



**YOUNGSTOWN
STATE
UNIVERSITY**

YSU Purchasing Guidelines

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1. Introduction

- University Board Policy 3356-3-01, "Purchasing", charges Procurement Services with the oversight of all purchasing including compliance with applicable codes of ethics as well as federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
- YSU Purchasing guidelines apply to all purchases regardless of the funding source used unless the specific source of the funding is more restrictive. Please contact Grants Accounting at GrantsAcct@ysu.edu for grant related questions.
- Purchase Orders in operating funds should correspond to the University's fiscal year, July 1st through June 30th.
- Goods and/or services should not be rendered without an approved purchase order and appropriate supporting documentation.
- Purchase requisitions for goods and/or services should be submitted to Procurement Services two weeks in advance to ensure compliance and timely processing.
- Non-compliance may result in personal financial liability, suspension, or cancellation of purchasing privileges, and/or personnel actions.
- YSU Purchasing Guidelines are located on the [Procurement Services](#) website.

2. Contracted/Preferred Suppliers

- University Board Policy 3356-3-01, "Purchasing" requires all purchases for goods and services for which there is an existing university contract or price agreement with one or more preferred suppliers must be made from these suppliers.
- For a list of contracted/preferred vendors by commodity/category, see [Procurement Vendor | YSU](#).
- If there is no existing contract available, Procurement Services can assist in locating competitive suppliers on contract through the State of Ohio term schedule, general services administration schedule, inter-university council purchasing group, or other group purchasing organization ("GPO") pricing agreements.
- Procurement Services can assist with the entire purchasing process for department items/services not available through a university-wide contract supplier. This includes identifying suppliers, request for proposal/quotation, negotiation and establishing a contract.
- Quotes and competitive events are not required for contracted vendors.

3. Non-Contracted Suppliers

- Purchases for goods and/or services for which there are no existing university contracts or group purchasing price agreements are subject to the spend thresholds/contract and quotation requirements in section 5 below.
- If a vendor is not available in eCUBE, the department should direct the vendor to complete and submit a [Vendor Request](#) form to the Procurement Services Secured Document Upload.
- See Section 5 for dollar thresholds for when a quote or bid is required.

4. eCUBE

- eCUBE is YSU's procurement management system for effective purchase-to-pay cycle, ensuring all purchase requisitions, purchase orders and invoices requests are tracked in a single system with complete tracing of purchasing request and approval history and supporting documentation.
- When entering a requisition, make sure the proper documentation is attached to the correct eCUBE form, and be sure it matches current quotation(s), etc. showing what will be purchased and the cost. **(Do NOT attach invoices)**
- If a purchase requisition is NSF (Non-Sufficient Funds) in the final stages, Procurement Services will notify the department of the issue, and the department has 30 days to correct the NSF condition AND notify Procurement Services, or the order will be cancelled.
- eCUBE attachments must be in pdf format for the system to send them along with the purchase orders. Other attachment types are acceptable, but unable to be sent through the eCUBE system.
- Internal notes/attachments do not get sent to the supplier whereas external notes/attachments are sent to the Supplier when purchase order is issued.
- New supplier information or changes in supplier information must follow the instructions on the Vendor Information webpage and be submitted to the [Procurement Services Secured Document Upload](#).
- A fixed asset item purchase (single item over \$5,000-ex: equipment) cannot be included on the same requisition as a non-fixed asset item purchase (ex: supplies). The only exception is when there are separate components that go together to make one item over \$5,000.
- See Section 8 eCUBE Forms for Purchase Requisitions for additional information.
- Additional eCUBE training can be found in Blackboard under [Procurement Training](#).

5. Spend Thresholds/Contract & Quotation Requirements

Goods and Services

- \$0 - \$24,999 – Requires a written quotation from the selected supplier, no requirement for 3 written quotations^{1, 2, 3, 4}
- \$25,000 - \$49,999 – May require 3 written quotations^{2,4}
- \$50,000 or greater – Formal Competitive Event²
- Note: A Professional Service Agreement (PSA) is required for requisitions \$1,000 or more that include a business service component, regardless of the amount.³; A Standard Independent Contractor Agreement ("SICA") is required for services from individuals regardless of dollar amount³

Software

- All software requires a written agreement with the supplier, regardless of spend amount
 - Written agreements need to be approved by general counsel.
- See Section 8 regarding software license purchase/renewal for additional details
- All software purchases need to be approved by IT prior to purchase.
- Software cannot be procured on a commercial card.

Construction/Renovation Projects

- \$1,000 or more requires PSA³
- \$50,000 - \$214,999 - Requires 3 written quotations or letterhead bid² (excludes professional design services)
- \$250,000 or greater – Requires formal competitive event²

¹ For purchases under \$25,000 and not available through a University-wide contracted supplier or a group purchasing organization (“GPO”) agreement, only one written quote is required to be included with the requisition. However, although not required, multiple quotes may be obtained.

² Goods and/or services purchased on an existing University-wide contract do not require additional quotes or Formal Competitive Events regardless of the thresholds. (See University Board Policy 3356-3-01, “Purchasing”).

³ For more detail including applicable forms to use, refer to Guidelines on the [Contract Management webpage](#).

⁴ This only applies to purchases with grant funds where the grant award was made November 13, 2020, or later. For grant fund purchases where the grant award was made prior to November 13, 2020, the threshold requirement of 3 written quotations remains unchanged at \$10,000-\$49,999.

6. Signature Thresholds

Signature Dollar Thresholds/Signature Approval Required

Standard Agreements (PSA and SICA)

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| • Up to \$1,499 | Associate Dean, Department Chair or Director |
| • \$1,500 to \$9,999 | Dean, Associate Provost, or Associate Vice President |
| • \$10,000 to \$14,999 | Division Area Officer |
| • \$15,000 or more | Vice President for Finance & Business Operations |

Non-Standard Agreements

- All non-standard agreements require the Vice President for Finance Business Operations signature.

Authorized signatories are designated by the Vice President for Finance and Business Operations.

7. Purchasing Procedures

Computes/Laptops/Tablets

- All new computer, laptop and tablet orders should be initiated through the [Service Level Agreement Program](#) in IT.
- Special orders (such as grant purchases, research projects, or special configurations) *must* be initiated through IT Customer Service. E-Mail servicedesk@ysu.edu and request a quotation.
- Computers must be charged to either account code 701140 Non-Instructional Computers & Printers or 701141 Instructional Computers & Printers Only.

Office Supplies

- Office supplies must be ordered through the eCUBE contract punch-out catalogs unless items are not available from these suppliers. Use the Non-Catalog Vendor Order if the items are not available from these suppliers.

Printers/Toners

- Printers and Toners must be ordered through the IT [Service Catalog](#) not eCUBE.

Furniture

- All furniture purchases must be made through an approved supplier. Use the Ohio Desk punchout in eCUBE or a requisition with an approved supplier. See [Furniture Standards](#) for a list of approved suppliers or contact Procurement Services at procure@ysu.edu for assistance.
- A supplier quotation is required, regardless of the amount. (Note: Furniture is not to be purchased on PCard.)

Depending on the value of the furniture purchase, a Project and Space Utilization Form may be required.

Drones

- For drone purchases, please contact [Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety](#). See University Board Policy 3356-4-44, "Unmanned Aircraft".

Unallowable Items

- Purchases which do not have a business purpose are unallowable, regardless of the method of purchase (PCard, eCUBE, Purchase Order, etc.)
- Items which may appear to have a business purpose but are considered unallowable or personal in nature may include:
 - Office Appliances: refrigerators, microwaves, coffee equipment, water coolers, etc.
 - Office Kitchen supplies: dish soap, plates, napkins, silverware, etc.
 - Hand sanitizer, lotion, tissues, first aid/ medical supplies, pain relievers, heaters, fans, air purifiers, etc.
 - Decorations for offices, celebrations, etc.
 - Personal food and drink items for general offices: snacks, drinking water, soda, coffee, and coffee supplies, etc.
- The purchase of items that appear to be personal in nature, require a written justification of business purpose, and preapproval by Procurement Services. Requests can be made by e-mailing procure@ysu.edu.
- Special janitorial service requests can be requested through janitorial, via email at janitorial@ysu.edu.

Delivery Addresses for Purchases

- All Office Supply **delivery addresses** should be listed for direct delivery to the departments, per the agreements with the suppliers. All other orders should have Central Receiving ship-to addresses (Central Receiving, YSU, 235 West Rayen Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio 44503), except for furniture or large freight items that require direct delivery.
- Departments are encouraged to enter their own receipt upon delivery of goods and/or services. Delivery Services will make every effort to enter a receipt for items that are delivered to Central Receiving.
- Note: ***Deliveries to any non-YSU location are unallowable*** without a prior written exception attached to the eCUBE form.
- Any orders for chemicals, medication, or potentially hazardous materials must have the product flag set on the requisition and the shipping address needs to be YSU Chemical Management Center (CMC, 124 Lincoln Ave. Youngstown, Ohio 44503).

Close/Cancel Purchase Orders

- If a purchase order needs to be cancelled or closed, enter a comment on the purchase order, add email recipients acctspay@ysu.edu and procure@ysu.edu and click the green check mark.
- Note: If the final invoice is lower than the amount remaining on the purchase order, please add a comment stating, “final invoice purchase order can be closed” and enter a comment to acctspay@ysu.edu

Returns/Backorders/Not filled

- If any items are returned, if notice of items on backorder are received, or notification that items are cancelled, please enter a comment on the purchase order to document for historical purposes. Include acctspay@ysu.edu Accounts Payable as a recipient (hint – type acctspay in the email field), then click “Add Comment”.

Business Related Expense (BRE)

- Must use Account Code 701330 (Business-Related & Entertainment expense).
- Must comply with [BRE Guidelines](#) and include all supporting documentation (forms, receipts, etc.)
- BRE form and **written quote** must be attached to the requisition and the business purpose must be clearly documented on the BRE form.
- The requisition must be entered and approved before the event takes place.

AVI

- All AVI catered orders must be entered through the punch-out catalog in eCUBE.
- All on-campus catering with a value of \$100 or higher must be done through AVI.
- All food orders under \$100 are meant for prepackaged items, regardless of the food supplier/s. Perishable foods are not permitted.
- Contract exceptions – AVI’s right to provide catering services shall be non-exclusive at: Pollock House; Stambaugh Stadium to include: DeBartolo Stadium Club, Loges, and Athletic

Training Tables (Summer Only); Beeghly Center Coaches Court; Covelli Sports Complex for athletic events; YSU Tennis Center for athletic events; WATTS for athletic events; Cafaro Field for athletic events; Harrison Field for athletic events; YSU property leased to a private party for office, retail and/or commercial use; Fueling Stations for Student Athletes and YSU campus events where the food order is valued at less than \$100 (food orders valued below \$100 are meant for prepackaged items, regardless of the food supplier).

- Other exceptions – Advance approval needed. In order to be granted an exception, the department should request a quote from AVI prior to submitting a request for exception. Requests are to be emailed to jlyoung02@ysu.edu.
- A completed BRE must be attached to the requisition to document the business purpose and compliance with BRE guidelines for all food orders. Save the BRE file including the date of the event in the file name. The Financial Manager is required to sign the BRE.
- If the order is over \$5,000 the BRE form must be signed by the Area Division Officer.
- After the event, AVI will send an invoice back through eCUBE. If the invoice and the purchase order match, the invoice will be automatically paid. If there is a difference, the invoice will go to the Financial Manager for approval.
- A receipt for the order does not need to be entered.

Professional Service Agreements (PSA)/Supplier (Non-standard) Agreements

For service agreements with businesses, use either the [PSA](#) or the supplier's agreement. **The preferred option is use of the PSA as this has standard terms and conditions most favorable to YSU.**

Purchase requisitions for these agreements may be entered either on the Non-Catalog Vendor Order form if a single payment or the Standing Order form if multiple invoices will be submitted.

Refer to Section 6 for signature thresholds.

Any requisition for goods totaling \$1,000 or more, that includes a service component regardless of the amount, **MUST** be accompanied by the Professional Service Agreement (PSA) or supplier contract. The PSA needs to be for the full amount of the goods and services.

In addition to the PSA, the Statement of Work/Scope of Work or Quote should be included with the requisition.

Services include, but are not limited to, services performed on or off campus, renovations, installations, etc.

In addition to the PSA, the Statement of Work/Scope of Work or Quote should be included with the requisition.

The supplier's agreement can be substituted for a PSA. *The University may use the supplier's Agreement for software licenses/subscriptions and renewals.*

The Supplier's agreement (Non-Standard Contract) regardless of dollar amount **MUST** be reviewed by Procurement and General Counsel and signed by the Vice President of Finance & Business Operations before the requisition can be approved.

The supplier should sign the agreement **before** the University representative. If submitting a supplier agreement, the agreement must be in a word document to allow General Counsel to make updates (red line).

All completed documents need to be attached to the requisition in eCUBE.

Signed contracts, agreements, order forms, quotations, terms and conditions, or any other signed

documents confirming an agreement of any kind, will not be sent to suppliers/contractors without a purchase order. Departments are **NOT** permitted to distribute signed contract to vendor. The completed signed contract will be distributed to the vendor, by Procurement Services, at the same time the purchase order is generated.

Standard Independent Contractor Agreements (SICA)

- For service agreements with individuals, use the [SICA](#).
- Purchase requisitions for these agreements may be entered either on the Independent Contractor – One Time Payment eCUBE form if a single payment will be made, or the Independent Contractor – Standing Order eCUBE form if multiple invoices will be submitted.
- Refer to Section 6 for signature thresholds.
- The completed eCUBE Independent Contractor – One Time Payment and Standing Order forms, along with all required documentation attached, **must be submitted at least two weeks prior to commencement of any services**, to reasonably guarantee that payment can be made when requested. The paperwork must be completed and approved through all channels prior to commencement of any services.
 - Departments are **NOT** permitted to distribute signed contract to vendor. The completed signed contract will be distributed to the vendor, by Procurement Services, at the same time the purchase order is generated.
- All completed documents need to be attached to the requisition in eCUBE.
- **Departments are not authorized to receive any OPERS forms or vendor forms. These forms can contain personal identifying information such as social security numbers. Have the contractor upload the OPERS form, and the SR 6/6E if applicable, to the appropriate secured website.**
- If a travel allowance is included in the agreement, the amount should be included in the total to be paid. Prepayment of travel expenses is generally unallowable. If the payment is for travel only (no services), an OPERS form is not required.
- Once the Independent Contractor form is submitted in eCUBE, it will typically electronically route through the following approvals:
 - Financial Manager
 - Procurement Services
 - Controller's Office for Grants or non-US Citizen
- Once the purchase order has been issued for an Independent Contractor One Time payment, the system will automatically create an invoice and return it to the Financial Manager for approval in eCUBE based upon the 'supplier invoice date' that is placed into this eCUBE form.
- For Standing Orders for Independent Contractors, Accounts Payable must receive an invoice for each payment request against the Standing Order throughout the time period. The invoice must include the Purchase Order number and be submitted to accounts payable at acctspay@ysu.edu. Each invoice will route to the Financial Manager for approval in eCUBE. The supplier's invoice will be attached in eCUBE by Accounts Payable. The Financial Manager should click on the attachment to open the invoice and review prior to approval.
- Account code 701805 Contractual Fees and Services should be used for SICAs.
- **DO NOT** approve the invoice for payment until **AFTER** goods and/or services have been rendered.
- If the amount to be paid to the Independent Contractor will be different than the amount on the invoice, the Financial Manager will need to detail the change and amount in the comment section on the invoice. This message will be reviewed by Accounts Payable, and the amount will be adjusted.
- The contractor should sign the agreement **before** the University representative.

- Signed contracts, agreements, order forms, quotations, terms and conditions, or any other signed documents confirming an agreement of any kind, will not be sent to suppliers/contractors without a written purchase order.
- **If you have questions regarding non-resident alien contractors, please contact the Controller's Office at controllersoffice@ysu.edu as special rules may apply.**

8. eCUBE Forms for Purchase Order Requisitions

Independent Contractor - One Time Payment Form

- This eCUBE form is utilized to order services from an independent contractor (individual) who will receive a one-time payment for services and travel expenses.
- Complete all required fields. Please note the following:
 - The check will be mailed to the Independent Contractor's address on record (make sure this is correct when you enter the requisition). If the correct address does not appear, follow the instructions on the [Vendor Information webpage](#) to request an update.
 - If the person is a non-US Citizen, then their country name must be completed in the Country box.
 - Enter the total dollar amount for services and travel.
 - Attach the signed SICA.
- Additional eCUBE training can be found in Blackboard under [Procurement Training](#).

Independent Contractor – Standing Order Form

- This eCUBE form is utilized to order services from an independent contractor (individual) over a specified time period within the fiscal year.
- If there are going to be multiple payments made to the Independent Contractor, you must choose this form. If you chose the Independent Contract Agreement – one-time payment form, then one-payment will be paid, and the order will automatically close.
- Complete all required fields. Please note the following:
 - The check will be mailed to the Independent Contractor's address on record (make sure this is correct when you enter the requisition). If the correct address does not appear, follow the instructions on the [Vendor Information webpage](#) to request an update.
 - If the person is a non-US Citizen, then their country name must be completed in the Country box.
 - Enter the total dollar amount for services and travel.
 - If the person is a non-US Citizen, then their country name must be completed in the Country box.
 - Attach the signed SICA.
- Additional eCUBE training can be found in Blackboard under [Procurement Training](#).

Non-Catalog Vendor Order Form

- This eCUBE form is utilized to order goods or services from suppliers that are not on our [University-Wide Contracted Vendors list](#).
- A written quotation/statement of work/contract/agreement must be included with all non-catalog vendor order form requisitions.

- Refer to section 5 “Spend Thresholds/Contract & Quotation Requirements/Signature Thresholds” for specific document requirements, based upon spend type and spend threshold.
- All information needs to be completed for orders using the non-catalog form. Some items may be from an online catalog. Make sure the correct current pricing is obtained, manufacturer catalog numbers, and any discounts. If the quote does not match the requisition, then the requisition will be delayed, returned, or rejected.
- In the description box, describe the goods/services being ordered, do not reference the quote number. This box is strictly for item descriptions. Reference the quote in the notes area.
- E-Mailed quotes must contain the supplier’s name, description of all items, and all estimated costs. Note: do not attach an e-mail file or a link as these cause system errors. Save as a PDF and attach.
- Include any estimated shipping charges as a line item.
- The department and/or Central Receiving will enter a receipt when the items are received.
- The supplier must submit the invoice(s) to acctspay@ysu.edu for payment.

Standing Order Form

- This eCUBE form is utilized when multiple invoices may be submitted against a Purchase Order for goods and/or services over a specified time period within the fiscal year.
- Enter the total dollar amount and applicable dates and attach any documentation to the eCUBE form.
- Refer to section 5 “Spend Thresholds/Contract & Quotation Requirements/Signature Thresholds” for specific document requirements, based upon spend type and spend threshold. (Note: Invoices should not be attached to this form, or it may be delayed/returned while by Procurement Services contacts the individual preparing the requisition to amend the issue.)
- The supplier must submit the invoice(s) to acctspay@ysu.edu for payment.
- Each invoice will route to the Financial Manager for approval in eCUBE. The supplier’s invoice will be attached in eCUBE by Accounts Payable. The Financial Manager should click on the attachment to open the invoice and review prior to approval.
- **The contract may be for multiple years, but the purchase order cannot extend beyond the current fiscal year** and only invoices related to that fiscal year will be posted against the purchase order.

As Per Invoice (API) Form

- This eCUBE form is **restricted** to certain types of purchases including but not limited to; Dues/Memberships, Subscriptions not related to software licenses, Permits, Rentals, Emergency Purchases, and other qualified purchases.
- If there is an invoice for payment that does not meet the criteria above and does not have a purchase order, then the “other” button can be selected and the explanation why a purchase order was not issued prior to the purchase must be included.
- Improper usage of this API form will be monitored for non-compliance with purchasing procedures and will be communicated to the department and the supplier by Procurement Services.
- Only one invoice can be attached per requisition.

Deposit/Pre-Payment Request Form

- This eCUBE form is if the supplier requires a pre-payment/deposit and will not submit an invoice. Examples include but are not limited to permits, performances, lectures, rentals, international study abroad payments (Insurance, touring, lodging, ground transportation, etc.).
- All required contract documents and/or any supporting documentation must be attached to the eCUBE form.
- A separate requisition should be entered for any balance due, and the supplier must invoice.

Software License/Renewal Form

- This eCUBE form should be utilized when purchasing/renewing software licenses, subscriptions, licensed subscriptions, maintenance agreements, etc.
- Please do not change the commodity code of 43230000.
- Use account code 701855 Software licenses and fees.
- A YSU PSA should not be substituted for a Software License Agreement.
- If there is a current agreement signed by the Vice President of Finance and Business Operations, please attach it to the eCUBE software license/renewal form for reference.
- **The contract may be for multiple years, but the purchase order cannot extend beyond the current fiscal year** and only invoices related to that fiscal year will be posted against the purchase order.

Security, Accessibility, and Review Requirements

To ensure institutional security, legal compliance, and digital accessibility, all software purchases and renewals must adhere to the following requirements.

Security and Accessibility Documentation

All software purchases must include:

- A System and Organization Controls (SOC) report **only if sensitive data is involved**, and
- Either a Higher Education Community Vendor Assessment Toolkit (HECVAT) or a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT).

These documents are required to verify that the software meets institutional security standards and accessibility compliance obligations.

New Software and Licensed Subscriptions Review

For new software products, the Information Technology (IT) Department must review:

- Vendor terms and conditions, and
- Implementation requirements.

This review must be completed prior to contract execution.

Contract Review and Routing

Once IT has completed its initial review, the contract will be forwarded to Associate General Counsel for legal review and approval.

Planning and Timeline Considerations

Departments are encouraged to plan software purchases well in advance. The collection and review of required documentation may take 8–10 weeks. These review steps are mandatory and help protect the institution, ensure regulatory compliance, and support an inclusive digital environment for all users.

Pre-Submission Checklist

Before submitting a Software License / Renewal Form, confirm that you have:

1. A current SOC report from the vendor if sensitive data is involved
2. Either a HECVAT or VPAT document
3. Determined whether the product is new (if new, vendor terms and conditions must be submitted to IT for review)
4. Attach all required documentation to **the requisition prior to submission**

Failure to attach the required materials may result in delays or denial of the purchase request.

Change Order Request Form

- Use this eCUBE form to request Procurement Services make changes to an existing Purchase Order (PO must be in **OPEN** status). This may be an increase or decrease in price or quantity.
- The request must include the amount to increase or decrease the purchase order, if applicable, along with the new total in the detail box on the change order request.
- The FOAP on the change order **cannot** be different than the original order. If the FOAP is different, a new requisition will need to be entered, and a change order cannot be processed.
- If the remaining invoices in a fiscal year are anticipated to total less than the remaining encumbrance on a purchase order, a decrease to the order may be requested to free up funds for other needs.
- If the invoice for payment is the final invoice, request Accounts Payable close the purchase order after payment via a comment on the purchase order in eCUBE and submit the invoice to acctspay@ysu.edu.

9. Important Notes

- Certain states have agreed to grant YSU a tax exemption. See [Sales Tax Reciprocal Agreements by State](#) under Procurement Services.
- All invoices and credit memos should reference the purchase order and be sent by email to accounts payable at acctspay@ysu.edu by either the department or supplier.
 - Invoices should not be attached to purchase requisitions since they represent goods/services that have already been rendered. No goods and/or services should be rendered without an approved purchase order and applicable contract/quotation documentation as noted below.
- [Operating Expense Account Code Descriptions](#) are listed on the Controller's website.
- [Commodity Codes and Descriptions](#) are listed on the Procurement Services website.
- Facilities must manage construction/Renovation projects. See University Board Policy 3356-4-15 for more information.
- There can only be one supplier per purchase requisition, as there can only be one supplier per purchase order.

- Only Procurement Services shall distribute purchase orders and associated documents (contracts). Suppliers **must** receive an approved Purchase Order **before** goods are ordered and/or services are provided. No verbal orders are permitted.
- If any items are returned, if notice of items on back order are received, or notification that items are cancelled, please enter a comment on the purchase order. Include acctspay@ysu.edu as a recipient (hint – type acctspay in the email field), then click “Add Comment”.