

1.601 General.

(a) Unless specifically prohibited by another provision of law, authority and responsibility to contract for authorized *supplies* and services are vested in the *agency head*. The *agency head* may establish *contracting activities* and delegate broad authority to manage the agency's *contracting* functions to heads of such *contracting activities*. Contracts may be entered into and signed on behalf of the Government only by *contracting officers*. In some agencies, a relatively small number of high level officials are designated *contracting officers* solely by virtue of their positions. *Contracting officers* below the level of a head of a *contracting activity* shall be selected and appointed under [1.603](#).

(b) *Agency heads* may mutually agree to-

- (1) Assign *contracting* functions and responsibilities from one agency to another; and
- (2) Create joint or combined offices to exercise *acquisition* functions and responsibilities.

Parent topic: [Subpart 1.6 - Career Development, Contracting Authority, and Responsibilities](#)