

A Quick Guide to Procurement

Our Mission

The Office of Procurement is a service unit within the Office of Business Services which supports the educational mission of Montgomery College. The Office of Procurement is responsible for providing procurement leadership, coordination, and strategy for the College. The office assists faculty and staff with the identification, selection, and acquisition of required goods and services in accordance with Board of Trustees policy and local, state, and federal laws. Our mission is to:

- **P**rovide value, quality, and satisfaction in the delivery of efficient and cost effective purchasing and materials management services and through the implementation of effective systems and processes.
- **H**elp buyers make informed and competitive decisions based on price, quality, and service.
- **S**ecure the highest quality products/services which add value to the College's operations and processes and which result in the lowest total cost, highest perceived value, and total customer satisfaction at minimal risk.
- **E**ncourage fair and open competition among vendors through competitive bidding, negotiation, and contract buying.
- **F**oster an energetic, supportive organization conducive to creative ideas, team effort, and professional and personal development.

Our Authority

The Office of Procurement complies with all applicable laws, regulations, and the policies and procedures of the Board of Trustees. (Refer to the BOT policy *Procurement* 63001/63001CP).

How We Serve You

We are here to help you obtain the goods and services necessary to meet your academic and administrative needs. If in doubt, call or e-mail us first, and we will assist you with any aspect of the procurement process. For a complete list of buyers and commodities, refer to the *Buyer Commodity Assignment List* on the procurement home web page at <http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/procurement/> under "Contact Us".

Following is a list of primary procurement services; we:

- **Buy** goods, equipment, along with contract/consulting and construction/renovation services while guiding and advising requestors and determining the best purchasing method to meet your needs in a timely manner, at the most favorable prices and contract terms.
- **Research** and provide information about products, vendors, and prices.
- **Obtain** quotes and proposals for purchases above \$2,501.
- **Conduct** competitive sealed bidding and competitive sealed proposal processes related to the purchase of goods and services for large-dollar value projects. **Advance planning is necessary!**

- **Commit** College funds and execute contracts/purchase orders as authorized agents of the College, including negotiating master contracts to increase the College's buying power through volume discounts. Unless specifically authorized by Board Policy and Procedures *Contracts* 68002/68002CP, departments and offices should not sign procurement contracts. (See the companion policy, *Consulting Services* 63002/63002CP.)
- **Expedite** orders to meet your departmental and office needs.
- **Receive**, deliver, and ship goods and materials.
- **Offer** training on procurement procedures, methods, and practices.

Your Role in the Procurement Process



1. **Adhere to all Board of Trustees Policies and Procedures.** Your needs can be better met when we collaborate together to execute the procurement procedures. We are here to serve you, and we need your help and cooperation to do so.
2. **Buy responsibly.** Taxpayers and students count on us to demonstrate fiscal integrity.
3. **Use approved purchasing methods** before committing the College to pay for supplies, services, and equipment.
4. **Plan ahead** to avoid last-minute purchases and rush orders, which generally cost more. Industry lead times vary by what you are buying. Keep Procurement advised of your future needs (especially large-dollar value projects).
5. **Let us know when you have questions or concerns.** We will be happy to meet with you as you plan your requirements.

Ordering Methods



- **Purchase Requisition – Self Service Banner (Electronic Requisition):** A Banner form that is prepared by College units to request goods and services from vendors. Banner automatically assigns a Requisition Number to each purchase requisition. The Purchase Requisition is **not** a legally binding document, and neither the Purchase Requisition Number nor the Purchase Requisition itself should be given to a vendor.
- **Purchase Order (PO):** A legally binding contract committing College funds. It is prepared and executed by the Purchasing Agent and sent to the vendor to buy requested goods and services. See the *Buyer Commodity Assignment List* on the procurement home page to find out which Purchasing Agent is assigned to buy the goods and services you need.
- **Purchasing Card (P-Card):** A VISA credit card issued by M&T Bank, which has been contracted by the College to provide a flexible, convenient method for authorized College requestors to buy small-dollar value goods according to established guidelines.

Procurement Procedures for Buying Goods and Services



Purchase Orders/contracts must be issued prior to committing College funds and placing orders regardless of funding sources, unless a requestor has College Purchasing Card authority and can use this payment method according to established guidelines.

- **Purchase Requisition Process:** Once the requestor has completed the Banner requisition form, it is routed for the required approvals. After the approval process is complete, the Procurement Office processes the requisition, issues a Purchase Order to the vendor, and e-mails a copy of the PO to the requestor.

- Be specific! Provide as many details as possible in the purchase requisition, including the

required delivery date. In addition, attach any quotes, proposals, invoices, or other written documentation from the vendor in the ImageNow system.

- Check your budget! Before entering your requisition, be sure money is in the organization budget you plan to use. When you enter a purchase requisition into Banner, the system checks for sufficient funds. If there are insufficient funds, Banner will not allow you to complete the requisition. The account manager needs to contact the Office of Business Services to verify available funds.

Procurement Methods



Although some purchases may be made directly by departments, many must be processed by Procurement due to their dollar value or the nature of the purchase. In this section, we identify all the procurement methods and indicate which can be done directly by departments and which require Procurement support. Purchasing card and direct payment methods listed below can be used by departments directly to make purchases of \$2,500 or less for goods and services they require. For each purchase it is important to seek the best price; or to use the Collegewide supply contracts when possible (listed below).

Purchasing Card (P-Card) Purchases

Montgomery College Purchasing Card (P-Card) provides purchasing charge cards designed to enable authorized College employees to make purchases of supplies and materials for official College business use. The Office of Procurement determines spending limits depending upon unit needs and in accordance with College Policy and Procedures. Most Purchasing Cards have a \$5,000 monthly credit limit unless a lower or higher limit has been established by the cardholders Department Head and the Director of Procurement. The per transaction limit for P-Card purchases is \$2,500. *Under no circumstances may the cardholder split transactions in order to circumvent the per transaction limit!*

NOTE: No purchases of services and/or contracted services are allowed using this method. Contact the Office of Procurement for guidance on acceptable and prohibited purchases.

Direct Payment

Direct Payment is a convenient method for purchasing subscriptions, memberships and other eligible transactions under \$1000 for which the payment transactions do not follow the regular procurement process. This method may also be used to pay Honorarium and Consultant fees up to \$1500. These transactions are paid directly from general ledger accounts through the Accounts Payable Department.

Details for these two methods are contained in the PCARD User's Guide and the Accounts Payable web page.

College Contracts

Utilize Collegewide supply contracts for purchasing:

- Office products and supplies, custom stamps, promotional items, etc. – **WB Mason Company** (contract valid from 7/1/2015 thru 6/30/2020).
- College business cards – **Miller's Minuteman Press** is the College print vendor for business cards. To order cards, e-mail Heather Milke in the Communications Office.
- College envelopes and stationary - **Envelopes and Printed Products** is the College print vendor for stationery. To order letterhead and envelopes, e-mail Sena Wiles in the Procurement Office.

For further details on how to order visit the procurement home web page at <http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/procurement/> under "Quick Links for Employees"

Alternatively, if the department chooses not to use either of the direct purchase methods listed above, the department may complete a purchase requisition for any purchases of \$2,500 or less. Procurement will then process the requisition for the department.

Procurement Supported Purchases:

The following procurement methods require the departments to collaborate with Procurement and follow the College's procurement processes.

The requestor completes an online purchase requisition to initiate the Procurement process for any of the following methods.

- Purchases where the value is above \$2,500 but less than \$10,000 shall be procured competitively with at least three price quotations if possible.
- Purchases where the value is above \$10,000 but less than \$25,000 require the Informal Bid process.

- Purchases where the value is above \$25,000 require the Formal Competitive Sealed Bid/Proposal process.
- Sole Source \$2,501+ is a noncompetitive award where the Director of Procurement (DOP) determines that there is only one available source. The department must complete and submit Special Purchasing Request form to the DOP for approval.
- A Specific Brand is usually available from multiple vendors, and competitive pricing can be obtained. If the purchase of a Specific Brand of a product is required to match existing products or to meet a certain requirement, the department must complete and submit a Special Purchasing Request form to the DOP for approval.
- Emergency \$2,501+ is an award of contract where the Director of Procurement and/or Office of Facilities determines that an emergency exists, and as a result competition may be waived. The department must complete and submit a Special Purchasing Request form to the DOP for approval.

Unauthorized Purchases

Unauthorized purchases are purchases of goods, services, or construction where Board Policy and Procedures have not been followed as prescribed. In all cases, unauthorized purchases delay payment to the vendor. Every effort should be made to ensure that purchases are made in compliance with Board Policy before a commitment is made with a vendor for goods or services.