



U of SC Aiken

Campus Auxiliary and Support Services

A GUIDE TO PURCHASING

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PREFACE

The University of South Carolina Aiken Purchasing Department procures goods and services in accordance with the State of South Carolina Consolidated Procurement Code and Regulations, which is incorporated herein and may be accessed through the SFAA Procurement Services website at <https://procurement.sc.gov/agency/contracts>.

University Purchasing is authorized to make commitments against University accounts for these purposes upon receipt of a duly completed purchase requisition.

The UofSC Aiken Purchasing Department has the sole authority and responsibility for all purchasing transactions at UofSC Aiken from \$10,000 to \$50,000.00 per good/commodity or service.

The responsibility for assuring availability of funds and for justifying the need for the purchase is vested with department heads.

Methods of Purchasing

All purchases, regardless of payment method, must adhere to the SC Procurement Code & USC policies mandating utilization of State Contracts.

Employee reimbursements should only be used if there is no other viable payment method available, this is the exception and not the norm.

Tools available for purchasing and payments are: purchase order, blanket purchase order, SC State visa purchasing card or payment request.

Purchasing Card

The Purchasing Card is a Visa credit card issued by a financial institution selected by the State Procurement Office through a competitive process. It is a purchasing tool which offers an effective method for purchasing and paying for supplies and some services with a total value of \$4,999.99 or less.

With the approval of the department head, a purchasing card will be issued to a full-time permanent university employee. There are no department cards. Each card will have a default University account number and class code and will have set parameters as to monthly credit availability (\$10,000.00) and single transaction amount (\$4,999.99) inclusive of shipping, taxes, etc. A departmental liaison will be assigned to each credit card with authority to change the account charged if necessary. Software is provided to the liaison to process all changes as well as monitoring expenditures. Training is required for both the cardholder and departmental liaison prior to receiving a purchasing card.

When possible, all goods and services (including small utilities like DirecTV and Verizon) under \$5,000 inclusive of taxes, freight and miscellaneous charges must be purchased utilizing the Purchasing Card (P-Card).

If the supplier does not accept the P-Card and the purchase is a departmental approved request, the Payment Request process must be used to pay the supplier through the Payment Request online tool. Accounts Payable will review and approve the invoice and required documentation for subsequent payment to the supplier.

Payment Request

Payment request is an online payment tool in PeopleSoft for paying invoices under \$10,000. This tool has strict guidelines and a payment matrix for allowed types of payments.

Accounts Payable will process invoices for payment for purchases made directly by a department (Non-Purchase Order)

Non-Purchase Order (Non-PO) Invoice – Supplier was determined by the department.

The invoice is not associated with a Purchase Order issued by the university Purchasing Department.

Non-PO supplier invoices for goods and services from \$5,000 and not exceeding \$10,000 that are not capital assets can be paid utilizing the Payment Request process. This is inclusive of Grant funds but not sub-recipients.

Any purchase exceeding \$10,000 or that is not otherwise noted as approved on the Payment Request Matrix, will not be allowed to be processed via Payment Request. Purchases of this amount are required to be processed through the Purchasing Department with no exceptions allowed.

The Payment Request Matrix provides documentation requirements for specific Payment Request types. For a quick reference on how to enter a payment request, [click here](#).

Purchase Requisition to Purchase Order

For a general understanding as to how items are purchased by UofSC Aiken, the following steps are completed for every transaction over \$10,000 in the procurement process when a university procurement card is not being utilized.

- A department recognizes the need or desire for a certain good(s) and/or service.
- Department receives quote(s) from supplier(s) for good(s) and/or services required. Quote(s) shall be attached to purchase requisition when creating in PeopleSoft.
- The department creates a purchase requisition (PR) in PeopleSoft. The requisition must be equal or greater than \$10,000. The requisition starts the approval/ordering/bidding process.

- A purchase requisition for a blanket purchase order (BPO) is to be created for multiple small purchases that will eventually exceed \$10,000.00 annually. (See section on Blanket Purchase Orders)
- Purchases under \$10,000.00 must be distributed equitably among qualified suppliers. (Accounts Payable will only authorized and approve up to \$10,000.00 annually to one supplier in total for payment request reimbursements.)

Exceptions:

- All assets must use a purchase order (\$5,000 or greater).
 - All radioactive material must use a purchase order (no dollar limit).
 - Suppliers that require a purchase order.
 - Department requires a purchase order for validation of terms and conditions associated with the purchase.
 - Most SC State Contract Items
- Based on the funding source, the purchase requisition will be placed in a workflow and forwarded to the appropriate approvers' worklist in PeopleSoft database system.
 - Once all campus approvals are received the purchase requisition is electronically sent forward to Columbia for review and assigned a buyer. PeopleSoft will create a purchase order (PO) and will be placed in the assigned buyers' worklist for processing. NOTE: A PO is not official until it has been dispatched to the supplier by the buyer.
 - The purchase order buyer will review to ensure all SC Procurement Codes and university policy and procedures have been adhered to. The purchase order will then be dispatched to the supplier for ordering of goods and/or services or will initiate the bidding process.
 - The PO constitutes a binding contract between the University and the supplier. No changes, additions, deletions or cancellations may be made to the PO without approval from the Purchasing Department.

Receiving

Receiving in PeopleSoft is an important part of the 3 Way Matching rule within PeopleSoft. It compares vouchers with purchase orders and receiving documents.

- Receipting is required on all purchases of goods.
- Receiving your requested goods is the trigger for Accounts Payable to pay and how much to pay.
- Goods require receiving. For example, supplies and equipment.
- Services do not require receiving. For example, maintenance or repair of equipment.
- Sending in the invoice will be Accounts Payable's (invoices@usca.edu) cue to make payment.

- 3 Way Matching is a control measure used to ensure that you pay for only the goods and services that you order and receive.
- If the lines on the Purchase Order, Receipt, and Voucher do not match, payment will not be made.

Training for Requisitioning and Receiving can be found at:

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/peoplesoft_finance/internal/training/

Blanket Purchase Orders

A blanket purchase agreement or blanket order is a simplified method of filling repetitive needs for small quantities of miscellaneous supplies, services, or information technology by establishing “charge accounts” with qualified sources of supply. Blanket orders are designed to reduce administrative costs in accomplishing small purchases by eliminating the need for issuing individual purchase documents.

Alternate Sources. To the extent practicable, blanket orders for items of the same type should be placed concurrently with more than one supplier. All competitive sources shall be given an equal opportunity to furnish supplies, services, or information technology under such agreements.

Blanket orders shall contain the following provisions which is submitted on an authorized purchase requisition:

- Description of agreement. A statement that the supplier shall furnish supplies, services, or information technology, described therein in general terms, if and when requested by the Procurement Officer, or his authorized representative, during a specified period and within a stipulated aggregate amount, if any.
- Blanket orders may encompass all items that the supplier is in a position to furnish.

Types of Procurement

Competitive Quotations

- \$10,000 to \$25,000
- Three Written Quotes. Written request for written quotes from a minimum of three qualified sources of supply may be made and, unless adequate public notice is provided in the South Carolina Business Opportunities, documentation of at least three bona fide, responsive, and responsible quotes must be attached to the purchase requisition for a small purchase not in excess of twenty-five thousand dollars. The award must be made to the lowest responsive and responsible source. The request for quotes must include a purchase description. Requests must be distributed equitably among qualified suppliers unless advertised as provided above.

OR

- Advertised Small Purchase. Written solicitation of written quotes, bids, or proposals may be made for a small purchase. The procurement must be advertised at least once in the South Carolina Business Opportunities publication. A copy of the written solicitation and written quotes must be attached to the purchase requisition. The award must be made to the lowest responsive and responsible source or, when a request for proposal process is used, the highest ranking offeror.
- \$25,000 to \$50,000
 - All competitive procurements above twenty-five thousand dollars will be bid using a Request for Quotation (RFQ) and must be advertised at least once in the South Carolina Business Opportunities online publication.
- \$50,000.01 and up
 - Requires sealed bidding and must be coordinated with USC Columbia.

Use of State contracts negates the competitive quotation requirements.

Splitting of orders to avoid the above required competitive methodologies is not permissible and may be deemed as an unauthorized procurement.

State Contracts

- The State establishes term contracts for goods and services that are in high demand. Items on State of South Carolina term contracts require mandatory usage by State agencies in accordance with the South Carolina Consolidated Procurement Code.
- Use of these term contracts is mandatory unless the item can be procured from another vendor for less than 10% of the contract cost and only, if the contract vendor will not meet the lower price.

For a comprehensive list of all items offered on Statewide Contracts:

<https://procurement.sc.gov/agency/contracts>

Sole Source Procurements

Are permissible when it is determined in writing there is only one source for the supply, service, information technology, or construction item. The following are a list of reasons that could require a sole source procurement:

- Where the compatibility of equipment, accessories, or replacement of parts is the paramount consideration.
- Where a sole supplier's item is needed for trial use or testing.

- Where the item is one of a kind.
- The determination as to whether a procurement shall be made as a sole source shall be made by the UofSC Associate Vice President for Business Affairs upon recommendation of the UofSC Director of Purchasing. Such determination and the basis therefore shall be submitted in writing. The determination must contain sufficient factual grounds and reasoning to provide an informed, objective explanation for the decision. The determination must be authorized prior to contract execution.

Departmental Responsibilities:

The authorized representative must document in writing and provide the following information in letter form to the UofSC Purchasing Department with the corresponding requisition:

- A brief description of the supply, service or construction;
- Justification for the need;
- Applicable circumstance(s) from the conditions listed above;
- Statement certifying that only one source for the procurement is available;
- Statement verifying there is not a dealer/distributor network.

Sole source procurements must be signed by predetermined levels of authority as set forth by law prior to the issuance of a purchase order.

Contact UofSC Aiken purchasing for guidelines to writing a sole source justification letter.

Emergency Purchases

An emergency condition is a situation, which creates a threat to public health, welfare, or safety. The existence of such condition must create an immediate and serious need for supplies, services, or construction that cannot be met through normal procurement methods and the lack of which would seriously threaten;

- The functioning of state government;
- The preservation or protection of property; or
- The health or safety of any person

The determination as to whether a procurement shall be made as an emergency procurement shall be made by the UofSC Director of Purchasing and the UofSC Associated Vice President of Business Affairs.

Such determination and the basis therefore shall be in writing, attached to the purchase requisition and an Emergency Procurement Determination supplemental form for Governor declared emergencies.

Contract Approval Routing Form (CARF)

It is the express policy of the Board of Trustees that no oral contracts or agreements shall be binding on the University of South Carolina. (Please refer to BTRU 1.04 Authority to Sign Contracts, for complete details.)

The President of the University and the Secretary of the Board of Trustees are delegated authority to sign contracts and agreements that are binding upon the University, and no contract or agreement shall become binding upon the University unless it is in writing and contains the signature of the President or the Secretary of the Board of Trustees.

Chancellor Jordan has been authorized to sign contracts and agreements on behalf of USC Aiken with a total value not to exceed \$100,000, excepting research and research-related agreements, and employment agreements. UofSC Aiken CARF form may be found at <https://www.usca.edu/campus-auxiliary-and-support/useful-forms/purchasing/carf>

For contracts exceeding \$100,000 a UofSC Contract Approval Form must be completed and submitted to the Office of General Counsel. The USC form may be found at http://trustees.sc.edu/forms/ContractApprovalForm_rev.pdf

Except as provided in the University's policy BTRU 1.04, no element of the institution is authorized to prepare contracts and agreements and offer the same for acceptance by outside (non-University) parties without prior review of such contracts and agreements by the Office of the General Counsel.

NOTE: A CARF will not replace policies and regulations as set forth by the SC Procurement Code.

IT Procurement

Technology is critical to efficiency and effectiveness in modern higher education and the workplace. Acquisition, implementation, integration, and maintenance, poses real and substantial risks of compromise for data security, data privacy, and continuity of mission-critical operations if not managed in a strategic, cost-effective and organized manner.

Therefore, UofSC Aiken's CIO will coordinate the implementation and ongoing administration of all hardware and software utilized at UofSC Aiken.

All proposed acquisitions of technology or technology-related services by Organizational Units, university personnel, or university affiliates, must submit a Notice of Intent to Acquire Technology.

University Purchasing will ensure that intended purchasing activity is reviewed to identify technology implications. When a product, service, or contract has evident technology requirements, the initiator will be directed to follow the Notice of Intent.

Purchasing has the authority to deny reimbursement to individuals or payment to vendors/suppliers for technology obtained independently that of should conformed to this policy.

Unauthorized Purchases

Unauthorized purchases are transactions in which a vendor extends credit to an individual representing the University without purchase authority. Authority to ratify an unauthorized purchase lies with the President of the University if the unauthorized purchase is within the University's certification limit. If the procurement amount is greater than the certification limit, the authority lies with the Division of General Services. Individuals who pay out-of-pocket expenses for goods/services which, exceed the petty cash limit of \$50.00 are in violation of Administrative Policies and will not be reimbursed via the Purchasing Office. A ratification letter is required from the employee's supervisor and signed by authorities leading up to the final approval of the University of South Carolina President.

The ratification elements of the unauthorized procurement letter must state:

A written determination as to the facts and circumstances surrounding the act;

- What corrective action is being taken to prevent reoccurrence;
- What action taken against the individual committing the act;
- Documentation that the price paid is fair and reasonable.

Evaluation of Trial Purchases

If you need a sample for evaluation or desire to purchase material on a trial basis, regardless of the cost, (and unless otherwise specifically exempted) you must request and obtain a purchase order prior to ordering the sample or trial material. The Purchasing Office can make certain your department is not charged for material ordered on trial and evaluation until you determine and notify Purchasing at trial end that it is acceptable. Note on your Purchase Requisition the vendor terms of the evaluation period. Example: thirty day free trial. With trial purchases it is the department's responsibility to notify the Purchasing Office the results of the trial, ie. keeping or returning material. Note: Should you order evaluation or trial material(s) without a purchase order and then decide to request that UOFSC AIKEN pay for the item(s), it will be considered an unauthorized purchase.

Minority Vendors

UofSC Aiken is committed to the fair and equal treatment of all persons interested in doing business with this institution. Additionally, the Purchasing Office is interested in identifying South Carolina minority vendors for participation in the procurement process.

If you are doing business with a vendor that you think may qualify as a minority, please indicate this on the purchase requisition. Any assistance that departments can provide in identifying these vendors will be greatly appreciated. <http://purchasing.sc.edu/smallminority.php>

Gifts

The officers, employees and agents of the university shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or parties to sub-agreements.

Vendor Relations

When a department feels a vendor has not satisfactorily delivered the goods or services as contracted, you should contact the Purchasing Office.

All correspondence or contact with vendors pertaining to a PO shall be carried on by the Purchasing Office. Direct correspondence regarding technical matters, requests for literature, etc. is accepted practice. You should refrain from correspondence that may be interpreted as committing the University to a purchase.

Personal Purchases

Purchasing does not enter into any negotiations or become involved in any transaction for the purchase of anything for the personal use of University staff. Certain items, which may be classified as personal accessories or expenses of a personal nature, are considered to be inappropriate use of University funds and, as such will be disallowed.

This guide has been prepared as a general source of basic information to help you obtain the best possible service from the Purchasing Office. If you cannot find instruction for your specific situation or if you have any questions, please call or visit us. The Purchasing Office is located in the Supply and Maintenance Building and personnel may be reached by calling 641-3397. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome.