substantial risk is borne by the contractor; that is, when the balance in the Employees' Life Insurance Fund is no larger than five times annual claims.

(2) The risk charge is determined by agreement between the contractor and OPM. The amount of risk charge shall be specified in the contract.

(b) *Waiver of the risk charge.*

(1) When the Fund balance is greater than five times annual claims, OPM and the contractor may agree that the contractor will relinquish the risk charge in favor of a profit opportunity in the form of a service charge for the contractor. The service charge so determined shall be the total service charge that may be negotiated for the contract and shall encompass any service charge (whether entitled service charge, profit, fee, contribution to surpluses, etc.) that may have been negotiated by

the prime contractor with any subcontractor. At no time may both a risk charge and a service charge be paid for the same portion of a policy year.

(2) Once agreement to relinquish the risk charge is made, the agreement may not be cancelled unless OPM and the Contractor mutually agree to reinstitute payment of a risk charge; or unless the Fund balance falls below the level defined in 2115.404-70(a) and 30 days' notice of cancellation is provided; or unless the Contractor or OPM provides notice of cancellation for any reason 1 year prior to the date cancellation is sought.

(c) Any profit prenegotiation objective (service charge) will be determined on the basis of a weighted guidelines structured approach.

2115.404-71 Profit analysis factors.

(a) The OPM Contracting Officer will apply a weighted guidelines method when developing the prenegotiation objective (service charge) for the FEGLI Program contract. In accordance with the factors defined in FAR 15.404-4(d), OPM will apply the appropriate weights derived from the ranges specified in paragraph (b) of this section and will determine the prenegotiation objective based on the total dollar amount of the Contractor's Basic and Option C (family optional insurance) claims paid in the previous contract year.

(1) *Contractor performance.* OPM will consider such elements as the accurate and timely processing of benefit claims, the volume and validity of complaints received by OPM, effectiveness of internal controls systems in place, the timeliness and adequacy of reports on operations, and responsiveness to OPM offices, enrollees, beneficiaries, and Congress as measures of economical and efficient contract performance. This factor will be judged apart from the Contractor's *basic* responsibility for contract compliance and will be a measure of the extent and nature of the Contractor's contribution to the FEGLI Program through the application of managerial expertise and effort. Evidence of effective contract performance will receive a plus weight, and poor performance or failure to comply with contract terms and conditions a zero weight. Innovations of benefit to the FEGLI Program will generally receive a plus weight; documented inattention or indifference to effective operations, a zero weight.

(2) *Contract cost risk.* OPM will evaluate the Contractor's risk annually in relation to the amount in the Employees' Life Insurance Fund and will evaluate this factor accordingly.

(3) *Federal socioeconomic programs.* OPM will consider documented evidence of successful Contractor-initiated efforts to support such Federal socioeconomic programs as drug and substance abuse deterrents and other concerns of the type enumerated in FAR 15.404-4(d)(1)(iii) as a factor in negotiating profit. This factor will be related to the quality of the Contractor's policies and procedures and the extent of exceptional effort or achievement demonstrated. Evidence of effective support of Federal socioeconomic programs will result in a plus weight; indifference to Federal socioeconomic programs will result in a zero weight; and only deliberate failure to provide opportunities to persons and organizations that would benefit from these programs will result in a negative weight.

(4) *Capital investments.* This factor is generally not applicable to FEGLI Program contracts because facilities capital cost of money may be an allowable administrative expense. Generally, this factor will be given a weight of zero. However, special purpose facilities or investment costs of direct benefit to the FEGLI Program that are not recoverable as allowable or allocable administrative expenses may be taken into account in assigning a plus weight.

(5) *Cost control.* This factor is based on the Contractor's previously demonstrated ability to perform effectively and economically. In addition, consideration will be given to measures taken by the Contractor that result in productivity improvements and other cost containment accomplishments that will be of future benefit to the FEGLI Program. Examples are containment of costs associated with processing claims; success at preventing waste, loss, unauthorized use, or misappropriation of FEGLI Program assets; and success at limiting and recovering erroneous benefit payments.

(6) *Independent development.* Consideration will be given to independent Contractor-initiated efforts, such as the development of a unique and enhanced customer support system, that are of demonstrated value to the FEGLI Program and for which developmental costs have not been recovered directly or indirectly through allowable or allocable administrative expenses. This factor will be used to provide additional profit opportunities based upon an assessment of the Contractor's investment and risk in developing techniques, methods, practices, etc., having viability to the Program at large. Improvements and innovations recognized and rewarded under any other profit factor cannot be considered.

(7) *Transitional services.* This factor is based on the Contractor's performance of transitional activities during a continuity of services period as described in the clause at 2152.237-70 of this chapter. These are any activities apart from the normal servicing of the contract during an active contract term. Other than for a transitional period, the weight applied to this factor for any active contract term is zero.

(b) The weight ranges for each factor to be used in the weighted guidelines approach are set forth in the following table:

Profit factor	Weight ranges
1. Contractor performance	0 to +.0005.
2. Contract cost risk	+.000001 to +.00001.
3. Federal socioeconomic programs	−.00003 to +.00003.
4. Capital investment	0 to +.00001.
5. Cost control	−.0002 to +.0002.
6. Independent development	0 to +.00003.
7. Transitional services	0 to +.0007.