



VA to Move Financial-Services Center to E-Invoices

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For help with moving from paper to electronic invoicing, the Veterans Affairs Department Financial Services Center awarded a contract to A&T Systems and OB10.

The vendors will jointly enroll suppliers on OB10's e-invoicing network, which lets suppliers submit invoices to the center in any electronic format. The network also provides data mapping and translation services, and presents the center with the invoice in its desired format.

The center, which operates as a franchise fund, processes invoices for the nationwide network of Veterans Health Administration hospitals and other field facilities. The center, which processes more than 1 million invoices annually, offers other financial and accounting services, all of which it also can provide to other federal agencies.

The value of the contract is based on the number of invoices processed through the e-invoicing network over the one-year base period. The contract has four option years. The two contractors plan to convert 70 percent of the center's annual invoice total -- received from the 2,700 highest-volume vendors -- from paper to electronic within 12 months, said Peter Watson, senior vice president at OB10.

With this contract, the financial-services center will perform more efficiently, center Director Rod Wood said.

"We are looking to eliminate invoice errors, reduce or eliminate late-payment penalties and make our accounts-payable process a model for other federal agencies," he said.

The center will require less staff time to open mail and deal with the mountain of paper involved with the nearly 17,000 invoices arriving each week. E-invoicing also will enhance security because the OB10 network operates in a secure electronic environment. It will eliminate security and privacy issues inherent with paper invoices. For example, electronic delivery eliminates manual errors that occur as center employees type paper invoice data into its payment system. And it will speed the payment process to comply with federal prompt-payment requirements.

