



THE DEPARTMENT OF PURCHASING GUIDE

Revised 4/2015

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General Information

The Department of Purchasing mandate is to organize and administer the procurement of services, equipment, and materials for The University of Akron in accordance with the responsibility and authority delegated by the Board of Trustees, the University President and the laws of the State of Ohio. All purchases, regardless of the funding source, must be administered by the Department of Purchasing in accordance with established University procedures.

Travel services are provided as part of the purchasing function. The Department of Purchasing's responsibilities include the establishment of procedures to encourage the most efficient and economical means of travel for University faculty, staff, and student organizations. Suggestions for the improvement of any of our programs or services, please contact us at the following address:

The Department of Purchasing
100 Lincoln Street Building, Room 209
Akron, OH 44325-9001
Phone: (330) 972-7340
Fax: (330) 972-5564
Website: [Department of Purchasing](#)

Objectives

The Department of Purchasing's responsibilities include: providing purchasing services to all University departments, programs, and offices; administering purchase agreements for material, equipment, supplies, and designated services; executing leases and contracts for equipment, materials, repairs, and services; conducting research to maintain the most effective purchasing practices and procedures; implement necessary cost-saving programs; To assure that interested firms have an equal opportunity to compete for University business and that all firms comply with applicable laws.

The Department of Purchasing seeks to assist departments during all stages of the procurement process in order to ensure that all of these operating and policy requirements are met with the least possible cost in time and expense. Departments are urged to review any large or unusual requirements with Purchasing at the earliest stages of planning.

Purchasing shares responsibility with every University office and department to assure that all transactions will satisfy internal and external audits and conform to good business practices.

Contracting Authority

The purpose of this statement is to review the policies that have been established for the purchase of goods and services for The University of Akron.

(1) Contracts involving the expenditures of money, within the limits set by Board appropriation, may be made on behalf of the University by the President, Vice President for Business and Finance, or Director of Purchasing, or Senior Vice President and Provost, within the scope of their authority, as set forth in the Bylaws and Regulations of the Board.

(2) The Dean of the University Libraries and the Law Librarian may make contracts for the purchase of library books and periodicals within their budgets for the respective libraries. Managers of campus stores may purchase stock for purposes of resale. The Food Service Manager may make purchases of food and expendable stocks.

(3) The Director of E.J. Thomas Performing Arts Hall may purchase the services of performing artists and enter into contracts with these artists on behalf of the University. The Athletic Director may execute contracts with other colleges and universities for intercollegiate athletic events.

No other persons are authorized to make purchases or to enter into contracts on behalf of the University unless specifically authorized by the Board of Trustees or the Director of Purchasing. Any unauthorized purchase will be considered a personal transaction between the vendor and the individual. The University may not assume responsibility for such transactions.

Minority Business Enterprise

The University of Akron goals for a diverse cross-section of otherwise qualified vendors are consistent with those of the State of Ohio to procure a percentage of goods and services from State Certified Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) and/or Encouraging Diversity Growth and Equity (EDGE) enterprises in accordance with Ohio Revised Code § 125.081.

[Ohio Revised Code 125.08](#)

[Ohio Facilities Construction Commission Edge Program](#)

The University of Akron's goal as established by House Bill 584, a spend goal fifteen percent (15%) of goods and services purchased are to be procured from minority businesses (MBE's). A spend goal of five percent (5%) of construction procurements is for EDGE (Encouraging Diversity, Growth and Equity). Vendors must be certified by the State of Ohio, prior to participation.

For further information on the State of Ohio certified supplier diversity programs, please visit the website [here](#).

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

The University of Akron is an equal employment opportunity/affirmative action institution and is charged to ensure that all vendors are in compliance with state and federal laws regarding these programs. The Department of Purchasing and the Office of Contract Compliance work together to encourage and ensure that those vendors with whom the University does business are in compliance.

Competitive Bidding/Board of Trustees Reporting and Limits

A competitive bid process and/or a negotiation process, as approved by the Director of Purchasing and the Office of General Counsel, shall be utilized in all cases where the goods to be purchased cost in excess of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) or services that cost in excess of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000).

Except where prohibited by law, competitive bidding requirements of the university may be waived only under very limited and exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances which warrant the waiver of competitive bidding include, but are not limited to; responding to emergencies resulting from fire, flood, freezing, or other acts of God or force majeure, situations in which it may reasonably be determined by a prudent person's standard that there is substantial financial or other risk or substantial financial or other opportunity to the university such that the risk or opportunity clearly warrants waiver, as well as emergencies necessitated by the immediate need to comply with laws or regulations affecting persons or property owned, leased, or operated by the university.

Proprietary items only available from a single source may be exempted from the competitive bidding requirement. Departments will be required to complete a "Sole Source Justification Form" for these

types of items. All requests for sole source purchases must be reviewed and approved by the director of purchasing and the office of general counsel.

Previously Bid Contracts

If a previously bid contract presently exists for a product or service that is required, no additional bidding may be required for these items.

Examples include:

- University of Akron Contracts
- State of Ohio Contracts
- Inter-University Council of Ohio Contracts (IUC)
- Community, University and Educational Purchasing Association Contracts (CUE)
- Contracts Bid by Other Entities
- Other Consortium Type Contracts

Exempt from Bidding

There are special categories for vendors set up by the Ohio Revised Code, which are available to the University without a competitive bid process.

Examples include:

- OPI Correctional Industries
- Ohio Industries for the Handicapped

Board of Trustees Reporting/Approval

Any purchase of goods or services in excess of five hundred thousand dollars, except for subcontracts issued through externally funded research grants and contracts for which the university is the grantee, shall be submitted to the board for prior approval. All purchases of goods in excess of twenty-five thousand dollars and services in excess of fifty thousand dollars, but less than five hundred thousand dollars, including all subcontracts through externally funded grants, shall be reported to the Board of Trustees.

Procurement Methods

Purchase Order

The purchase of goods and/or services initiated by creating a Peoplesoft requisition.

On Campus Order Form

To purchase of goods or services from a university department.

Direct Payment Form

[CAP-6-01](#) establishes expenditure categories that do not require processing through the Department of Purchasing. Invoices for these expenditures may be sent directly to Accounts Payable for processing, assuming all University expenditure policies have been followed.

ESM easyPurchase

A spend management suite to automate our "procure-to-pay" process.

University Procurement Card

A program that allows departments the opportunity to use a University procurement card to purchase certain small dollar goods.

Blanket Purchase Orders

Blanket Purchase Orders are requested via a PeopleSoft requisition when departments have the need to make repetitive, small dollar purchases from a vendor throughout the fiscal year. The requisition should indicate a general description of the items to be ordered, the requested total dollar amount of the blanket order, and list the names of the individuals authorized to make releases against the blanket order. Once the blanket order has been established by Purchasing, the department and selected vendor will be notified of the purchase order number. At that point, departments may work directly with the vendor to place their orders.

Blanket Purchase Orders are usually issued for varying amounts up to \$24,000. The established dollar amount on the blanket order is encumbered against a department's budget until the funds are actually expended.

Office Supply Program

GBEX LLC, along with its wholesale distributor OfficeMax/OfficeDepot, provides a personalized office supply catalog via the ESM easyPurchase Program. Additional information regarding the Office Supply and ESM easyPurchase Programs is available on the Department of Purchasing website which may be accessed [here](#).

University Procurement Card Program

The Procurement Card Program has been established as a service to campus departments. This program allows departments the opportunity to use a University procurement card to purchase certain small dollar goods. The University benefits from the use of the procurement card by utilizing a procurement process that allows for the placement and payment of small dollar orders in a more efficient and cost effective manner. Thus, the Procurement Card should be used for as many small purchases as possible. Departments are required to follow the established rules and procedures listed on the website. All cardholders will be held accountable for their actions.

The Procurement Card Program cannot be used to avoid or bypass appropriate purchasing procedures or bidding requirements. This program is designed to work side by side with existing purchasing procedures and to empower the cardholder to make needed small dollar purchases without delay and, with minimal paperwork.

Guidance, direction and training regarding the Procurement Card Program, in addition to the Procurement Card Program Policy & Procedure Manual, can be found on the Department of Purchasing website, which may be accessed [here](#).

Travel

As a public institution, the University must ensure resources are used judiciously and appropriately in support of University business. All individuals who travel on University business shall adhere to the travel policies and procedures adopted by the University and the state of Ohio. The intent of the travel policy is to encourage the most efficient and economical means of travel for accomplishing the purpose of the trip and to standardize the reporting and documentation of expenses.

The rules for traveling on behalf of the University and business related expenses, including the proper method of payment and how to be reimbursed, can be found on the Office of the Associate Vice President/Controller's website, which may be accessed [here](#).

Campus Bookstore

The University Bookstore is the exclusive seller of all required, recommended or suggested course materials and course supplies including books, textbook rentals and materials published or distributed electronically through our learning management system or over the internet.

Departments are permitted to purchase other items from the bookstore as a convenience. However, departments should, if possible, utilize applicable existing contracts available to assure the greatest savings. Examples include the office supply contract and/or computer peripheral contracts available through our ESM easyPurchase Program, which may be accessed [here](#).

University Service Agreements

The Office of General Counsel developed University Service Agreements for use when there is a need to engage outside professionals such as consultants, performers, lecturers, artists, and other personnel services. Prior to a commitment being made to outside professionals for services, all agreements and/or forms must be reviewed and approved by the Director of Purchasing in advance.

Outside professionals are hired for specific short-term tasks and are employed in the capacity of independent contractors. Failure to meet specific guidelines, as determined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), could result in these types of individuals being considered employees, with possible tax/benefit cost ramifications to the University. The presence of an agreement or contract, stating that an independent contractor relationship exists, will not by itself guarantee a favorable ruling by the IRS if the relationship is questioned.

In addition to the agreement, it is also necessary to create a requisition in Peoplesoft so that the purchase order can be generated in Peoplesoft. The instructions for use and agreements are available on the Department of Purchasing website, which may be accessed [here](#).

Vehicle Rental

Preferred rental car suppliers for The University of Akron are listed within the Campus Contracts on the Department of Purchasing website, which may be accessed [here](#).

Central Stores/Surplus Property

Central Stores is responsible for the University's centralized receiving function, as well as providing an in-house inventory stocking program for miscellaneous supplies, and is responsible for the sale and/or disposal of surplus supplies and equipment. Additional information is available on the Central Stores website, which may be accessed [here](#).

Central Stores Contact	Surplus Property Contact
Nicole M. Cook, Manager 185 E. Mill Street Akron, Ohio 44325-0703 Phone: (330) 972-7579 Fax: (330) 972-5294	Michael A. Szczukowski, Director of Materials Handling 185 E. Mill Street Akron, Ohio 44325-0702 Phone: (330) 972-2542