

National Bulletin: 440-23-25

Date: 09/11/2023

Subject: PGM – Temporary Suspension of Application and Contract
Management Activities in ProTracts for Fiscal Year 2023

Purpose: To announce the fiscal year (FY) 2023 year-end schedule for suspension of application and contract management financial activities in ProTracts.

Expiration Date: December 31, 2023.

Background: ProTracts will undergo annual maintenance and new-year setup activities from September 29, 2023, to October 6, 2023. This process permits year-end alignment with the Financial Management Modernization Initiative (FMMI).

Explanation: Neither ProTracts nor FMMI will be turned off during this period, but there will be a brief suspension of financial activities to end the FY as detailed below. **All transactions to FMMI must be completed by 11 p.m. CST on Friday, September 29, 2023.**

Eligibility

- Participants should resolve all outstanding eligibility issues and submit necessary documents to the **Farm Service Agency (FSA) by Friday, September 15, 2023**, to allow adequate time for NRCS to complete the contract obligation before the end of September. FSA updates to the business file occur in real time; FSA subsidiary rollover for FY 2024 will **begin September 22, 2023**. NRCS should ensure all FY 2023 customer records are complete when the FSA rollover occurs.
- States must monitor the Fund Manager reports for applications and contracts with eligibility issues to timely resolve issues that impact FY 2023 obligations.
- States must use existing protocols to escalate any eligibility issues for assistance.
- ProTracts and Fund Manager will continue using FY 2023 eligibility data for obligations through September 29, 2023.

Obligations

- **On September 29, 2023, at 11 p.m. CST** (hereafter referred to as “close of business”), ProTracts will stop processing obligations. This is unchanged from prior years.
- All applications in all programs that are in “approved” status at close of business on September 29, 2023, will be automatically changed to “preapproved” status to prevent any new obligations of funds in FY 2024.
- NRCS must not sign or accept participant signatures on Form NRCS-CPA-1202 (NRCS-CPA-1265 and NRCS-CPA-1266 for Agricultural Conservation Easement

Program – Agricultural Land Easement) or the associated NRCS-CPA-1202 Appendix (NRCS-CPA-1265 Appendix) after close of business September 29, 2023, as this will be considered an unauthorized commitment of FY 2023 program funds.

Accruals

- If the payment is certified in ProTracts, no accrual is required to be sent in by the field or state office. Otherwise, the instructions below should be followed. This is consistent with instructions distributed to NRCS by the FPAC Business Center, Financial Management Division.
- For state-initiated accruals, if the paperwork is complete (NRCS-CPA-1245, NRCS-CPA-1268, payment checklist, easement Internal Controls approval, etc.) but the certification and approval of the **completed practice has not been entered into ProTracts**, states will prepare and submit accrual request packages using the Accrual Certification Checklist (attachment) to the Payment Operations Section by 4 p.m. CST, Wednesday, September 27, 2023, through myFPAC Services portal.
 - The link to the portal may be accessed at <https://usdafpacbc.servicenowservices.com/fpacnow>.
 - Select “Payment Operations” and “Quarterly Expense Accruals - ProTracts.” The accrual certification package should be attached with proper supporting documentation.
- The FPAC Business Center, Budget Division, Data Validation and Budget Technology Branch will record an accrual for practices certified in ProTracts but not approved for payment by 1 p.m. CST, Friday, September 29, 2023.

Payments

- Certified practices subject to annual payment limitations that have not been approved or resubmitted in ProTracts **by close of business on September 29, 2023**, will be attributed to FY 2024 payment limitations when they are approved in FY 2024. **Any payment not accepted in FMMI by 11 p.m. CST on September 29, 2023, will likely not be processed by FMMI until on or after October 2, 2023.** This means there may be a slight delay for participants receiving their payments when NRCS approves the payments at the end of the FY. Advance payments must not be submitted in ProTracts after 11 p.m. CST on September 29, 2023, as these will not reflect properly on financial statements if paid after this date.
- States must not approve payments in ProTracts after close of business September 30, 2023.
- Payments that have been signed by the participant and are certified but not approved in ProTracts by the close of payment approval on September 29, 2023, will be automatically accrued.

- Practice payment certification will remain enabled in ProTracts during the rollover period.

Contract Modifications

Modifications are discouraged after September 28, 2023, and must not be initiated after September 28, 2023, unless states are:

- processing a payment,
- removing contract items,
- cancelling a contract, or
- terminating a contract.

Contact: Direct questions to Xiomara Tryban, Business Tools Specialist, by email at xiomara.tryban@usda.gov.

Attachment: Accrual Certification Checklist