

**Subject:** Purchasing

**Application:** Employees

The Westchester Library System (WLS) is committed to promoting a responsible procurement process based on receiving the highest-quality goods and services while assuring the prudent and economical use of revenues. The intent of this policy is to maximize the use of the WLS funds by employing efficient and professional procurement practices and providing sound safeguards against favoritism, extravagance, fraud and corruption, while allowing appropriate decision-making flexibility for WLS staff to function effectively. This policy controls the procurement of goods and services with WLS funds. Procurement of goods and services shall be subject to the requirements and restrictions in these guidelines.

Purchasing activities may be initiated by any WLS staff member with the approval of the appropriate Department Head and/or the Executive Director. Large hardware and software purchases are the responsibility of the Director of Information Technology and/or Network Administrator, in consultation with and approval of the Executive Director. In the absence of the Executive Director, the Chief Financial Officer shall consult on and approve purchases.

### **Competitive Bidding**

Under normal circumstances, contracts shall be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder. Circumstances under which a contract may not be awarded to lowest responsible bidder may include, but are not limited to: (1) vendor cannot comply with the full specifications set forth in the bid; (2) vendor cannot guarantee delivery of goods or services within the time frame or under the conditions established by WLS; (3) vendor's after-purchase support services are deemed inadequate; (4) vendor's terms of payment are disadvantageous to WLS; (5) vendor's performance in previous engagements are not satisfactory.

To the extent possible, WLS will not purchase goods or services from any vendor in which a Board member or staff member has disclosed or is known to have a full or partial actual or prospective business interest.

### **Quotes**

Competitive quotes are required when the estimated expenditure for a product or service exceeds certain thresholds, as noted below. This process allows WLS to obtain the best value for expenditure of its funds. The only exceptions to this process are for purchases in which there are fewer than the required number of competitors who offer a given product or service, or for purchases for which a "sole source" makes good business sense (see below).

### **Sole Source Suppliers or Fewer-than-Required Number of Vendors**

Under certain circumstances, it may be necessary to seek quotes from fewer than the required number of vendors or make a purchase from a sole source. Sole sourcing may make sense in a situation where a specific manufacturer's product is compatible with products already

owned by the system, where a specific vendor may have special expertise related to a specific project or initiative or in a situation where it is determined that seeking competitive quotes is not advantageous to WLS. In situations where a sole source or fewer vendors will be sought, approval of the Executive Director must be obtained in advance of any purchase being made.

<b>Dollar Amount Of Purchase</b>	<b>Quote Requirements</b>	<b>Purchase Order (PO) required?</b>	<b>Payment Options</b>
Less than \$2,000	No quotes	No	1. Petty Cash (for items under \$50) 2. Vendor invoice 3. Corporate credit card
\$2,000 - \$4,999	Minimum of 2 verbal quotes	No	Vendor invoice
\$5,000 - \$24,999	Minimum of 2 written price quotes	Yes	Invoice, PO & supporting delivery documents
\$25,000 - \$99,999	Minimum of 3 written price quotes	Yes	Invoice, PO & supporting delivery documents
\$100,000 and up	Formal bid process	Yes	Invoice, PO & supporting delivery documents

**Office and Other Supplies**

Office supplies are purchased on a monthly basis. Employees make requests on a form located in the supply room. Requests include the item description, name of requestor, requesting department and date. The Administrative Assistant for Information Technology compiles these requests and enters an online order for these items. The order is then routed to the Executive Assistant for approval and submission. When the ordered items are received, the Administrative Assistant for Information Technology reviews the order for accuracy and completeness, distributes the items to the various requestors, and submits back-up information on the order to the Operations Manager.

For purchases other than office supplies, the requestor first explores the possibility of purchasing through a New York State government agency contract or any other recognized government agencies or national discount programs for libraries which offer the potential for economies of scale.

**Cooperative Purchases for Member Libraries**

For items purchased on behalf of the member libraries, WLS recognizes that those purchases are subject to competitive bidding as outlined in General Municipal Law. Therefore, the following procedures will be implemented for these purchases:

<b>Dollar Amount Of Purchase</b>	<b>Quote Requirements</b>	<b>PO required?</b>	<b>Payment Options</b>
Less than \$2,000	No quotes	No	1. Petty cash (for items under \$50) 2. Vendor invoice 3. Corporate credit card
\$2,000 - \$9,999	Minimum of 2 verbal quotes	No	Vendor invoice
\$10,000 - \$19,999	Minimum of 2 written quotes	Yes	Invoice, PO & supporting delivery documents
\$20,000 and up	Formal bid process*	Yes	Invoice, PO & supporting delivery documents

\* Request for Proposal (RFP) or Request for Quotation (RFQ), publicly advertised, and a minimum of 3 quotations, with selected vendor approved by the Executive Director. If funds have not been previously approved by the WLS Board of Trustees, then selected vendor requires Board approval.

**Exclusions**

These guidelines do not apply to the following:

1. Purchases made through a New York State contract, when the State contract vendor offers specified goods or services at a lower cost, purchase at the lower rate is recommended, with appropriate documentation included with the purchase documents.
2. Purchases of computer hardware, related equipment and support, when standardization of equipment and support can be justified, a specification document outlining in detail the technical requirements, including when appropriate brand name specification, can be developed and with Board approval used as part of the RFP or RFQ for these goods and services.

**Awarding Contracts for Purchases made for WLS or Cooperative Purchases for Member Libraries**

The basis for all contract awards shall be the lowest responsible bid that meets the requirements outlined to the vendor(s) in a statement of specifications, a RFP or RFQ.

**Purchases for WLS or Cooperative Purchases for Member Libraries Not Subject to Bid**

1. Professional services which involve specialized expertise, use of professional judgment and/or high degree of creativity, such as: attorney, architect, engineer, land surveyor, trainer;
2. Situations when immediate action is required that cannot await competitive bidding;
3. Insurance - documentation shall include written quotations and specifications;

4. Sole-source purchases which may occur when there is no substantial equivalent, or when the product is available from only one source and deemed necessary to public interest, items included under this criteria may include, but not be limited to:
  - i. Electronic databases
  - ii. Digital content (ebooks, downloadable audiobooks, videos and music)
  - iii. Specialized hardware
5. Real property
6. Dues and memberships in trade or professional organizations
7. Library materials, including periodical subscriptions
8. Advertisements
9. Postage
10. Petty cash purchases
11. Utility services
12. Copyrighted materials, patented materials, art and artistic services
13. Employee benefits
14. Legal services
15. Fees and costs of job-related travel, seminars, registration and training

*Last approved: September 29, 2015*