

Valdosta State University
PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES & REQUIREMENTS

As a State Entity, VSU must comply with all applicable public procurement laws, regulations, and guidelines when it makes purchases or enters in to contract with State Suppliers. Below is a summary of key procedures and requirements involved in the procurement process at VSU. Please review as you make purchasing decisions to ensure a smooth procurement process and avoid any delays or gaps in service.

1. STATEWIDE CONTRACTS AND PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS.

a. The state has established an order of precedence when making purchasing decisions and all VSU purchases must comply. Therefore, when looking to make a purchase for a needed good/service, you must conduct your market research as follows:

i. **First, use VSU Central Stores:** VSU keeps a number of office supplies on hand in its Central Stores. Search the [Central Stores Catalog](#), if any item you need is available here, you must purchase it through Central Stores. If no needed item is available in Central Stores, move on to the next paragraph.

ii. **Second, use Statewide Contracts:** The State has contracted with State Suppliers to provide a number of goods/services to all state entities. If the contract is a Mandatory Statewide Contract (SWCM), then state entities must purchase from that contract or receive a waiver from the state to buy elsewhere. Even when the Statewide Contract is not mandatory (SWCC), if a needed item is available through a Statewide Contract, it makes sense to utilize the SWCC since there is no need to get contract approval and no bid will be required regardless of the cost. Items on statewide contract can be found by using the following sites:

- o [GeorgiaFIRST Marketplace](#) (Requester Login Required)
- o [The Statewide Contract Index](#)

If no needed item is available on Statewide Contracts, move on to the next paragraph.

iii. **Third, use Existing Contracts:** If the needed good/service can be purchased through an existing state entity contract (such as a contract with VSU, BOR, etc.) then you must purchase it through the existing contract. If you believe that there may be an existing contract for the item you need, contact the Office of Procurement (x2697) to determine if you may purchase off of it. If no needed item is available off of an existing state entity contract, move on to the next paragraph.

iv. **Fourth, use Mandatory Statutory Sources:** Because of the social benefit derived, the State has identified the following providers as mandatory sources of supply, meaning if not available in any of the sources above, if a needed item is available through either of the following, you must purchase it through these sources:

- o [Georgia Enterprises for Products and Services \(GEPS\)](#)
- o [Georgia Correctional Industries Administration \(GCI\)](#)

If no needed item is available through a Mandatory Statutory Source, move on to the next paragraph.

v. **Last, make an Open Market Purchase:** Only when a needed good/service is not available through any of the sources above are you free to go to the open market and purchase from a new Supplier. All contracts must be approved prior to acceptance (see Section 3 below) and if valued at \$25,000 or more, may require a formal bid (see section 2 below).

2. FORMAL BIDDING REQUIREMENTS.

- a. Any purchase anticipated to be valued at **\$25,000.00** or more must be bid out if not purchased from a Statewide Contract or exempted from bidding requirements.
- b. Depending on the type of purchase, VSU may be required to issue any one of the following:
 - i. **Request For Quotes.** A Bid Invitation is posted online for up to 15 days and bids are accepted from State Suppliers. The lowest bid is awarded the contract. In order to ensure that specifications are written and all other requirements are met, this process generally takes a minimum of **6 weeks** to complete but could take significantly longer for large or complex purchases.
 - ii. **Request For Proposals.** A committee is created to develop specifications for the bid. Then, a Bid Invitation is posted online for up to 15 days and proposals are accepted from State Suppliers. An evaluation committee is created to score the technical aspects of each bidder's proposal. Technical scores and cost scores are combined and the highest scoring Supplier is awarded. In order to ensure that specifications are written and all other requirements are met, this process generally takes a minimum of **3-4 months** to complete but could take significantly longer for large or complex purchases.
 - iii. **Sole Source Purchases.** In the rare event that there is only one Supplier who can provide the good/service being purchased, VSU can forego the bid process and issue a Notice of Intent to Award, which must be posted for **5-15 days**, depending on the value of the purchase. To do this, VSU must justify why no other Supplier is capable of bidding.
- c. All bids run the risk of being protested by suppliers who believe the contract was awarded in error. When a protest is lodged, a stay is automatically placed on the process and the contract cannot be awarded or the purchase made until the protest is successfully resolved.
- d. Since any purchase valued at \$25,000 or more may need to be bid out, immediately contact the Office of Procurement (x5708) to determine which bid process, if any, is required before attempting to get the contract approved or entering your Requisition into ePro.

3. CONTRACT APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS.

- a. Any purchase that requires VSU to enter into a contract must receive prior approval and be signed by a delegated signatory before a requisition can be entered into eProcurement or a P-Card transaction can be made.
- b. Those with purchases that require contract approval are encouraged to submit them as early as possible in order to avoid delays, missed deadlines, and gaps in service. The process is not instantaneous and often requires review by multiple parties. Therefore, contract approvals take a minimum of 20 business days, but can often take significantly longer due to any or all of the following:
 - i. Stalled or complicated negotiations with contractors regarding contract edits;
 - ii. New, unique, or complex contract issues discovered in the approval process;
 - iii. Failure by the requesting party or contractor to provide required documentation;
 - iv. Lack of adequate funding; and/or
 - v. Increased workload at fiscal year end;
- c. Note that Contract Approval Requests must be accompanied by a completed [Contract Routing Form](#) and [Contract Approval Information Sheet](#) in order to be processed.
- d. Instructions for requesting Contract Approval can be found here: [How to get a contract approved.](#)

- e. **VSU Service Agreement Forms.** For services such as speakers, presenters, and consultants, valued under \$25,000, the VSU Service Agreement Form (SAF) can be used in lieu of a contract. The benefit of using a SAF is that there is no need to go through Contract Approval. The blank Service Agreement Form and instructions for completing it are available [here](#).

4. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- a. **IT Purchases.** Any purchase that touches a VSU computer, the network, or VOIP device is classified as an IT Purchase and must be approved by IT **BEFORE** a requisition can be entered or a P-Card purchase can be made. You are encouraged to contact [IT Quotes](#) and [IT Purchasing](#) if you think you are making an IT Purchase or if you have any questions.
Consult the [IT Procurement](#) website for more instructions.
- b. **New Vendors.** Unless the Supplier is being paid via P-Card, all Suppliers must fill out a Vendor Form or already be a Supplier in ePro to be paid.
- c. **E-Verify.** Any contract for services valued at \$2,500.00 or more where the services are provided in the state must satisfy the eVerify reporting requirement, either by submitting a completed, signed and notarized [DOAA Contractor Affidavit](#) or acceptable alternative. Consult the Procurement's [eVerify](#) webpage for more information.
- d. **Determination of Status.** To ensure that all independent contractors truly fit that status and are not employees who have been misclassified, requesters must complete a [Determination of Status \(DOS\) Questionnaire](#) on all individuals who contract with VSU. Business entities are excluded from this requirement. DOS Questionnaires should be submitted to Ernest Smith in Human Resources for review and approval. This must be done prior to a contract or Service Agreement getting signed and must be attached to your requisition in ePro.
- e. **Criminal Background Checks.** Background checks are required for all suppliers that regularly interact with students, employees, monies, sensitive/confidential data, or facilities.
- f. **Month End.** Departments entering requisitions into eProcurement must keep in mind that at the end of each month, eProcurement closes down (for up to 4 business days) for monthly reconciliations. During that time, requisitions cannot be entered or processed and checks cannot be cut. Please plan accordingly if there is a tight deadline for any purchase.
- g. **Year End.** eProcurement closes down to Requesters at the end of April each Fiscal Year for Surplus Funds (Funds 10000, 10500, and 10600) and will not re-open until the beginning of the next Fiscal Year. Therefore it is imperative that all requisitions using this fiscal year's funds be entered into ePro on or before this date. Surplus that is not encumbered in a PO or, at a minimum, entered as a requisition into ePro is subject to be swept from departmental funds.

NOTE: All forms referenced in this document can be accessed via the VSU Procurement website. Please do not download and save documents as they are frequently updated due to changes in procurement policy and procedure.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, contact us!

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