Progress Through Regional Cooperation In The Alleghenies

State of the Southern Alleghenies APEX Accelerator – January
by James Gerraughty
SAP&DC APEX Accelerator Program Manager

hello January

Happy New Year! I hope this year brings you peace and joy!

Considering how late my December 2023 newsletter was, I don't have a whole lot to update (Note to self: Start the newsletters a bit earlier in the coming year…). On December 22, 2023, the **updates** to the Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) 2.0 were in the Federal Register. It's a big read, about 80 pages, and comments on it are due by 26 FEB 2024. Those of us at the APEX Accelerators nationwide will be keeping an eye on this and providing training on the changes.

Speaking of training, please review our training opportunities that are coming up in January 2024 (and beyond for our APEX Accelerator and PREP Partners, once our funding is confirmed). A big one is an update to Wide Area Workflow, hosted by David Kern, Small Business Analysist from Tobyhanna Army Depot on February 6, 2024. It will be a virtual event, same as last year, with opportunities to meet with buying agencies. Free to attend, but you must **register**.

You can review and register for upcoming events on our **eCenter page**.

Stop back often, as the training events do pop up there pretty frequently!

Finally, if you have ideas for topics, or would like to learn more about something, please drop us a line at (814) 949-6500 or by **email.**

Pentagon Issues Proposed CMMC Rule
By Edward Graham, Staff Reporter, Nextgov/FCW

The long-anticipated draft rule, which will be officially published on Dec. 26, outlines proposed updates to DOD's cybersecurity requirements for defense contractors and subcontractors who handle sensitive military data. [Editor's note: Comments will be received through 26 FEB 2024.]

The Pentagon is poised to release its draft updates to cybersecurity requirements for defense contractors and subcontractors next week, with the proposed rule seeking to tighten up current cyber requirements for firms that handle sensitive military

information.

The proposed updates to the Department of Defense's Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification — or CMMC — program are set to be officially published in the Federal Register on Dec. 26. CMMC, which went into effect in 2020 and was updated in 2021 to streamline some of its requirements, outlines baseline security standards for the over 70,000 companies that do business with DOD.

Although the proposed rule has not officially been published, a PDF version of the 234-page document is already accessible through the Federal Register. **Continue Reading**

(Accessed 12/27/2023)

GSA Launches Text Message Service for Government Programs in Four Localities and States
By Natalie Alms, Staff Reporter, Nextgov/FCW

The General Services Administration's pilot to send customized text reminders to individuals at critical moments during the enrollment and renewal of federal benefit programs — such as upcoming application deadlines — has onboarded two states and two distinct cities and counties, GSA announced Thursday. State and local governments can also use the service to send messages to their own staff, GSA says.

Norfolk, Virginia and Montgomery County, Maryland, as well as the states of Wisconsin and Washington, will use the pilot — called Notify.gov — to send messages about federal programs administered on the local level, according to a GSA spokesperson.

GSA had been working with Norfolk's Department of Human Services already as its first partner on a texting campaign around changes to eligibility rules for federal programs at the end of the public health emergency for the coronavirus pandemic, specifically about recertifying for Medicaid, according to performance.gov. **Continue Reading**

(Accessed 12/27/2023)

IRS Direct File Participants Will Have to Use ID.me for Identity Verification
By Natalie Alms, Staff Reporter, Nextgov/FCW

The IRS still isn't ready to field the government-provided Login.gov for digital access to taxpayer services.

The coming IRS direct file pilot, which will allow taxpayers in certain states to file their taxes directly to the government, will require participants to verify their identity via ID.me, according to a new IRS blog post.

That means that the IRS still isn't ready to adopt the government-owned identity solution Login.gov. IRS officials have had concerns about the security features of Login.gov, which has been in hot water this year over the fact that it doesn't meet certain identity verification standards. Since then, the General Services Administration announced that it will be adding face matching technology to Login.gov to meet the standard in question.

But sticking with ID.me could resurface old controversies. The vendor came under scrutiny from lawmakers and civil society groups in early 2022 after the IRS started using ID.me — which offers facial recognition to verify identities — to its sign-in processes for online IRS accounts. **Continue Reading**

(Accessed 12/27/2023)

About US
The Southern Alleghenies APEX Accelerator at SAP&DC is an
economic development entity that bridges the gap between

supplier and buyer in the government marketplace. The APEX Accelerator stands ready to support businesses in the central PA Alleghenies region in the pursuit to secure contracts with local, state and/or federal government agencies nationwide.

Due to the generous support of our Commonwealth and Federal funding partners, services provided by the APEX Accelerator are free of charge.

Whether you are an experienced contractor or new to the government marketplace, the APEX Accelerator will provide one-on-one counseling utilizing all of the program resources necessary to increase your share of contract awards. We will also coordinate assistance, if needed, with our PA PREP partners.

Contact us today at the Southern Alleghenies APEX Accelerator at SAP&DC to get started!

Email: **apex@sapdc.org**
Phone: (814) 949-6500
Web: **APEXAccelerator@SAP&DC**

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SAP&DC **|** 814-949-6528 **|** jgerraughty@sapdc.org **|** http://www.sapdc.org
3 Sheraton Drive
Altoona, PA 16601