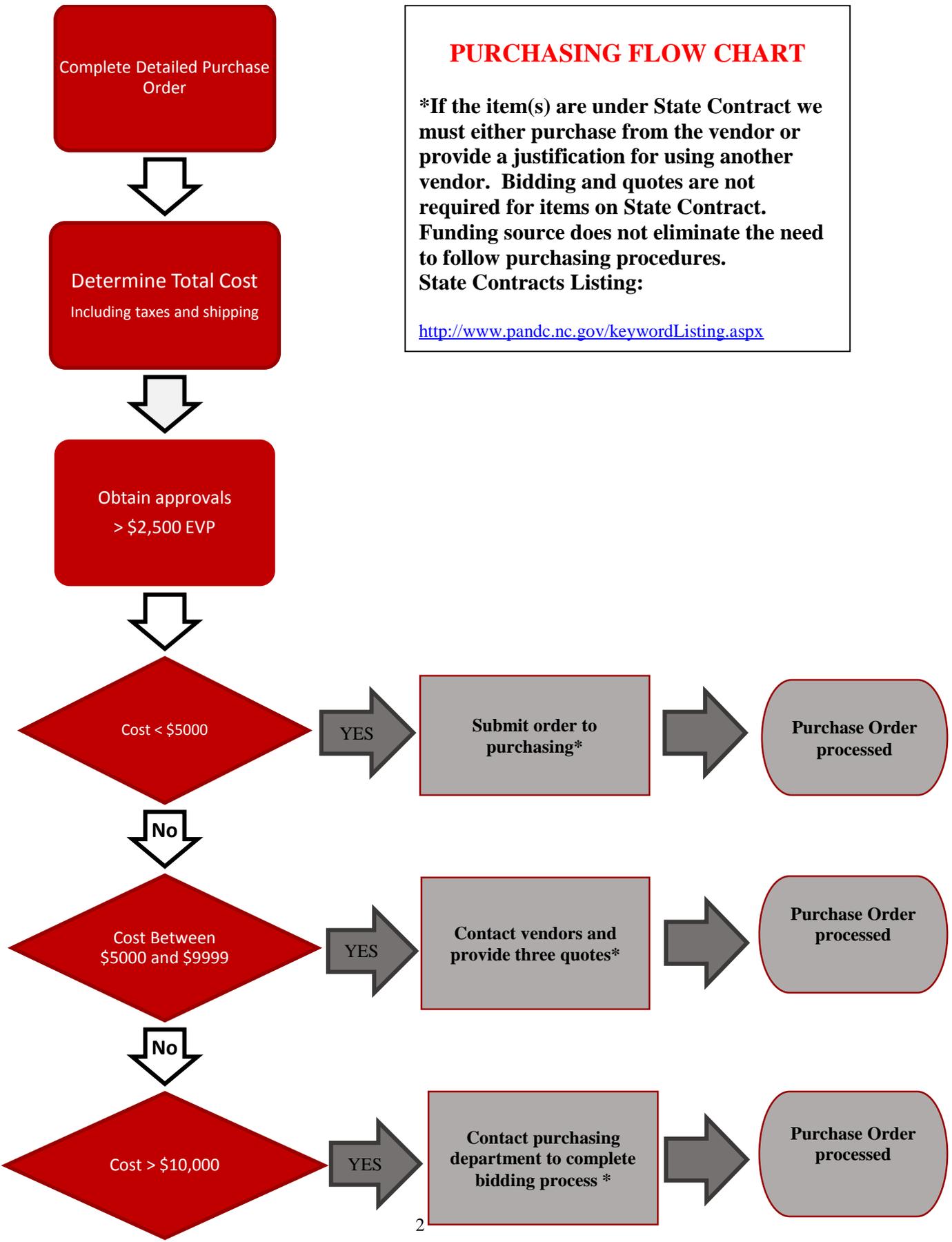




## **PURCHASING GUIDELINES**

**Last updated April 1, 2016**



**PURCHASING FLOW CHART**

**\*If the item(s) are under State Contract we must either purchase from the vendor or provide a justification for using another vendor. Bidding and quotes are not required for items on State Contract. Funding source does not eliminate the need to follow purchasing procedures. State Contracts Listing:**

<http://www.pandc.nc.gov/keywordListing.aspx>

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## **SECTION 1- Purchasing General Terms and Concepts**

### **A. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the following purchasing guidelines is to provide employees with the proper policies and procedures necessary for the procurement of all goods and services. The guidelines have been prepared for general use only as a quick reference guide. This document does not supplant the requirements of the State's general statutes or the North Carolina Administrative Code.

### **B. COMPETITION**

The State's purchasing program is based on sound competitive purchasing procedures and organized as a centralized purchasing system. Competition is the cornerstone around which public contracting is built. In its best form, it is a mirror of a free and open economy. North Carolina's purchasing program is built on the principle of competition. Where competition is not sought, or obtained, the reason must be valid and must be documented as part of the public procurement file.

### **C. DELEGATION**

Every State Agency has a General Delegation. This Delegation reflects the dollar amount in which the State Agency has the authority granted by the State Purchasing Office to handle purchases. Any complete order that has a total dollar amount over this delegation must be forwarded to Purchasing and Contracts. The Delegation for Sandhills Community College is \$10,000 for purchases of goods. The Delegation for Sandhills Community College is \$25,000 for all Information Technology related purchases.

### **D. GENERAL STATUTE TOPICS PERTAINING TO PURCHASING**

Following are some of the NC General Statute topics that we must adhere to when pertaining to purchasing requests:

#### **1. STATEWIDE TERM CONTRACTS**

Statewide term contracts have been established by the State Purchasing Office. These contracts should be the first source of supply for any item that is on contract. Any item available on state contract has been through a formal bidding process with Purchase and Contract, so bids on this level are not required. These contracts must be utilized. Equipment or supplies listed on state contract must be purchased from vendors listed on the contract in accordance with state laws or a detailed justification must be furnished stating why the items on contract are unacceptable.

**NOTE:** Per State established purchasing guidelines, price is not a justifiable factor or reason for not ordering from state contract.

The State maintains statewide term contracts for numerous commodities. Where there is a state contract, the college must purchase from this contract, unless the end user wishes to exercise the

Purchasing Flexibility Option (see section P below). Items on a state contract may be ordered directly from the vendor subject to any restrictions on the specific term contract. Although the purchasing delegation limits do not apply to purchases made from state contracts, certain state contracts do have an abnormal purchasing dollar limit assigned to them.

If you need to review a State Contract, you may obtain a copy by going to the NC Division of Purchase and Contract web site on the Internet. Click on the “Term Contracts Alphabetical/Key Word Listing” link OR the “Term Contract Numerical Listing” link. A list of State Contracts in alphabetical order based upon key words OR numerical order based upon state contract number will be displayed based upon your selection. The web address is: [www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/](http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/).

## **2. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**

### **G.S. 148-134 - Statement of Preferential Procurement from Correction Enterprises and Exemption from Competitive Bidding**

Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 148-70, “All departments, institutions, and agencies of this State shall give preference to Department of Correction products in purchasing articles, products, and commodities which these departments, institutions, and agencies require and which are manufactured or produced within the State prison system and offered for sale to them by the Department of Correction. The provision of Article 3 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes respecting contracting for the purchase of all supplies, materials and equipment required by the state government or any of its departments, institutions or agencies under competitive bidding shall not apply to articles or commodities available from the Department of Correction”. Competitive bidding is **not** required when purchasing these products or services. A listing of the general categories of products and services available is as follows:

Office Seating	Wood Products	Re-upholstery
Oils and Lubricants	Textile Products	Food Products
Janitorial Products	Manpower Services	Metal Products
Paints and Coatings	Printing and Quick Copy Service	City Tags
Signs	Furniture	

A complete listing of actual products available can be viewed on the Internet at

<https://www.correctionenterprises.com/>

## **E. STATEWIDE TERM CONTRACTS VS. E-PROCUREMENT**

A Statewide Term Contract is an actual contract that has been negotiated by The North Carolina Department of Purchasing and Contracts for the purchase of various commodities. Statewide Term Contracts are not vendor based, they are commodity based. However, there are certain vendors that are noted on the State Contract as the designated vendors that will provide items for the commodity in which the contract is covering. Statewide Term Contracts usually have an Abnormal Purchasing clause that requires a purchasing agency to forward a requisition request to Purchasing and Contracts if the total order amount surpasses a stated dollar value. E-

procurement is the buying system that is used to initiate requisitions. Please keep in mind, just because a vendor is registered on E-procurement does not mean they are a vendor that has been designated to sell items for a particular commodity on a State Contract. Always, check the State Contract to verify designated vendors.

## **F. CONVENIENCE CONTRACT VS. STATEWIDE TERM CONTRACT**

A Convenience Contract may be negotiated by the State for commodities that they deem appropriate based upon the frequency of purchases by State Agencies. Bids are not required when purchasing from a contractor that is included on a Convenience Contract. However, if the total dollar amount for an order is greater than the Delegation of the purchasing agency, the order must be forwarded to Purchasing and Contracts.

## **G. PURCHASE ORDER REQUIREMENT**

Per NC General Statute 143-58, a purchase order is required before a purchase is made or receipt of any materials and/or services is made. SCC is not responsible for payment of any purchases obtained without prior authorization. **EMPLOYEES PURCHASING ANY MATERIALS WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN OR VERBAL AUTHORIZATION MAY BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYMENT OF SUCH PURCHASES.**

## **H. DETERMINATION OF EQUIPMENT VS. SUPPLY ITEM**

Any one item costing \$5,000 (including tax) or more is considered equipment, unless the item is expendable, such as software. Software purchases should be charged to the current expense budget. Equipment costing less than \$5,000 may also be charged to the current expense budget except equipment classified as **High Risk Items**.

The North Carolina Community College System considers the following to be High Risk: data processing and network equipment, servers, computers, laptops, portable projectors, I-pads and other tablets and guns.

## **I. SOLE SOURCE PURCHASE and WAIVERS FOR COMPETITION**

Sole source is a procurement method utilized when procuring goods or services where one or more of the “waivers of competition” defined under 01 NCAC 05B.1401 and 09 NCAC 06B.0901 policies are met. This method requires a justification document for the file. The criteria for “waiver of competition” are as follows:

- (a) Where a needed product or service is available from only one source of supply
- (b) Where emergency action is indicated [*Emergency is defined as a situation which endangers lives, property, or the continuation of a vital program and which can be rectified only by immediate on-the-spot purchase (or rental) of equipment, supplies, materials, printing, or contractual services.*]

- (c) Where competition has been solicited but no satisfactory offers received
- (d) Where standardization or compatibility is the overriding consideration
- (e) Where a donation predicates the source of supply
- (f) Where personal or particular professional services are required
- (g) Where a particular medical product or service, or prosthetic appliance is needed
- (h) Where a product or service is needed for the blind or severely disabled and there are overriding considerations for its use
- (i) Where additional products or services are needed to complete an ongoing job or task
- (j) Where products are bought for “across the counter” resale
- (k) Where a particular product or service is desired for educational, training, experimental, developmental or research work
- (l) Where equipment is already installed, connected and in service, and it is determined advantageous to purchase it
- (m) Where items are subject to rapid price fluctuation or immediate acceptance;
- (n) Where there is evidence of resale price maintenance or other control of prices, lawful or unlawful, or collusion on the part of companies which thwarts normal competitive procedures
- (o) Where the amount of the purchase is too small to justify soliciting competition or where a purchase is being made and a satisfactory price is available from a previous contract
- (p) Where the requirement is for an authorized cooperative project with another governmental unit(s) or a charitable nonprofit organization(s)
- (q) Where a used item(s) is available on short notice and subject to prior sale

## **J. QUALITY ACCEPTANCE INSPECTIONS**

**When a contract requires an Inspection by Purchasing & Contracts, no invoices pertaining to the contract can be paid until the inspection has been conducted by a Quality Acceptance Representative.** In addition, an inspection by a State Quality Acceptance Representative shall be mandatory when an individual items costs \$10,000 or more.

## **K. E-PROCUREMENT**

It is preferred that purchase orders only be issued to vendors who have registered with the E-Procurement system and that end users submit a requisition in E-procurement before making a purchase. For end users, E-procurement Web-Based Training and Job Aids can be found online. All E-procurement users are encouraged to utilize these E-procurement training aids. Please click the link below to access these training aids. The password to access the training modules is **Ncep200#**. The username is **eptraining**.

<http://eprocurement.nc.gov/Training.html>

## **L. INTEGRITY**

Fairness and impartiality in all phases of the purchasing process are essential aspects in public purchasing. Integrity is reflected through fairness, honesty, objectivity and an unbiased approach to communicating with vendors. The purchasing process cannot be both effective and biased. No matter how strongly a user may prefer a particular product, service or vendor, equivalent products and services must be given reasonable consideration and all vendors must be given equal opportunity unless there is sufficient brand specific or sole source justification.

## **M. ETHICS**

All personnel shall be entirely cognizant of the necessity of ethical behavior. Everyone involved in the purchasing process is held accountable to the following principles and standards:

1. The purchasing power of the State shall not be used for private advantage or gain. Employees or other individuals will not process orders for articles of ownership.
2. Avoid the intent and appearance of unethical or compromising practice in relationships, actions, and communications.
3. Refrain from any private business or professional activity that would create a conflict between personal interests and the interests of the institution.
4. Refrain from soliciting or accepting money, loans, credits or prejudicial discounts and the acceptance of gifts, entertainment, favors, or services from present or potential suppliers with might influence, or appear to influence purchasing decisions.
5. Do not discuss with suppliers: cost information, bid information or trade secrets. Handle all information of a confidential or proprietary nature with due care and proper consideration of ethical and legal ramifications and governmental regulations.

## **N. BLANKET PURCHASE ORDERS**

A “Blanket Order” is an open purchase order that has been issued to a vendor against which purchases may be made. A Blanket Purchase Order can only be used when frequent, repeated purchases of the same supply items are expected. In this situation, a Blanket Purchase Order can eliminate multiple purchase requisitions by submitting one requisition to establish a standing order. To obtain a blanket purchase order you must have prior approval from the appropriate department chair and VP. The anticipated total dollar amount of the Blanket Purchase order will be determined, and you must use this total dollar amount before any new future Blanket Purchase Orders are issued.

## O. GENERAL LEDGER ACCOUNT CODES (BUDGET CODES)

It is preferred that all Purchase Orders and requisitions created in E-procurement must have a valid 18-digit General Ledger Account Code (Budget Code) so the purchasing department will know what fund source your purchase is coming from. At a minimum, the Fund, Purpose, and Unit code should be reference (see example below).

<u>FUND</u>	<u>PURPOSE</u>	<u>VOE CODE</u>	<u>OBJECT CODE</u>	<u>UNIT CODE</u>
2-Digits	3 Digits	2 Digits	6 Digits	5 Digits

Example: 11-120-97-523000-10000 (Fund-Purpose-Unit = 11-120-10000)

Example: 02-220-00-526000-38000 (Fund-Purpose-Unit = 02-220-38000)

When creating a requisition, the end-user must always verify that they are using the correct General Ledger Account Code and verify that the code is active. If end users have questions in regards to their General Ledger Account Codes, they are to contact the accounting department. If the end-user keys an incorrect General Ledger Account Code on a requisition or the code the end-user keys on the requisition is not an active code, the requisition will not be able to be processed. In this event, the requisition may have to be deleted and the end-user will have to verify their correct code and re-submit the requisition to preserve the accuracy of the process.

## P. PURCHASING FLEXIBILITY

Legislation allows community colleges purchasing flexibility that will allow the college to “shop state contracts.” This means, if a community college can find the same supplies, equipment, or materials that are on a state term contract at a price that is lower than the state contract price, the college can purchase them at the lower price. To utilize this option, the following rules apply:

1. The item is the same or substantially similar in quality, service, and performance as items available under State Term Contracts.
2. The purchase price, including the cost of delivery, must be lower, **not equal**. A quote from one of the “Authorized Dealers” from the state contract will be sufficient to verify the price difference between state contract price and non-state contract price.
3. The cost of purchase cannot exceed the college’s delegation.
4. The college must keep a detailed record of all purchases made from non-certified sources.

The record will contain the following:

- a) A descriptive name of the item being purchased
- b) The purchase order number
- c) The state-term contract number for the item purchased
- d) The cost of the item had it been purchased under the state-term contract
- e) The actual total cost paid (including the cost of delivery but **not** the cost of taxes) for the item purchased from the non-certified source

- f) Savings per unit
- g) Number of units purchased
- h) Total cost

***BEFORE THIS OPTION IS USED, YOU MUST CONSULT WITH THE SCC PURCHASING OFFICE TO ENSURE THE APPROPRIATE PAPERWORK IS COMPLETED.***

The college will submit a report of these purchases to the State Board of Community Colleges. The college must also maintain the documentation pertaining to these purchases for compliance review by the Division of Purchase and Contract (P&C) in the purchasing file for a period of five years.

The staff of the Administrative and Facility Services Section of NCCCS will review these semiannual reports, make an annual report to the State Board, and furnish P&C with a copy of this report. P&C will study the results of your purchases to determine what changes, if any, should be made statewide and report to the General Assembly. If you report a great deal of savings, P&C will need to study their existing contracts to determine why the state contract price is not the lowest price. They might also decide to initiate more “convenience contracts,” which would allow you to use the contracts only if you want to use them. They also might recommend that other state agencies be allowed to have this same flexibility.

## **Q. SPECIFICATIONS FOR REQUISITION REQUESTS**

Specifications can either enhance or inhibit competition because of how they are written. Specifications must be written to allow competition to the maximum degree possible. This can be accomplished by describing goods or services in manner which meets the agency’s needs while not being unnecessarily restrictive or descriptive of a particular vendor’s product. The following specification categories are listed in the preferred order of use:

- a) Generic (Performance and Design) - end users should create specifications with a view towards soliciting the requirement on a generic specification basis.
- b) Brand Name or Equivalent – When it is determined to be impractical to develop a Generic specification, a brand name may be used to convey the general style, type, character, and quality of the article desired. Unless otherwise provided in the solicitation document, the name of a certain brand, make, or manufacturer does not restrict bidders to the specific brand or manufacturer named. Any article that is determined to be the equivalent of the specified brand, considering quality, workmanship, economy of operation, and suitability for the purpose intended, shall be accepted. The specifications should inform vendors that they must identify the equivalent product it intends to supply.
- c) Brand Specific- A brand specific specification restricts the acceptable products to those of one or more specified manufacturers. Use of brand specific specifications may be appropriate in such situations as:

1. when the desired product must be compatible with or is an integral component of the existing equipment or products, or where prequalification of products is necessary to support specific needs of a program
2. when a product is covered by a patent or copyright; when the product must yield absolute continuity of results
3. or the product is one with which a user has had extensive training and experience, and the use of any other similar piece of equipment would require considerable re-orientation and training

-The end user must provide written justification in memo form to the purchasing office explaining the need for a brand specific request. This memo will be kept in the purchasing office for public record.

-If there should be a protest that would arise in regards to bid specifications that ask for brand specific products or merchandise, the end user will be responsible for addressing and defending the brand specific choice.

**\*\*\*\*\*Things to Consider When Creating Bid Specifications\*\*\*\*\***

- What are you buying? This should include: An accurate description of the item, item numbers, model numbers, quantity needed, and list of additional components needed to complete the system.
- Detailed product requirements (materials used, color, horsepower, minimum and maximum requirements)
- Are there space or weight restrictions?
- Provide any additional details of the functionality of each item/component that you deem necessary from an end user perspective.
- Do you have drawings, diagrams, or other related representations that could provide further detail?
- Specifications should not be photocopies/printouts from literature. They need to be typed.
- Do you need a maintenance contract for this kind of item?
- Would used, refurbished or demo equipment be acceptable?
- Do you have any specific delivery requirements? Deadline for Delivery, etc.?

- Do you have a warranty requirement?
- Is installation required? If so, what is the service requirement? Installation requirements must be included in the specifications.
- Do you wish to have a mandatory pre-bid site visit? (This would require that all bidding vendors attend this meeting to allow them to ask the end user all necessary questions pertaining to their specifications). If so, please note in the specifications, the street address for the site you would like the meeting to be held.
- Is training required?
- Is there a particular design that is mandatory for your request? If so, include drawings, pictures, and/or complete descriptions of the design. Explain why those particular designs/specifications must be adhered to in order to meet the needs of your request. Be sure to clearly note your reasons.
- Is this a brand specific bid? If brand specific, provide an explanation/justification. For instance, if you were requesting only Lincoln Electric Brand Welders, that would be a brand specific request. So, you would need to provide justification as to why only Lincoln Electric brand welders would suffice.
- Does the equipment needed require special certification, permits, or licenses
- Responsibilities (who hooks up the utilities, removes debris, disposes of the old equipment)

\*\*\*Note: When the Bids have closed, and you receive the bids for evaluation, please remember that in order to deem the lowest bidder unacceptable you must be able to show that the lowest bidder did not meet a requirement that was specifically noted in your specifications. If a slight variation is unacceptable for a certain specification, be sure to note why a slight variation in that specification would not be acceptable.

## **R. HUB STATUS**

The state invites and encourages participation in the procurement process from businesses owned by minorities, women, disabled business enterprises and non-profit work centers for the blind and severely disabled. A Historically Underutilized Business is a business which is majority owned or managed by one of more of the aforementioned individuals. Please consider HUB vendors in all of your purchases. You may locate HUB vendors at the Purchase and Contracts Website.

## **S. DEFINITIONS**

AGENT: A person who, by express or implied agreement, is authorized to act for the institution in business dealings with a third party.

AGREEMENT: Contractual offer resulting from an offer and an acceptance.

BUYER: Authorized agent of the institution to buy, purchase or enter into contract with a supplier.

COMMODITIES: Any like group of equipment, materials, or supplies.

COMPETITION: The fair and open solicitation of offers from more than one source; the receipt of offers from more than one qualified source.

EMERGENCY: A situation which endangers lives, property, or the continuation of a vital program and which can be rectified only by immediate on-the-spot purchase (or rental) of equipment, supplies, materials, printing, or contractual services. All emergency purchases must follow the guidelines below:

1. Emergency purchases must be authorized by the SCC Purchasing Department. Call the SCC Purchasing Department for approval.
2. Must receive prior approval from the department budget manager by the requisitioning party.
3. They still have to be channeled through the requisition E-PROCUREMENT process.
4. Emergency purchases must be documented in the requisition in the comment section of the requisition by the requisitioned as to why this purchase was considered an emergency or a pressing need purchase.

EQUIPMENT: An item that represents an investment of money that can be capitalized. The “stand-alone” item retains its original shape and appearance with use and does not lose its identity through the incorporation into a different or more complex unit or substance.

***The State categorizes a piece of equipment as being one single item totaling over \$5000 per item, all in-cost, which includes purchased price, applicable tax and shipping charges.***

SCC separates equipment into 2 categories:

1. Major Equipment = over \$5000 for each individual item
2. Non Capitalized High Risk = under \$5000 for each individual item

INVITATION FOR BID (IFB): The formal advertised written solicitation document used for seeking competition and obtaining offers.

LEASE: A contract conveying use of a commodity for a designated period of time in return for established periodic payments.

LEASE-PURCHASE: (Conditional Sales Contract) A contract in which the established periodic payments are applied to fulfill the payment obligations for ownership of the commodity.

NEGOTIATION: The act of making a purchase, lease, lease-purchase, or rental agreement, by an authorized agent of the institution under the following conditions:

- a) When all offers have been rejected
- b) When the use of the standard solicitation document is not appropriate
- c) Where there is a sole source
- d) When an emergency or pressing need arises

OFFER: The term may refer to a proposal, quote, or bid submitted in response to a Request for Proposal, Request for Quotation, Invitation for Bid, or Negotiation.

OPEN MARKET CONTRACT: A contract for the purchase of a commodity or contractual service not covered by a term contract.

PRESSING NEED: A need arising from unforeseen causes including, but not limited to, delay by contractors, delay in transportation, breakdown in machinery, or unanticipated volume of work. Lack of reasonable forethought or planning is not justification for a pressing need.

PURCHASE: The act of acquiring a needed item or service by an authorized agent of the institution. The acceptance of an offer to sell, lease, lease-purchase, or rent. An item or contractual service acquired as a result of a valid agreement between an authorized agent of the institution and a seller.

RENTAL: A contract for the right to use a commodity for a period of time, usually with payments made at intervals over the period of use, and normally providing for short notice of cancellation.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: A solicitation document. This document or the IFB (invitation for Bids) is required to be used for competitive procurements over \$10,000. To be used for quotations for services.

REQUEST FOR QUOTES: An informational written procurement document used for seeking competition and obtaining offers. Normally used for your smaller, non-advertised competitive procurements.

RESPONSIBLE OFFEROR: An offeror who has the capability in all respects to perform fully the contract requirements, and the integrity and good faith performance.

RESPONSIVE OFFEROR: An offeror who has submitted an offer which conforms in all material respects to the solicitation document.

SOLE SOURCE: When an item or service is available from only one known source.

**STATEWIDE TERM CONTRACT:** A term contract handled by the Division of Purchase and Contract for all agencies and institutions of the state, unless exempted by statute, rule, or special term and conditions contract. The contract is generally intended to cover all normal requirements for the commodity or contractual service, for a specific period of time, based on estimated quantities only.

#### **T. PURCHASING FROM OR THROUGH A COLLEGE EMPLOYEE**

Every reasonable effort shall be made to avoid making purchases from or through an employee of the college. Prior written approval from the State Purchasing Office (SPO) is required in instances that may develop where the college desires to make a purchase from college personnel. In deciding whether to grant such approval, the (SPO) shall consider the type, item, or service needed, the prevailing marking conditions, whether competition is available, the cost involved, and the effects of doing business with the employee.

#### **U. USE OF PURCHASING POWER FOR PRIVATE GAIN**

The purchasing power of the state or the college cannot be used for private advantage or gain. Purchases under contracts made by the college shall not be allowed for personal use out of private funds, nor shall the college place orders for articles for ownership by employee or other individuals.

#### **V. STATE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) CONTRACTS**

Like the Division of Purchase and Contract, the Statewide IT Procurement Office has established Statewide IT Contracts to cover normal requirements for an IT related commodity or contractual service for a specified period of time based on predicted usage. Sandhills Community College is not mandated by law to utilize these contracts, but they should be the first source of supply. These contracts have already been competitively bid. To search for IT related items on contract, please click on the following link:

<http://www.its.state.nc.us/ITProcurement/TermContracts/TContracts.asp>

#### **W. SCC INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) PURCHASING PROCESS**

All purchases (except for consumables) for technology will be made through Information Technology. (This includes grants and other organizations)

*A purchase request signed by the appropriate personnel with the budget code you wish to use and authorizing IT to make the purchase for you, should be sent to the Information Technology Office. (A purchase request form can downloaded from the Sandhills Community College intranet)*

All purchases for software will be made through Information Technology.

*A purchase request signed by the appropriate personnel with the budget code you wish to use and authorizing IT to make the purchase for you, should be sent to Information Technology.*

**Purchase of Toner/Ink Cartridges:** In an effort to expedite service and achieve the highest level of quality, your department should purchase technology related consumables directly from the state contract vendors. Information Technology will not order and supply departments with consumables.

## **X. EXEMPTIONS**

It is not mandatory for the items listed below to be purchased through P&C:

- a) Perishable articles such as fresh meats;
- b) Publish books, manuscripts, subscriptions to printed material, packaged copyrighted software products, and like material;
- c) Services (a service does not have any goods associated with it)
- d) Contracts for the construction of and structural changes to public buildings

## **SECTION 2- DETERMINATION OF ORDER REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. COMPLETE ORDER TOTALING \$5,000 OR LESS**

The first step is to determine that state contract merchandise or equipment is not available (To search for a state contract please refer to the link mentioned in the “Statewide Term Contract” area of Section D above).

Competition is not required, but good purchasing practice suggests that it should be solicited wherever possible and documented. Wise spending and budget accountability is everyone's responsibility; therefore it is advised to always seek the best price available by obtaining competition.

### **B. COMPLETE ORDER OVER \$5,000 UP TO \$10,000**

1. The first step is to determine that state contract merchandise or equipment is not available. (To search for a state contract please refer to the link mentioned in the “Statewide Term Contracts” area of Section D above).
2. If there is no state contract for the desired merchandise or equipment, for any complete order over \$5,000 up to \$10,000 competition shall be solicited using Equote, a Request for Quotation, or any other solicitation document that contains the required standard language and the Terms and Conditions of the State of North Carolina from 3 sources is required.

3. The end user must email the documents/information listed below to the Sandhills Community College Purchasing Office. Once the documents listed below are received from the end user, the Purchasing Office will solicit the purchase.
  - Typed specifications detailing all of the specifics and/or scope of work for of each service or good that the end user is requesting. The specifications must be typed in Word Format. (please refer to section R “Specifications for Requisition Requests” above)
  - If **sole source** is being requested, a sole source request letter must be completed and submitted to the Purchasing Office. (Please see section I above for what constitutes a sole source purchase).
  - Three (3) suggested vendors that the end user would like to solicit to supply this product or service. When choosing vendors, it is suggested that the end user contact the vendors to ensure the vendors would like to participate in the solicitation. If quotes are solicited and only one vendor offer is received, the solicitation will have to be re-issued to obtain competition.

**C. COMPLETE ORDER TOTALING MORE THAN \$10,000**

1. The first step is to determine that state contract merchandise or equipment is not available. . (To search for a state contract please refer to the link mentioned in Section D above in the “State Wide Term Contracts” Section).
2. Any complete order for goods that is over \$10,000 must be forwarded to the NC Department of Administration, Division of Purchase & Contract in Raleigh for formal written bids.

Bids will be returned to the college for review and for our recommendation for award. It is the responsibility of the end user to review the information received to make sure that the bid you recommend meets the specifications that were requested. For procurement of Services, we are not required to send our request to Purchasing and Contracts or the State IT Purchasing Office, however we are still required to obtain formal written bids and follow the Purchasing Procedures.

3. Please keep in mind that complete orders over \$10,000 should not be divided into smaller purchases to eliminate the need to forward the request to the NC Department of Administration/Division of Purchasing and Contracts.
4. For complete orders over \$10,000, it is a requirement that an Invitation for Bid be posted to the Interactive Purchasing System for a minimum of 10 days. The end user must electronically submit via email the following documents to the Sandhills Community College Purchasing Office:

- **Typed specifications detailing all of the specifics of each piece of equipment/item that the end user is requesting. The specifications must be emailed in Word Format.** (Please see section Q “Specifications for Requisition Requests” above)
- **Funding Approval Memo.** The following information needs to be noted in your funding approval memo:
  - The estimated total expenditure
  - The funding source
  - Summary of what you are requesting
  - Letter must be signed by the requestor
- If **sole source** is being requested, a sole source request letter must be submitted to the Purchasing Office. (Please see section I above for what constitutes a sole source purchase).

After this information is received, The SCC Purchasing Office will initiate contact with the Purchasing and Contracts to begin the Purchasing Process.

#### **D. END USER BID EVALUATION**

When Bids/Quotes are received, the end user must evaluate the Bids/Quotes received from vendors to determine the most responsive and responsible bid. During the evaluation process, the end user must take an objective, unbiased approach to the bid evaluations. The end user must focus on the established specifications of the bid and whether the vendor offers are meeting the specifications that were required.

#### **E. VENDOR PROTESTS**

Upon completion of the bidding process and the subsequent award of contract to the appropriate bidder, all bidders that submitted proposals have the option to protest the award to insure fairness and to promote open competition. In the event of a bidder protest, it will be the responsibility of the individual that made the award recommendation to defend their recommendation.