Contractor Alert Reporting Database Manual



APRIL 4, 2012

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I. INTRODUCTION

On April 27, 2010, the Board of Supervisors directed the Chief Executive Office (CEO), Auditor-Controller (A-C), County Counsel (Counsel), and the Director of the Internal Services Department (ISD) to establish a work group to develop a mechanism to alert departments of poorly performing contractors. As a result, the County developed the Contractor Alert Reporting Database (CARD), which uses the County's existing enterprise-based eCAPS System to track poorly performing contractors.

This manual provides guidelines and instructions for using CARD. Departments are responsible for:

- Providing contractors with due process prior to placing them in CARD
- Notifying a contractor that they may be placed in CARD, and the reasons for the placement
- Placing poorly performing contractors in CARD and including adequate documentation to justify/support placement
- Notifying other County departments when a contractor has been placed in CARD
- Working with the contractor to resolve the issue(s) that resulted in placing the contractor in CARD and providing training to help prevent future non-compliance
- Updating contractor records in CARD, and
- Using CARD during each applicable contract solicitation and ongoing monitoring of existing departmental contractors

II. CRITERIA FOR PLACING A CONTRACTOR IN CARD

The requirements for placing a contractor in CARD are applicable to all County contracts, unless otherwise prohibited. Departments should consider the materiality of the issues with the contractor, such as the dollar amount owed to the County, the pattern and number of occurrences, and impact to the County and public before placing a contractor in CARD. Only contractors with a <u>significant</u> issue(s) should be placed in CARD.

Before placing a contractor in CARD, departments must also ensure that they provide contractor with due process. Departments must respect the legal rights of contractors and provide an opportunity and a reasonable amount of time for contractors to correct the issue(s).

Contractors must meet one or more of the following criteria to be placed in CARD:

- The Contractor owes the County for overpayments and/or questioned costs and has not entered into a repayment agreement or agreed to pay the County back, or has been referred to the Treasurer and Tax Collector for collection.
- 2. The contractor has not taken the appropriate steps to correct significant documented instances of contract non-compliance in a timely manner.
- 3. The contractor and/or their principal owners are currently debarred by other governmental entities.
 - Principal owner is any person or entity, who or which owns a 10 percent or more interest in the contractor.
 - Department must update CARD to indicate if/when the issue is resolved once the debarment period of the other government entity expires (if applicable).
- 4. The contractor has experienced financial, administrative, programmatic or legal issues that affect their ability to comply with the County contract requirements. Examples of these issues include, but are not limited to the following:
 - Bankruptcy
 - Loss of licenses
 - Failure to pay property or payroll taxes
 - Financial Viability concerns
 - Lack of qualified staff
 - Amount of disallowed or undocumented costs
 - Lack of required insurance
 - Poor program services
 - Assessment of any fines and/or penalties by public entities
- 5. The County has imposed contractual remedies against the contractor for non-compliance with the County contract requirements. Examples of contract remedies include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Termination for default
 - Assessing liquidated damages
 - · Adjusting the contractor's funding
 - Not renewing the contract

Departments can begin placing contractors that meet one or more of these criteria in CARD beginning August 1, 2011. Departments may retroactively place a contractor in CARD even if the contract expired prior to August 1, 2011 when the contractor still owes the County for overpayments and/or questioned costs. If a contractor has no pending

overpayments and/or questioned costs, and their contract expired prior to August 1, 2011, a Department should not retroactively place the contractor in CARD.

III. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION FOR CARD PLACEMENT

After identifying a poorly performing contractor, departments must maintain documentation to support placing the contractor in CARD, and demonstrate sufficient due process was provided to the contractor. Examples (not a complete list) of supporting documentation include:

- Departmental contract monitoring reports
- Annual performance reviews
- Auditor-Controller reports
- Debarment records
- Contractor's audited financial statements
- Communication from the contractor stating their unwillingness to comply with requirements
- Communications from the department documenting collection or other efforts to resolve outstanding issues
- Bankruptcy filings
- Cancellation of required licenses, insurance, etc.

The supporting documentation must be uploaded into CARD using the instructions on page 9.

Departments may contact the Auditor-Controller's Countywide Contract Monitoring Division at (213) 253-0300 for assistance if they are not sure they have sufficient documentation to proceed with a CARD placement.

IV. PLACING A CONTRACTOR IN CARD

Departments must develop internal approval procedures before placing a contractor in CARD, and must send written notification to a contractor before placing the contractor in CARD. At minimum, the department's Administrative Deputy or a designee should approve a CARD placement. To simplify the approval and notification process, departments are required to:

- Complete a standardized CARD Placement Notification Letter (see Exhibit I), including an approval signature from the Administrative Deputy/designee.
- Send the signed CARD Placement Notification Letter to the contractor ten business days before CARD placement via certified US mail and email.
- If the issue is unresolved after the ten business days, place the contractor in CARD according to the instructions below. This includes uploading the supporting

documentation justifying CARD placement (including the signed notification that was sent to the contractor). Departments may delay the CARD placement to allow the contractor additional time to resolve any issues.

 Notify the Board of Supervisors' budget deputies, their respective cluster's Board deputies, and the Countywide Contracting Network (<u>cardnotify@isd.lacounty.gov</u>) of the CARD placement via email and attaching a copy of the signed CARD Placement Notification Letter. The Countywide Contracting Network contact will forward the notification to the network.

Instructions for placing a contractor in CARD:

A. Getting to the CARD table in eCAPS:

1. Click on Search.



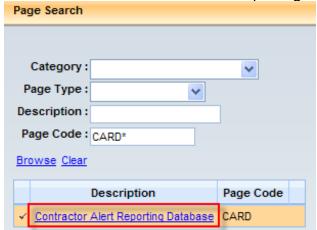
2. Click on Page Search.



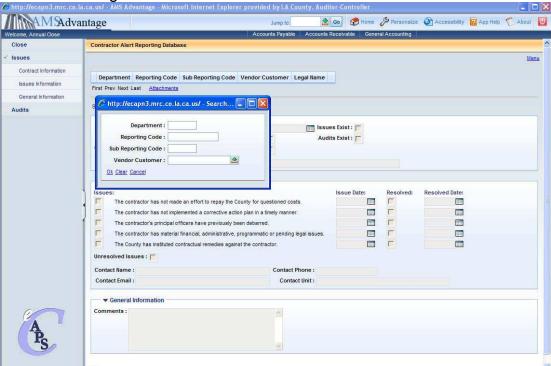
3. Type in CARD for the Page Code and Click on Browse.



4. Click on the Contractor Alert Reporting Database link to go to the CARD Table.



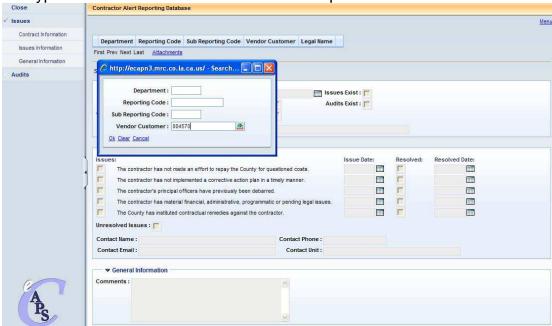
5. The following CARD table will load with a Search box.



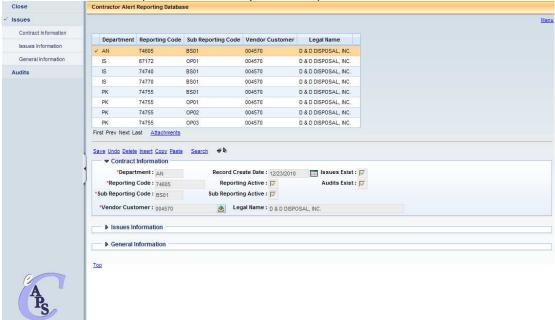
B. Searching to determine if the contractor is already in CARD:

1. Type in the Vendor Customer number and press Enter.

Close Contractor Alert Reporting Database

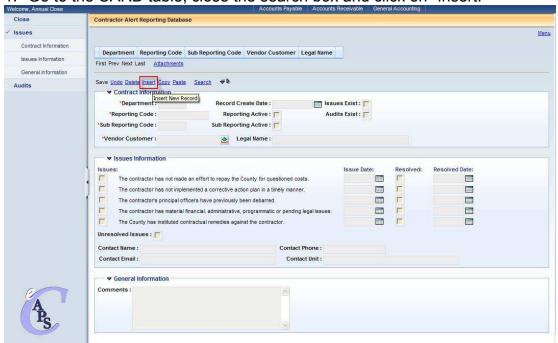


2. The following page will load with zero (the contractor is not in CARD), one or several records (as in the example below) for the contractor.

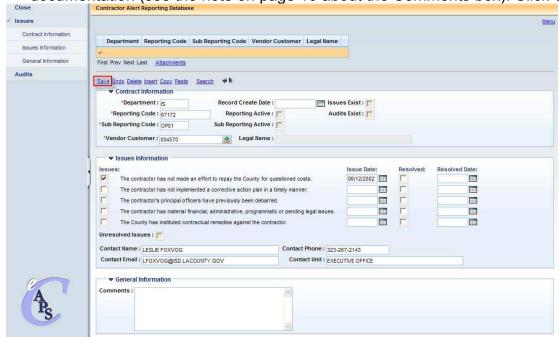


C. Adding a new record for a contractor that is not in CARD:

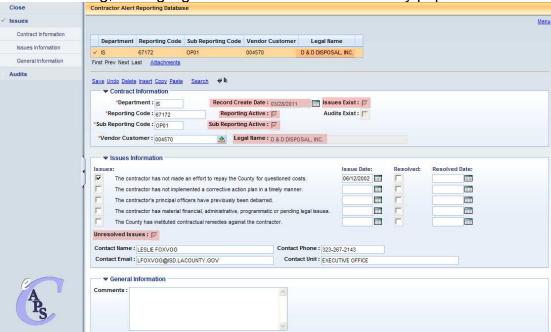
1. Go to the CARD table, close the search box and click on "Insert."



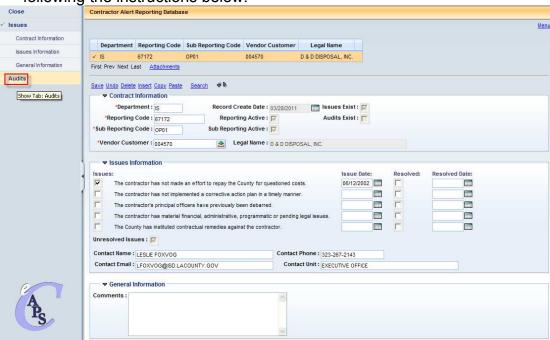
2. Enter the Department, Reporting Code, Sub Reporting Code, and Vendor Customer. Also, click the check boxes for the relevant Issues, enter the Issue Date(s), and enter the contact information for the person who should be contacted regarding the CARD record. A comments box is provided but should rarely be used and only to provide factual information supported by documentation (see the note on page 16 about the Comments box). Click Save.



3. After saving, the highlighted areas will be automatically populated.

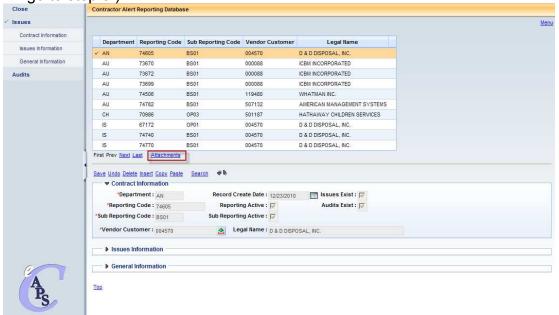


Click on Audits to go to the Audits Page and upload supporting documentation by following the instructions below.



D. Uploading supporting documentation:

 To upload any supporting documents for an Issue other than audit/monitoring reports or related documents (e.g., the CARD Placement Notification Letter), go to the contractor's Issues Page, select the relevant CARD record, and click on the Attachments link. (To upload audit/monitoring reports or related documents go to step 8.)



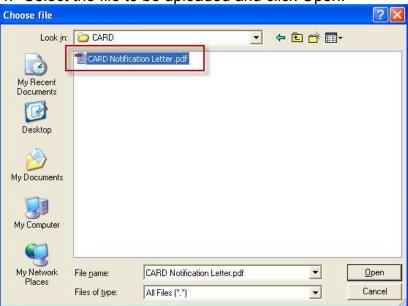
2. Click on Upload.



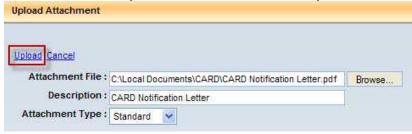
3. Click on Browse.



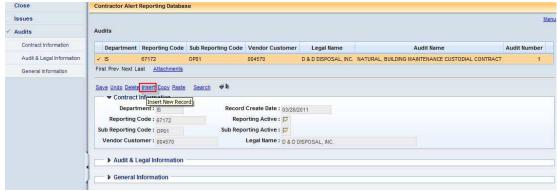
4. Select the file to be uploaded and click Open.



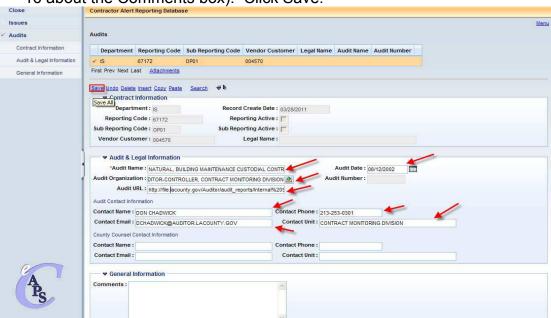
Enter a Description of the file and click Upload.



- 6. Repeat steps 2 thru 5 to upload additional supporting documents for an Issue.
- 7. Click Return to go back to the Issues Page.
- 8. To upload an audit or monitoring report to a CARD record, go to the Audits Page and click on Insert.



9. Enter the Audit Name, Organization, Date, URL (optional), and the Contact Information. A comments box is provided but should rarely be used and only to provide factual information supported by documentation (see the note on page 16 about the Comments box). Click Save.



10. Click on the Attachments link to upload attachments.



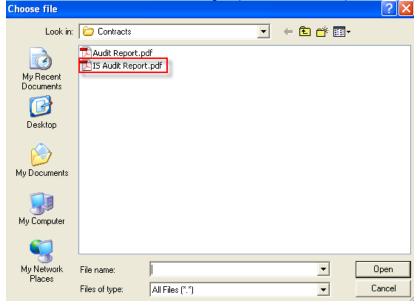
11. Click on Upload.



12. Click on Browse.



13. Select the audit/monitoring report file to be uploaded and click Open.



14. Enter a Description of the file and click Upload.



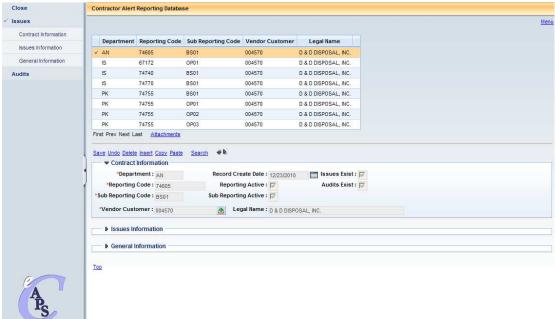
- 15. Repeat steps 11 thru 14 to upload any additional files relevant to the audit/monitoring report (i.e., communications with the contractor, corrective action plans, follow-up reports, etc.).
- 16. Click Return to go back to the Audits Page.



17. Repeat steps 8 thru 16 to upload another audit/monitoring report for the CARD record.

E. Adding a record for a contractor that is already in CARD:

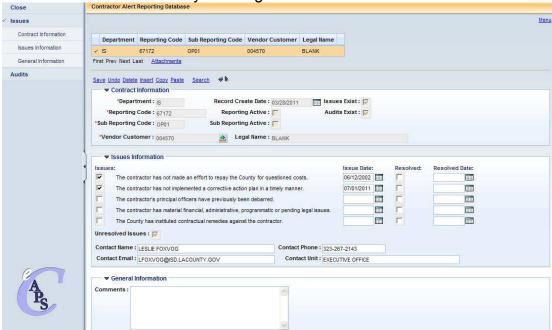
 Check the Department, Reporting Code, and Sub Reporting Code fields in the contractor's CARD record list to determine if there is a record for the contract to be added into CARD.



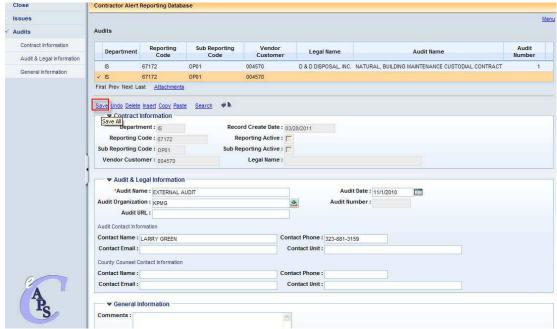
2. If a record exists for the contract, follow the instructions on page 15 to update an existing record. If not, add a new CARD record as shown on page 7.

F. Updating an existing CARD record:

1. Update the CARD record's Issues Page by adding additional Issues, revising the contact information or by entering comments and then click Save.



Update the CARD record's Audits Page by uploading additional documents, revising the Audit Name, Date, Organization or contact information or by entering comments and then click Save.



G. Potential error messages:

- 1. LAC30: Contract is not valid. The Department Code, Reporting Code, Sub Reporting Code, and Vendor must be on the Contract Extension Table.
- 2. LAC34: Issue/Resolved Date must be entered when Issue/Resolved checkbox is checked.
- 3. LAC35: Issue/Resolved Date cannot be entered unless Issue/Resolved checkbox is checked.
- 4. LAC38: Resolved Date cannot come before Issue Date.
- 5. LAC39: Please specify at least one Issue. CARD entries should have at least one issue.
- 6. LAC40: Department/Reporting Code/Sub Reporting Code/Vendor Customer field is required. These fields must be entered.
- 7. LAC42: Contact Name and Contact Phone must be entered if any Issues are checked.
- 8. LAC43: Audit Name is required when Audit Information is entered.
- 9. A unique index was violated. Either a duplicate record was inserted, or a unique attribute was modified.

Note: A comments box is provided on the Issues Page and Audits Page if a department needs to include an explanation of a rare circumstance (e.g., a resolved issue becoming a current issue again). The comments box should rarely be used and only to provide factual information supported by documentation. Departments should not make negative commentary or state opinions about a contractor in the comments box.

V. RESOLVING CARD ISSUES

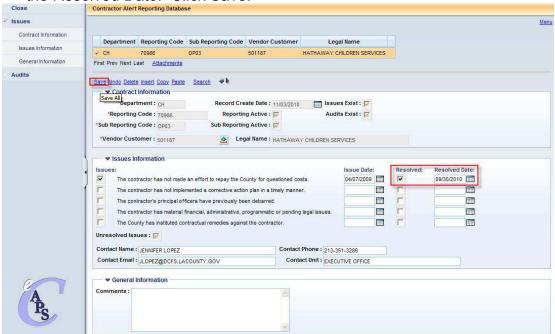
In addition to providing contractors with due process before they are placed in CARD, departments must also allow contractors an opportunity to resolve any of the issues indicated in the contractors' CARD records. The CARD Placement Notification Letter that is sent to contractors before they are placed in CARD provides contractors with departmental contact information to resolve outstanding CARD issues. If a contractor expresses interest in resolving any issues, departments should work with the contractor and indicate the steps necessary to resolve the issues. Any letter or email a contractor sends to the department that placed them in CARD should be replied to timely.

Once a contractor has taken the steps necessary to resolve one or more of their CARD issues, the department should follow the steps below to update the contractor's CARD

records. After updating CARD, the department must notify the contractor that their CARD record is updated. In doing so, departments must not state that the contractor is/was removed from CARD, since the contractor will remain in CARD with the issue(s) updated to indicate a "resolved" status.

The following are instructions for updating a contractor's CARD record for an issue that has been resolved:

1. Go to the appropriate Issues Page, check the related Resolved box, and enter the Resolved Date. Click Save.



2. Upload documentation demonstrating that each Issue was resolved (see instructions for uploading documents above).

If a resolved issue becomes a current issue again, departments should go to the Issue Page, unclick "resolved", delete the resolved date, update the issue date to indicate the date of the current issue, and update the contact information (if necessary). Departments must also upload additional supporting documentation for the current issue and type a brief note in the Comments section about the resolved issue becoming a current issue again. However, departments must not remove the historical supporting documentation.

VI. USING CARD DURING THE SOLICITATION PROCESS

New Solicitation Language

To ensure proposers are aware of the CARD review, departments must include the following standard language in their new solicitation documents, where a proposer's performance history is reviewed as part of the evaluation process, as of August 1, 2011:

X.X.X Proposer's Qualifications (__%)

- Proposer will be evaluated on their experience and capacity as a corporation or other entity to perform the required services based on information provided in Section X.X of the proposal.
- 2. Proposer will be evaluated on the verification of references provided in Section X.X of the proposal. In addition to the references provided, a review will include the County's Contract Database and Contractor Alert Reporting Database, if applicable, reflecting past performance history on County or other contracts. This review may result in point deductions up to 100% of the total points awarded in this evaluation category. Additionally, a review of terminated contracts will be conducted which may result in point deductions.
- 3. A review will be conducted to determine the significance of any litigation or judgments pending against the Proposer as provided in Section X.X of the proposal.

New Contract Language

Departments must also include the standard language in new contracts and amendments beginning on August 1, 2011:

The County maintains databases that track/monitor contractor performance history. Information entered into such databases may be used for a variety of purposes, including determining whether the County will exercise a contract term extension option.

Executed contracts do not need to be amended. However, departments must ensure that they notify poorly performing contractors about CARD during their monitoring process and before sending a CARD Placement Notification Letter to a contractor.

New Evaluation Procedures

For County contract solicitations where a proposer's performance history is scored as part of the evaluation process, departments must add a CARD review to their evaluation procedures for solicitations released with the new solicitation language above. The CARD review must include (1) searching CARD to determine if proposers have been placed in CARD and (2) contacting proposers' non-County references to identify any

issues that may exist that are similar to the CARD criteria. Proposers that have been placed in CARD or provided non-County references who indicate and provide documentation that the proposer has issues similar to the CARD criteria will receive deductions from the points awarded in their performance history evaluation.

The following are instructions for completing the CARD review:

- 1. Searching CARD for proposers Whether or not proposers include a County department as a reference in their proposals, departments must search CARD to determine if a County department has placed the proposers in CARD. Departments should identify any business names the proposers may use and determine if they are in CARD by reviewing the eCAPS Cognos report titled "CARD Contractor List" (see the eCAPS Cognos Reports section beginning on page 20) or by searching CARD for each individual proposer (see instructions on page 6).
 - a. If the proposer is not in CARD, departments can skip the remaining steps for searching CARD, and begin contacting the proposer's non-County references (see instructions below) to determine if any CARD-related issues exist.
 - b. If the proposer is in CARD, departments must review all of the proposer's CARD records and:
 - i.Determine the proposer's total number of active (unresolved) CARD issues. In addition, determine the total number of resolved CARD issues within the last five years. If there are no active issues and less than three resolved issues within the last five years, departments can skip the remaining steps for searching CARD and begin contacting the proposer's non-County references (see instructions below).
 - ii.Call and/or email the County contact person for any active CARD issues to confirm that they are still active. Since the maximum deduction to the performance history evaluation score is reached when a proposer has two confirmed active CARD issues, there is no need to confirm the status of additional active CARD issues once two active issues have been confirmed.
- 2. Contacting non-County references A proposer may include a non-County reference in their proposal. Departments must:
 - a. Obtain/complete (via US mail, email or telephone) a Non-County Services Evaluation Checklist CARD (see Exhibit II) for the non-County references to ensure all proposers are evaluated consistently based on the CARD criteria.
 - b. Review all of the responses from the proposer's references and ensure that any CARD-related issues are supported with adequate documentation. Determine the proposer's total number of active CARD-related issues that are adequately

documented and the total number of resolved CARD-related issues within the last five years that are adequately documented.

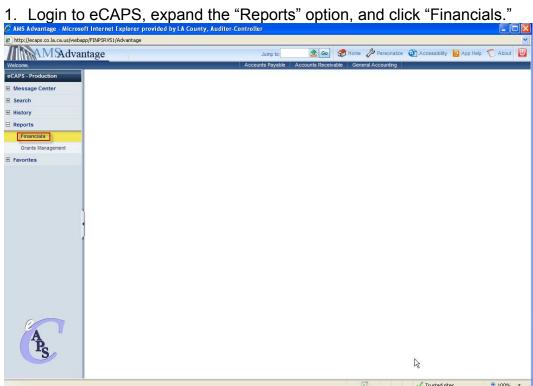
- 3. Add the proposer's total number of active CARD issues and active CARD-related issues from non-County references. In addition, add the total number of resolved CARD issues within the last five years and resolved CARD-related issues from non-County references within the last five years. If there are no active issues and less than three resolved issues within the last five years, no points are deducted. Otherwise, deduct points from the proposer's performance history evaluation score based on one of the following criteria (select the largest deduction possible):
 - a. If there are at least two confirmed active issues, deduct 100% of the total points awarded for the performance history evaluation section.
 - b. If there is one confirmed active issue, deduct 75% of the total points awarded for the performance history evaluation section.
 - c. If all of the issue(s) are resolved, deduct 25% of the total points awarded for the performance history section if the contractor has three or more issues that were resolved within the last five years.

A department must provide justification in their Board letter if the recommended contractor has an active CARD issue.

<u>Note:</u> Departments may not deduct any points in other performance history evaluation components for the issue(s) that resulted in a CARD-related deduction. As a result, departments should require proposers to provide alternate references. In the event that a proposer provides a County reference that placed the proposer in CARD or a non-County reference that identified CARD-related issues, the department should evaluate the proposer using an alternate reference to prevent the proposer from losing evaluation points twice for the same issue(s).

VII. ECAPS COGNOS REPORTS

Two scheduled reports are available to departments in eCAPS. The first report named "CARD Contractor List" is a cumulative report of all contractors that have been placed into CARD. The second report named "CARD Contractors with Active Issues" is similar to the first report but only includes contractors that have one or more unresolved issues in CARD. To access the reports:



2. If the IBM Cognos front screen opens, click "IBM Cognos content."



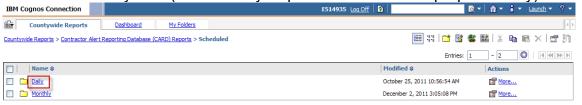
3. Select Countywide Reports and click the link for the CARD reports.



4. Click the "Scheduled" link.



5. Click the "Daily" link (the "Monthly" reports are for archive purposes only).



6. Click the "CARD Contractor List" link for a comprehensive list of every contractor in CARD. If your computer has a pop-up blocker installed, you may need to hold down the "CTRL" button on your keyboard as you click the link and then continue holding it until the report spreadsheet loads.



If you only want to view contractors with active issues in CARD, click the appropriate link during step 6.

CARD PLACEMENT NOTIFICATION LETTER SAMPLE

DEPARTMENT LETTERHEAD

DATE

TO: CONTRACTOR

FROM: DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVE

DEPARTMENT NAME

SUBJECT: CONTRACTOR ALERT REPORTING DATABASE PLACEMENT

NOTIFICATION

This letter serves as notification that unless *CONTRACTOR* resolves an outstanding contract issue by *DATE*, *CONTRACTOR* will be placed on the County of Los Angeles' Contractor Alert Reporting Database (CARD). CARD placement is a result of *CONTRACTOR* meeting one or more of five CARD criteria. The CARD criteria applicable to *CONTRACTOR* is/are checked below:

Contractor owes the County for overpayments and/or questioned costs and has not entered into a repayment agreement or agreed to pay the County back, or has been referred to the Treasurer and Tax Collector for collection.
Contractor has not taken the appropriate steps to correct significant documented instances of contract non-compliance in a timely manner.
Contractor and/or principal owners are currently debarred by other governmental entities (contractor/principal owners must notify the County when the debarment period expires).
Contractor has experienced financial, administrative, programmatic or legal issues that affect their ability to comply with the County contract requirements.
County has imposed contractual remedies against the contractor for non-compliance with the County contract requirements.

CARD will be used when evaluating the performance history of a contractor participating in a County contract solicitation. Therefore, placement in CARD may negatively affect *CONTRACTOR*'s score during future contract solicitation evaluations. Our prior efforts and requests for *CONTRACTOR* to resolve the issue(s) above have been unsuccessful. To avoid CARD placement, *CONTRACTOR* must resolve the above issue(s) by *DATE*. If you have any questions, please contact:

NAME(S) ADDRESS PHONE EMAIL

ADMINISTRATIVE DEPUTY/DESIGNEE SIGNATURE

ANALYST NAME	
SOLICITATION#	

NON-COUNTY SERVICES EVALUATION CHECKLIST - CARD

Firm Name:	
Services Provided:	
Contracting Agency:	
Agency Contact and Title:	Telephone/Email:
Evaluation Period From:	То:

CARD CRITERIA	ACTIVE ISSUE	ISSUE RESOLVED IN THE LAST 5 YEARS
1. The Contractor owes your agency/company for overpayments and/or questioned costs and has not entered into a repayment agreement or agreed to pay you back, or has been referred to collection.	Yes□ No□	Yes□ N/A□
2. The contractor has not taken the appropriate steps to correct significant documented instances of contract non-compliance in a timely manner.	Yes□ No□	Yes□ N/A□
 3. The contractor and/or their principal owners are currently debarred by other governmental entities. Principal owner is any person or entity who or which owns a 10 percent or more interest in the contractor. 	Yes□ No□	Yes□ N/A□
 4. The contractor has experienced financial, administrative, programmatic or legal issues that affect their ability to comply with your contract requirements. Examples of these issues include, but are not limited to, the following: Bankruptcy Loss of licenses Failure to pay property or payroll taxes Financial Viability concerns Lack of qualified staff Amount of disallowed or undocumented costs Lack of required insurance Poor program services Assessment of any fines and/or penalties by public entities 	Yes□ No□	Yes□ N/A□
 5. Your agency/company has imposed contractual remedies against the contractor for non-compliance with your contract requirements. Examples of these contract remedies include, but are not limited to the following: Termination for default Assessing liquidated damages Adjusting the contractor's funding Not renewing the contract 	Yes□ No□	Yes□ N/A□

PLEASE PROVIDE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION FOR ANY CRITERIA MARKED "YES"