OFFICE OF NAVAL RESEARCH (ONR) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)
FOR CONTRACTS & OTHER TRANSACTIONS

For Current and Prospective Performers Impacted by Novel COVID-19

As our nation continues to face an unprecedented public health challenge owing to COVID-19, Contracting Officers are implementing new flexibilities to ensure ONR continues to meet its mission. The efficient execution of ONR’s existing R&D and S&T contracts, other transactions, and the awarding of pending and future contracts is imperative. Accordingly:

1. Q: Can Contractors continue to work on contracts?

   A: Contractors, including those working on/supporting classified programs to maximum extent practicable, are encouraged to telework when contract services can be delivered without mission degradation. In-person activities that cannot be done via telework, such as a machinist in a machine shop, can continue unless delayed due to COVID-19 issues like a mandatory quarantine requirement. Please coordinate with your CORs.

2. Q: What if a Contractor cannot telework?

   A: When continuous telework work is not possible, contractors should enlist strategies to reduce the likelihood of spreading COVID-19 and guarantee conduct of social distancing. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, considerations of options available, and that you deem acceptable to your companies, such as separating staff by offsetting shift hours or days, changes to workforce/workplace flexibilities, leave policies, or employment flexibilities per law to allow your contractor employees to take advantage of National unemployment compensation enhancements. Please follow CDC and other appropriate guidance.

3. Q: Will the period of performance be extended under contracts?

   A: ONR will extend periods of performance due to COVID-19 impacts when applicable and as permitted by statute and regulation.

4. Q: How fast will I receive my new award?

   A: ONR will do its utmost to accelerate negotiations and awards using authorized flexibilities.

5. Q: Are ONR contracts part of the essential critical Infrastructure?

   A: The Department of Homeland Security has identified the Defense Industrial Base as a Critical Infrastructure Sector. In a memorandum dated March 20, 2020, concerning the “Defense Industrial Base Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce,” the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition & Sustainment included the research and development industrial base as part of the essential critical infrastructure for DoD, stating that contractors and subcontractors supporting the “development, production, testing, fielding, or sustainment of our weapon systems/software systems, or the infrastructure to support those activities, are considered Essential Critical Infrastructure.” Therefore, those performing or supporting ONR R&D and S&T efforts are expected to continue to
meet their contractual obligations as best as they can. Should local restrictions such as stay-at-home orders frustrate your efforts to continue your work, please inform your Contracting Officer Representative (COR) or the Contracting Officer immediately.