

COVID-19: Impacts and Possible Remedies for Government Contractors  
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What can the Government Contractors Amidst COVID 19 do?

A situation like today concerning the spread of the virus was seen only in cinemas and comics till now. But turning the horrifying fiction into reality on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) officially declared that the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) should be characterized as a "pandemic" because of its continuous rising number of cases throughout the World. Even the very developed countries are struggling to get back to their normal routine life. Approximately 3,18,645 infected folks have lost their lives. This virus has not only affected the individuals but also the worldwide supply chain.

Prime and subcontractors are both at the risk of experiencing impacts on either side to facilitate and perform certain aspects of their regime contracts.

Let us analyze the current scenario and its impacts & possible remedies for the Government Contractors taken to fight this deadliest disease.

Contractors and Sub Contractors

Government Contractors generally mean, a person or a firm that takes up a contract to provide goods and services for a government. They can be further differentiated into Principal contractors and sub-contractors. The following are some of the responsibilities of the Government Contractors.

- The contractors and subcontractors shall set up a system for sharing the responsibilities to detail their part of work concerning the health and safety of all workers in the workplace.
- The contractor and sub-Contractor must ensure the proper implementation of the health and safety measures at work as they are in direct control and if something goes wrong, which could affect both of them directly or indirectly, they are responsible for controlling and eliminating hazards.

The instructions that are likely to be given by the government to the contractors should be clear and should reach them easily as they are held responsible for the actions that are likely to occur at the course of work.

Impacts - Government Contractors Amidst COVID 19

Sometimes, the flow of the material affects the supply chain or the durability of the materials. During such a time, the contractors may seek a revision of the distribution from the contracting office but in a way that it shall not disturb the supply chain of essential commodities. In a regime contract, a contractor, if fails to perform his part of the contract, will not be considered to be in default if the failure arises from causes beyond his control. The clause under which the contractors are exempted from their duties also includes Acts of God, Epidemic, and Quarantine Restrictions.

### Coordinating With Government

- The government contractors should coordinate with the subcontractors and organize health and safety programs that help in the awareness of COVID-19.
- The subcontractors must set up and maintain 10 or more members in their occupational health committees with any appropriate information available to the contractor that could affect the health and safety of the workers.
- Sub contractors must understand the accountability and make them aware of the health and safety activities that could affect them.
- Government contractors must observe the subcontractors and make sure that they comply with the occupational illness requisites and take action to rectify any noncompliance activities happening at the place of employment.

### Impact - Government Contractors Amidst COVID 19

The contractors are to be more vigilant and should keep an eye on the subcontractors so that they do not cause a disruption to the supply chain. They must make certain that the timely demand is made with the material suppliers. The contractors should be vigilant about impacts on their supply chain resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. If the regime is not inclined to grant measurement, the contractor may find itself in a situation where it must perform, even if subcontractors and suppliers cannot consummate their contractual obligations because of disruptions to the supply chain.

Accordingly, the contractor must consider the alternate sources available to meet contract requisites. Alternate sources must comply with all obligatory regime regulations, including the counterfeit components. Likewise, the utilization of the alternate sources may require the regime notice and approbation of the same.

### Remedies available to the Contractors

The following are some of the powers that are readily available to the contractors to ensure that the safety measures are implemented in a proper way.

The contracting officer, in his own interest, may direct the contractor to remove or substitute any other contractor or subcontractor for performing private security functions. This would be in cases where the mentioned contractor has failed to comply with the applicable essentials. Such action may be taken at the administrators' discretion without prejudice to its rights under any other contract provision.

- The contracting officer can avail all the facilities that are readily available, provided by the government, to ensure the health and safety measures are taken in such a way, that is useful to the litigant public.
- If the performance failures are astringent, protracted, or reiterated, the contracting officer shall refer the matter to the opportune suspending and debarring official.

### Impact

The contractors, thus, without prejudice, should act accordingly that the remedy is only to solve the problematic scenario but they must not take advantage by invoking the remedy available. The contractors shall be responsible to orchestrate, execute, supervise, inspecting, and directing the individuals working under them.

Thus, the responsibilities, procedures, accountability, training, equipping, and conduct are all additionally the component of the contractors. The contractor's responsibilities include making sure that employees are vigilant and are complying with pertinent orders, directions, and ordinant dictations,

keeping opportune personnel records and reporting designated incidents to the authorities concerned, in which the personnel performance and private security are vested with.

Conclusion - Government Contractors Amidst COVID 19

Apart from everything, even the workers working under the government contracts are facing unsolvable problems including the effect of this terrible disease. The relief provided by the government will also not be enough for the workers as the loss cannot be compensated in the terms of money.

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