



Policy # 57001

SMALL PURCHASES (PROCUREMENT) / EXPENDITURE COMPLIANCE

Related Policies #54005 Contract Administration Process;
#58011 Emergency Declaration and Procurement Waiver Policy

Original Effective Date: October 18, 2002

Revision Date: October 8, 2025

Responsible Office: Purchasing

Division: ADMINISTRATION & BUSINESS AFFAIRS

I. PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform requirements and guidelines for procurement expenditures to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and university procedures, including the Louisiana Revised Statutes (LRS) Chapters 39 and 17:3390 et seq., the Louisiana Procurement Code, Title 34 of the Louisiana Administrative Code, applicable Governor's Executive Orders, and university delegation of authority. More specifically, this policy addresses procedures for purchases under 60,000 to promote efficient, transparent, and compliant small purchases that support the university's mission.

II. APPLICABILITY

- A. This policy applies to all university departments, faculty and staff who initiate, approve, manage or review expenditures for purchases related to goods, services, or projects funded by the university, using state-appropriated, grant, auxiliary, and other public funds.
- B. Policy #54005 is applicable to professional, personal, consulting and social service contracts and therefore those guidelines are not covered under this policy.

III. DEFINITIONS

- 1. **Best Value:** The most advantageous balance of cost, quality, and other factors as defined in procurement criteria.
- 2. **Competitive Bidding:** A procurement method where bids or proposals are solicited publicly or from qualified vendors to ensure fair competition.
- 3. **Contract:** Any agreement for the procurement of goods, services, or construction between the university and a vendor.
- 4. **Delegated Authority:** The official authorization granted to university personnel to approve procurement actions within defined limits.
- 5. **Goods:** Tangible personal property, including equipment and supplies.
- 6. **Purchase Requisition:** An internal document used to request procurement of goods or services.
- 7. **Vendor:** A supplier, contractor, or service provider that offers goods or services to the university. Small Purchases

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8. **Small Purchase:** The procurement of supplies, equipment or operating services with a total cost not exceeding \$60,000. Additionally, certain types of purchases are exempt from the competitive sealed bidding requirements under the Louisiana Procurement Code. These purchases may be made without a formal competitive process when doing so is in accordance with approved guidelines.
9. **Small Entrepreneurship:** Any business entity, including sole proprietorships, joint ventures, or corporations, that is certified as a small entrepreneurship by the Louisiana Department of Economic Development under the Hudson Initiative, or as a small and emerging business under the Small and Emerging Business Development Program.
10. **A Veteran-Owned Small Entrepreneurship:** Businesses similarly structured that are certified as veteran-owned or service-connected disabled veteran-owned under the Louisiana Veteran Initiative.
11. **Authorized Dealers:** Vendor specifically authorized by a manufacturer to sell and/or provide service for its products.
12. **Louisiana Authorized Dealer:** A business that meets the criteria of a resident business as defined in Louisiana law and is also authorized by the manufacturer to sell and/or service its products.

IV. STATEMENT OF POLICY**Small Purchase Procedures & Guidelines****A. Purchases up to \$30,000:**

1. No competitive bidding is required.
2. Departments may identify a vendor for good or services, ensuring fair and reasonable pricing.
3. Departments shall initiate electronic requisitions ensuring proper approvals are obtained in advance of purchases or services.
4. Under no circumstances shall an employee enter into a contract or obligate the University to any indebtedness prior to the issuance of a purchase order to a vendor for the requested services or goods.

B. Purchases between \$30,000 and \$60,000:

1. Obtain at least three written or electronic quotations from qualified vendors whenever feasible. (form included in policy)
2. Whenever possible, solicit at least one quotation from a certified Louisiana small entrepreneurship or veteran-owned small entrepreneurship.
3. Document all vendor contacts, quotations received, and justification for vendor selection. (form included in policy)
4. If purchasing from a certified small or veteran-owned business and price is deemed reasonable, the three-quote requirement may be waived. The rationale must be documented.

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5. Departments shall initiate electronic requisitions ensuring proper approvals are obtained in advance of purchases or services.
6. Under no circumstances shall an employee enter into a contract or obligate the University to any indebtedness prior to the issuance of a purchase order to a vendor for the requested services or goods.

C. Categories Exempt from Competitive Quotations

The following categories of purchases may be procured without competitive bidding, subject to Purchasing department approval and documentation:

1. Repair parts and services from original equipment manufacturers or authorized dealers (prefer Louisiana authorized dealers when practicable).
2. Vehicle repairs not covered by existing contracts.
3. Publications, subscriptions, and copyrighted materials purchased directly from publishers.
4. Food and supplies for instructional purposes when preparation and serving are integral to coursework.
5. Scientific and laboratory supplies or equipment for research, up to \$60,000 per transaction.
6. Public utilities and telecommunications repairs under \$2,500.
7. Livestock and agricultural supplies as approved by the university's agriculture department.
8. Parcel and mailing services not covered by existing contracts.
9. Advertising expenditures where approved by the department head.
10. Software licenses, royalties, and intellectual property rights as required by university activities.
11. Other purchases specifically authorized by the President or his authorized designee in writing not exceeding 60,000 or declared emergency based on Policy #58011.

D. Documentation: (applicable for parts A, B & C)

1. The originating department must ensure that the Purchasing Department's files include vendor information, quotes, selection rationale, and any waivers granted.
2. The Purchasing Department is responsible for processing all requisitions for the acquisition of materials, supplies, services, and equipment on behalf of the University.
3. All purchases of supplies, contractual services, and equipment must receive prior approval from the appropriate Vice President(s) and the President, or the President's authorized designee, in accordance with established approval protocols.

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V. COMPLIANCE

1. An employee who intentionally makes an unauthorized purchase may be held personally liable and subject to disciplinary actions that could include suspension and/or discharge as approved by the President or his authorized designee in accordance with LA R.S. 39:1679 which is as follows:

LA R.S. 39:1679. Violations; penalties

A. No person shall intentionally violate the Louisiana Procurement Code or any rule or regulation promulgated by the commissioner of administration with respect to purchasing.

B. Any person who intentionally violates such law, rule or regulation shall be fined not more than one thousand dollars, or imprisoned for not more than six months, or both.

2. Louisiana law (R.S. 39:1679) says that anyone who knowingly breaks state purchasing rules can face serious consequences, including fines or even jail time. This law is meant to make sure public money is spent honestly, fairly, and responsibly. Everyone involved in buying goods or services for the university must follow the law and university rules. If someone breaks these rules on purpose, they may lose purchasing privileges, face disciplinary action, and possibly be reported to legal authorities.

VI. TYPES OF UNAUTHORIZED PURCHASES

1. No Prior Approval or Requisition
 - i. Making a purchase without required departmental or procurement approval.
 - ii. Placing an order without submitting a requisition or generating a purchase order (PO).
2. Skipping Required Quotes
 - i. For purchases between \$30,000 and \$60,000, failing to obtain at least three quotes from qualified vendors, including efforts to contact at least one certified small or veteran-owned business, when required.
3. Using Personal Funds or Credit Cards
 - i. Buying items with personal money or a personal credit card without proper approval, then requesting reimbursement.
 - ii. Not allowed unless explicitly permitted in emergencies or under policy exceptions.
4. Splitting Transactions to Stay Below Limits
 - i. Dividing a purchase into multiple smaller transactions (e.g., two purchases of \$29,000 each) to avoid quote requirements.
 - o This is called "purchase splitting" and is not allowed.
5. Making Commitments to Vendors Without Authorization
 - i. Telling a vendor to begin work or deliver goods before the university issues a PO or contract.
 - ii. Only authorized individuals may commit university funds.

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6. Ignoring Designated Purchasing Roles

- i. A staff or faculty member who is not authorized to make purchases acting outside of their role.
- ii. Only designated procurement staff or trained buyers should make purchases, depending on the dollar amount and policy.

VII. NO COMPETITIVE PROCESS

No competitive process is required when using State Contract Vendors, University Bookstore and all other exceptions as stated in an Executive Order signed by the Governor of the State of Louisiana.

VIII. REVISION/REVIEWED

October 18, 2002-Effective Date

March 15, 2022- Revision Date

June 30, 2022 – Revision Date

TEMPLATE Small Purchase Quote Documentation Form

(For purchases between \$30,000 – \$60,000)

Department: _____

Date: _____

Requisition Number (if applicable): _____

Description of Item/Service:

Total Estimated Cost: \$ _____

Vendor Quotes Summary

Vendor Name	Contact Person	Phone/Email	Certified Small or Veteran-Owned? (Yes/No)	Quote Amount	Selected Vendor? (Yes/No)	Notes / Reason for Selection
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Note: Attach copies or screenshots of all quotes (email, PDF, written, etc.).

Waiver Section (if applicable)

- ☐ **Three-quote waiver requested** (select one):
 - ☐ Purchased from a certified small/veteran-owned business.
 - ☐ Emergency or time-sensitive need.
 - ☐ Sole source or proprietary item.
 - ☐ Other: _____

Justification for Waiver (Required if box above is checked):

Procurement Preparer Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Department Head Approval: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

TEMPLATE Small Purchase Justification for Exempt Items

(For purchases of exempt categories)

Department: _____

Date: _____

Requisition or PO Number: _____

Vendor Name: _____

Description of Item or Service:

Estimated or Actual Total Cost: \$ _____

Category of Exemption (Check One or More):

- ☐ Repair from OEM or authorized dealer
- ☐ Scientific/lab supplies or research equipment under \$60,000
- ☐ Instructional food and training supplies
- ☐ Publications, subscriptions, copyrighted materials
- ☐ Public utilities / telecom repair (\leq \$2,500)
- ☐ Parcel/mail services not under contract
- ☐ Advertising to reach targeted audience
- ☐ Software licenses / IP rights
- ☐ Livestock / agricultural supplies
- ☐ Other (Specify): _____

Justification:

Explain why the item/service qualifies for exemption from the competitive quote process:

Prepared by: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Procurement Office Approval (if required): _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

TEMPLATE Reasonableness of Price Determination

(Optional if using quote waiver or sole-source)

Department: _____
Date: _____
Item/Service: _____
Vendor: _____

Basis for Determining Price is Reasonable (Check all that apply):

- ☐ Comparison with recent purchases of similar items
- ☐ Price listed on vendor's website or catalog
- ☐ Vendor is certified small/veteran-owned with fair market price
- ☐ Emergency procurement – prices reviewed post-purchase
- ☐ Price verified through informal market research (attach evidence)
- ☐ Unique item/service not available elsewhere (sole source)

Brief Description of Evaluation:

Prepared by: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

Additional Notes:

- These forms should be retained in department or procurement office records for **5 years**, or according to university/state record retention requirements.
- All forms may be adapted into electronic or fillable PDF versions.