Bulletin: OCFO 13-03

Date: December 19, 2013

To: USDA Agencies

Subject: Invoice Processing Platform (IPP) Implementation

PURPOSE

This bulletin announces the implementation of the Invoice Processing Platform (IPP) for processing vendor payment requests and provides the responsibilities, policy, and procedures for USDA Agencies and vendors to utilize IPP.

BACKGROUND

The Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), in partnership with the Office of Procurement and Property Management (OPPM), has implemented the use of IPP for contracts and purchase order invoice payments. IPP is a Web-based system that provides one integrated, secure system to simplify the management of vendor invoices. IPP enables vendors to electronically create and submit invoices directly from the contract award, and provides online access to invoice status and payment information for all Government payments, not only those invoiced via IPP. IPP automates and supports timely invoice processing by offering multiple approval steps and options to delegate, reassign, or escalate invoices that are not processed promptly. This change to the vendor invoice submission and payment tracking process supports the Secretary's Administrative Strengthening Project to streamline and modernize financial systems/processes, and meet budget reduction goals through cost-saving efforts.

RESPONSIBILITIES

OCFO

- Share responsibility with OPPM for determining functional and technical requirements.
- Determine telecommunications capabilities and requirements.
- Submit a daily invoice status file from the Financial Management Modernization Initiative (FMMI) to IPP.
- Grant users access to the IPP system.
- Submit vendor information to IPP.
- Conduct Agency training and issue certificates and Continuing Professional Education credits.
- Review the "Vendor Match Exception Report" daily to identify new awards loaded into IPP that require an IPP account.

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- Serve as the point of contact/help desk support for IPP inquiries (except for assistance with user ID and/or passwords).
- Timely record receipts in the Integrated Acquisition System (IAS) for Agency approved invoices (as requested by the agencies).
- Conduct the 3-way match between the purchase order, invoice, and goods receipt.
- Issue IPP notifications to agencies.
- Maintain the USDA financial interface responsible for the payment of all IAS invoices.
- Perform "invoice action" (e.g. reassign an invoice, set delegation, etc.) as requested by the Agencies.

OPPM

- Share responsibility with OCFO for determining functional and technical requirements.
- Provide requirements for the configuration of IPP and the integration between IAS and IPP.
- Submit approved IAS awards to IPP in near real-time.
- Retrieve approved invoices from IPP and load into IAS for processing.
- Receive all requests for IPP access via the IAS-200 form and coordinate with OCFO to load users into IPP.
- Maintain IAS/IPP user account mappings and configurations/validations within IAS needed to support IPP.
- Support OCFO with issues requiring IAS support/intervention.
- Participate in user acceptance testing of new IPP releases, update IAS interface code when necessary, and work with OCFO on any applicable IPP configuration changes.

Agencies

- Ensure all parties involved in contract functions comply with established USDA policies and procedures.
- Ensure users request access to IPP.
- Identify the workflow and approvers required for invoices submitted by vendors.
- Modify contracts (when applicable) to identify workflow and approvers required, if other than the Contracting Officer (CO).
- Request training and identify the method for training Agency personnel.
- Ensure Agency personnel utilize AgLearn for training registration.
- Notify vendors of IPP's invoice remittance process.
- Timely approve vendor invoices submitted to IPP.
- Submit requests for configuration changes.
- Identify escalation and receipting groups.
- Identify escalation time frames for the different types of goods and/or services.
- Establish delegation procedures in IPP.
- Modify workflow approvers when required.

- Review and approve invoice workflow and, in certain circumstances, submit invoice on behalf of the vendor.

Vendors

- Register with IPP to enable access to review awards and submit their invoices for payment.
- Maintain up-to-date contact information with the System for Award Management (SAM).

POLICY

Agencies and vendors will use IPP for submission of contract/award invoices for payment. Vendors will be requested to complete a one-time registration with IPP in order to submit invoices for payment. In the event a vendor is unable to utilize IPP, the Agency representative will be required to submit the invoice in IPP for payment on the vendor's behalf. Vendors will no longer be required to fax invoices for payment request.

PROCEDURES

Registration

- Vendors are identified and their information is provided to IPP.
- Vendors are notified in writing of the requirement to begin utilizing IPP for all invoice submissions.
- Notifications are issued from IPP to the vendors which will include a logon ID (vendors that have previously registered with IPP will not be required to re-register).
- Agency user/employees will complete an IAS-200 to request IPP access.
- Agency users/employees and vendors will receive an e-mail communication from IPP with instructions on how to complete the registration process.
- Vendors will provide required information during the IPP registration process.

NOTE: Many Departments/Agencies, other than USDA, utilize IPP for invoice processing. Accordingly, a vendor may have multiple contracts/awards with various Government entities; therefore, a single IPP user ID/login is required by the vendor.

Invoice Submission and Approval

- New contracts/awards will be uploaded to IPP as they are issued. The Agency is responsible for revising existing invoice submission instructions, as well as assuring new contracts/awards contain the correct invoice submission instructions.
- Once goods and/or services have been provided, the vendor (or Agency CO/Contracting Officer Representative (COR)) will logon to IPP and submit the

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invoice for review and approval. Invoices may be submitted for a partial payment or entire contract amount.

- Agency CO/COR will be notified via email when an invoice is awaiting review. Once reviewed, if approved, the invoice is processed via USDA's core-accounting system and the payment is issued.

During this process, invoices should reflect one of the following statuses:

Status	Definition
Draft	Invoice created but not yet submitted and is editable at this stage
Received	Awaiting review by Agency
Scheduled to Pay	Invoice approved and has a scheduled pay date
Rejected	Invoice returned to vendor with explanation and/or request for action
Paid	Payment issued by Treasury and funds received by vendor

- Treasury sends the payment file to IPP, which changes the status to "paid" and triggers the notification of the payment to the vendor, which includes:

  - ACH trace number
  - Payer name
  - Issue date
  - Returned date (if applicable)
  - Status
  - Amount
  - Reason

Invoice Rejection

- Invoices that are not approved will be rejected and the vendor notified via e-mail.
- Agencies are required to explain in detail, the reason any invoice is rejected and provide any other helpful information or instructions to the vendor.
- Rejected invoices can be resubmitted after the appropriate action has been taken.

INQUIRIES

Any questions concerning this bulletin should be directed to the COD Contact Center at 877-243-3072 or 504-426-5695, or via e-mail at cod.help@usda.gov.

Additional information is available on the COD Web site at https://cod.nfc.usda.gov/IPP/ipp.html.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This bulletin is effective immediately.

/S/

JOHN G. BREWER
Associate Chief Financial Officer for Financial Operations

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