

Federal AI Proposal Volume Self-Check

A 30-item self-assessment checklist contractors can run on their AI technical proposal volume before submission or before engaging Encore for a full readiness audit. Free tool. Federal-grade evaluation criteria.

LIBRARY REFERENCE	ISSUED	VERSION	DISTRIBUTION
EFAIRA-SELF-CHECK-V1	May 2026	1.0	Public Reference

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A. Why this exists

Federal AI proposal evaluations have specific failure modes that are visible to experienced reviewers and invisible to many contractors. This 30-item self-check surfaces the most common deficiencies. Running this checklist before proposal submission reduces the risk of an avoidable evaluation deduction. Running it before engaging Encore for a full readiness audit lets the contractor arrive at the engagement with the obvious issues already cleared.

This checklist is published as a free tool. No registration required. The checklist mirrors the structure of the EFAIRA 30-point methodology but is presented in self-assessment format rather than third-party audit format.

B. How to use

For each item, find the location in your technical proposal volume where the item is addressed. If you cannot find it, mark the item as a gap and consider whether the gap is intentional (out of scope for this acquisition) or unintentional (missed requirement).

Domain 1 — AI capability description and disclosure

- Every AI component used in the proposed solution is explicitly named, including any third-party foundation model dependencies, inference services, and pre-trained components.
- For each AI component, the proposal identifies the model type, the provider, the version, and the expected refresh cadence.
- The proposal distinguishes between AI components developed by the contractor and AI components consumed as a service from another party.
- Inference path data flows are described from input through model invocation to output, including any human review checkpoints.
- Any AI use cases that fall under the agency's published AI use case inventory criteria are explicitly identified as such.

Domain 2 — Risk assessment and impact analysis

- A pre-deployment risk and impact assessment is documented in the proposal, with methodology, identified risks, mitigations, and residual risk acceptance.
- The risk assessment references OMB M-25-22 minimum risk management practices and identifies which practices apply.
- The proposal identifies the populations affected by the AI capability, including any vulnerable or protected populations.

- For higher-impact use cases, the proposal references the NIST AI RMF Map function and demonstrates how mapping was conducted.

Domain 3 — Human oversight and intervention

- Human oversight checkpoints are defined for the AI capability, distinguishing between human-in-the-loop and human-on-the-loop modes.
- Escalation criteria are documented: what triggers a human review, who has override authority, and how the override is captured for audit.
- The proposal addresses what happens when the AI capability is unavailable or operating outside its intended performance envelope.

Domain 4 — Data quality and provenance

- Training and inference data sources are identified, with lineage documentation including provenance, licensing, and any access restrictions.
- Data quality metrics applied during model development are documented, along with the thresholds used.
- The proposal addresses how training data and reference data are refreshed and how the model is updated as a result.
- Any use of federally-restricted data is identified with the applicable handling and access controls.

Domain 5 — Performance monitoring and drift

- Performance baselines for the AI capability are explicitly stated, with metric definitions.
- Monitoring cadence is defined, along with the metrics monitored and the thresholds that trigger investigation.
- Drift detection methodology is documented, with the conditions that trigger model retraining or replacement.
- The proposal addresses how monitoring results are reported to the agency and how the agency exercises oversight.

Domain 6 — Incident response and reporting

- AI-specific incident categories are defined, distinct from general cybersecurity incident categories.
- Reporting timelines for AI-specific incidents are documented, including coordination with federal cybersecurity reporting obligations.
- The proposal identifies the contractor personnel responsible for AI incident response and the qualification basis for those personnel.

Domain 7 — Bias testing and fairness

- Bias screening methodology is documented, including the fairness metrics applied and the populations evaluated.
- Bias screening results are summarized at a level appropriate for the proposal volume. Detailed results are available on request.
- Where bias screening surfaced findings, the mitigation approach is documented.
- The proposal addresses how bias monitoring continues during contract performance, not just at pre-deployment.

Domain 8 — Transparency, sustainment, decommissioning

- Plain-language transparency artifacts for end users are described, including model card or system card materials.
- Recourse pathways for affected individuals are documented, where applicable.
- Periodic re-assessment cadence is defined, along with the conditions that would trigger an off-cadence re-assessment.
- Decommissioning criteria for the AI capability are defined, along with the replacement planning approach.
- The proposal addresses how transparency artifacts are maintained as the AI capability evolves over the contract performance period.

How to use the scoring. Count the items where you found clear coverage in your technical proposal volume. Federal AI evaluators typically expect 24 or more of the 30 items to be addressed substantively in a competitive proposal. Items not applicable should be explicitly noted with rationale rather than omitted silently.

C. When to engage Encore

This self-check is structured to surface the most common gaps. It cannot replicate the independent third-party assessment that an Encore Readiness Audit produces, because the third-party assessment introduces an evaluator outside the proposing organization. Contractors who find significant gaps in this self-check, or who are pursuing a high-value award where an independent assessment would strengthen the proposal, should engage Encore for a full EFAIRA Readiness Audit.

Self-check limitations. Running through this checklist does not produce an Encore Readiness Receipt and cannot be cited in a technical proposal volume as an independent third-party assessment. Self-assessment results are for the contractor's internal use only.

ABOUT ENCORE SERVICES LLC

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