



ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

County of Jefferson Board of Legislators Office of the County Administrator

Section: Purchasing

Issued: 12/1991

Subsection: 4.01 Policy, Control, & Quotations

Revised: 06/2011, 12/2018, 08/2024, 04/2025, 08/2026

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Policy is to establish a standardized and centralized purchasing system that ensures the efficient, cost-effective, and transparent procurement of goods and services. This Policy promotes compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws while fostering competition, fairness, and fiscal responsibility. The keynote of any successful purchasing system is cooperation and control. Control involves not only compliance with required purchasing procedures but also affects efficiency. "Administrative overburden" can ruin the effectiveness of the system as quickly as noncompliance.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all Jefferson County departments, agencies, and personnel involved in the procurement of goods and services.

POLICY AND CONTROL:

1. The County's Purchasing Agent shall be responsible for the development and administration of a centralized and standardized purchasing system. The Purchasing function is delegated to the Purchasing Agent and the two Buyers in the Purchasing Department.
2. The purchasing policies and procedures shall be in accordance with all applicable state and local laws and regulations.
3. The Purchasing Department shall procure materials, equipment, supplies, and services as required, at the best possible prices, from responsible suppliers and providers and maintain appropriate supporting documentation and records.
4. The purchase of materials, equipment, supplies, and public works contracts in excess of the competitive bidding thresholds per General Municipal Law, Section 103 shall be awarded only after public advertising, and the solicitation of formal bids in compliance with General Municipal Law, Section 103. Current thresholds are involving an estimated annual expenditure of \$20,000 or more for materials, equipment, and supplies and public works contracts involving an estimated annual expenditure of \$35,000 or more.
5. Requests for bid preparation are to be made directly to the Purchasing Department. The requesting department must allow a reasonable amount of time for the preparation and review of the bid package by the Purchasing Department. The following information is required from the requesting department:
 - a. Description of the items to be bid.

- b. What is to be included in the specifications. For example: sample or previously used specifications.
 - c. Date department requires delivery of goods and/or services.
 - d. List of suggested vendors when available.
 - e. The adopted budget amount for the goods and/or services.
6. The Purchasing Department shall be responsible for issuing Requests for Proposals (RFP) once a determination is made that an RFP rather than a formal competitive bid is appropriate. The RFP shall include specific language that identifies the method of award.
 7. Upon request, the Purchasing Department will work with County Departments to develop RFPs for Professional Service Contracts. Such RFPs will be developed by the individual Department and Purchasing and issued through the Purchasing Department. All other Professional Service Contracts will be documented by the individual Department.
 8. The Purchasing Department shall be responsible for all required public advertising, competitive bidding, bid solicitations and openings. The Purchasing Department shall secure and document the recommendations from the appropriate official for awarding bid contracts and award contracts within the annual appropriations authorized by the Board of Legislators

Per General Municipal Law § 103-d, all bids subject to competitive bidding must include the following statement, signed and affirmed by the bidder under penalty of perjury: NON-COLLUSION CERTIFICATION By submitting this bid, each bidder (and each person signing on their behalf) certifies—and in the case of a joint bid, each party certifies for its own organization—that to the best of their knowledge and belief:

- a. The prices in this bid have been arrived at independently without collusion, consultation, communication or agreement, for the purpose of restricting competition, as to any matter relating to such prices with any other bidder or with any competitor.
- b. Unless otherwise required by law, the prices which have been quoted in this bid have not been knowingly disclosed by the bidder and will not knowingly be disclosed by the bidder prior to opening, directly or indirectly, to any other bidder or to any competitor; and
- c. No attempt has been made or will be made by the bidder to induce any other person, partnership or corporation to submit or not to submit, a bid for the purpose of restricting competition.
- d. Jefferson County will accept sealed bids by utilizing the following methods:
 - i. In person

ii. Mail

iii. Electronically (excludes any purchase contracts necessary for the completion of a public works contract).

All bids must be delivered to the Purchasing office, as outlined on the County website, prior to the date and time specified in the bid solicitation. No late bids will be accepted. The electronic bidding process utilized by the County is compliant with General Municipal Law 103-d and with Article III of the State Technology Law, and article eight of the Labor Law, to ensure the integrity and privacy of the sealed bidding process.

9. Materials, supplies, equipment, and services which are not subject to competitive bidding, must still be procured in a manner which will serve the best interests of the public. To this end, in cases where competitive bidding for procurement of a good or service is not legally required, purchases will be made in accordance with this Policy.
10. Equal Opportunity shall be provided to ensure full and open competition for all responsible suppliers to do business with the County. The Purchasing Department may solicit bids or quotations from any responsible vendor and may develop a list(s) of suppliers that may be used for the procurement of specific goods and services. Any responsible supplier may be included on the list upon request.
11. Vendors who are included on the NYS Department of Labor List of Debarred Contractors are not eligible to provide quotes or services to the County. The County shall award contracts to the lowest responsible and responsive bidders. In determining responsibility, the County will conduct an affirmative review of the bidder's integrity, past performance, and legal authority to do business. The County reserves the right to perform additional discretionary background measures beyond a review of the New York State debarment list. The County maintains absolute discretion in evaluating a bidder's fitness for an award; no preference will be granted to any bidder who, despite meeting technical bid requirements, is deemed non-responsible by the County.
12. Any bidder wishing to protest an award must submit a written protest via email to the Purchasing Department within five (5) business days of the notice of intent to award. The protest must clearly state the grounds for the challenge. The Purchasing Agent will review the protest and issue a written determination within ten (10) business days upon receipt of protest. The County reserves the right to proceed with the contract award during the protest period if it is deemed in the best interest of the County.
13. When formal bidding procedures are not required by law, quotations shall be solicited and appropriately documented.
14. Purchases may be made through available state contracts of the NYS Office of General Services, GSA, or in accordance with Sub. 3 of GML 103 which allows the purchases of materials, equipment or supplies, or the contract for services, other than services subject to Article 9 of the Labor Law, through any municipality within New York State, whenever such purchases are in the best interest of the County.

- a. In lieu of obtaining quotations or issuing formal bids for the purchase of commodities or services not subject to Article 9 of the New York State Labor Law, the Purchasing Department is authorized to make such purchases using established national and regional cooperative contracts.
- b. As authorized by New York General Municipal Law 103, and in accordance with Jefferson County Local Law, purchase contracts may be awarded on the basis of best value, as defined in section 163 of the State Finance Law and as authorized in section 103 of the General Municipal Law, to a responsive and responsible bidder.

When the bid specifications state that the bid will be awarded on the basis of “best value”, the specifications will also include the criteria that will be used to award the bid. In assessing best value, when awarding the purchase contract, non-price factors can be considered. Non-price factors may include, but are not limited to, environmental benefits, energy efficiency, reliability of a product, efficiency of operation, difficulty/ease of maintenance, useful lifespan, ability to meet needs regarding timeliness of performance, and experience of a service provider with similar contracts.

The basis for “Best Value” shall reflect, wherever possible, objective and quantifiable analysis. Such basis may also identify a quantitative factor for offerors that are small businesses, certified minority-or women-owned business enterprises as defined in subdivisions one, seven, fifteen and twenty of section three hundred ten of the executive law or service-disabled veteran-owned business enterprises as defined in subdivision one of section forty of the veterans’ services law to be used in evaluation of offers for awarding of contracts and services

- c. In Accordance with GML 103(6), surplus and secondhand supplies, materials or equipment may be purchased without competitive bidding from the Federal Government, State of New York, or from any other political subdivision, district, or public benefit corporation.
- d. Blanket purchase orders are used for items which are frequently purchased from the same vendor on an “as needed” basis during a certain calendar period. A blanket purchase order eliminates the processing of many individual purchase orders and allows the departments flexibility in ordering and receiving commodities. The department(s) submitting blanket purchase requisitions for a particular commodity, on existing awarded county bid contracts, will not be allowed to purchase any other items on that blanket PO on the blanket purchase order issued. In such instances, the requesting department will be required to submit a separate purchase requisition.

Although a Department may request a purchase be made using a particular contract source, the decision as to the appropriate contract to be used will be that of the Purchasing Department who will appropriately document the reason for the determination.

15. Jefferson County will allow all other municipalities within New York State to “piggyback” on the contracts of Jefferson County in accordance with GML 103.
16. Contractual agreements for the leasing and/or lease/purchase of equipment shall be awarded by the Purchasing Department, in conformance with the bidding requirements of GML 103 or solicitation of quotations, whichever is applicable, within the appropriations authorized by the Board of Legislators.
17. Supplies used by county departments shall be uniform whenever consistent with operational needs and in the interest of efficiency and economy.
18. Control involves not only compliance with required purchasing policy but also affects the paperwork necessary. There are certain expenditures for which the processing of a purchase order may be unnecessary. The following expenses may be approved without purchase orders:
 - a. Employee expenses
 - b. Reimbursement of petty cash funds
 - c. Utility bills
 - d. Legal notices
 - e. Postage
 - f. Medical examinations and veterinarian fees
 - g. Interdepartmental charges
 - h. Intergovernmental charges
 - i. One-time purchases \$1000 and under that are not applicable to a blanket purchase order
 - j. Subscription renewals
 - k. Training and Travel
19. No official or employee shall be interested financially in any contract entered into by the County. All officials and employees shall comply with the provisions of the County’s code of ethics, and Procurement Conflict of Interest policy.
20. The Purchasing Department shall make available to other municipalities within the County the opportunity to participate, whenever practicable, in the County’s contracts or competitive bids.
21. Pursuant to Section 103 (4) of the General Municipal Law, Emergency Purchases are granted as an exception to competitive bidding. The following criteria will be considered for emergency purchases: the situation must arise out of an accident or unforeseen occurrence or condition, the circumstances must affect public buildings, public property, or the life, health, safety, or property of the County’s residents; and the situation must require immediate action which cannot await competitive bidding.

For consideration, the requisitioning department must request an Emergency Exception by using the “Competitive Bidding Exception Request Form.” The following information will be requested:

- a. Reason for emergency purchase.
- b. Department name and budget code.
- c. Complete description and cost of services or materials to be purchased.
- d. Name and address of selected vendor.

- e. The payment method used to procure the goods or services.

The Purchasing Agent or designee determines if the purchase is in fact an emergency and will either approve or reject the submitted form. Once the request is approved, the requisitioning department may contact the selected vendor to initiate the order.

When an emergency occurs outside of normal office hours, the department may proceed with an emergency purchase at the discretion of the Department Head or designee within the scope of this Section only. The Department Head or designee must email the Purchasing Agent within 3 business days with information outlined in 'a' through 'e' above.

- 22. In cases where a reasonably exhaustive and documented search discloses that a good or service is available only from a single vendor or in cases where there is common knowledge of the existence of a monopolistic situation for a particular good or service being sought, that good or service may be purchased from a single identified vendor or supplier without competitive bidding or solicitation of quotations. The Board of Legislators may also approve the standardization of a particular product based upon the recommendation of the Purchasing Department.

As provided by section 103 of GML, sole source purchases are permitted when there is only one valid source to procure goods and services. Justification for sole source purchases includes: purchase order is made to the original manufacturer or provider; there are no regional distributors, or parts/equipment are not interchangeable with similar parts of another manufacturer, or it is the only known item that will meet the specialized needs of the department or perform the intended function; purchases required by contractual obligations; or standardization approved by the County Legislature.

- a. Whenever a Department Head believes that materials or services they require are available from a sole source vendor, he/she shall complete a purchase requisition and forward it to the Purchasing Agent or designee for approval. Documentation must be attached to the requisition.
- b. When the Purchasing Department determines a sole source vendor, documentation must be attached to the requisition.
- c. Following approval, the purchase requisition or credit card transaction will be processed in the normal procedure.

A Single Source vendor may be a distributor/wholesaler/retailer that has a contractual agreement for a specific territory to the exclusion of others. A letter from the manufacturer must be on file with the purchase order and/or confirming the single source status. The Purchasing Department determines a single source vendor.

- 23. All purchases made using state or federal funding must be completed and monitored according to the Uniform Administrative Requirement Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Award (2CFR 200). Reference Appendix A.
- 24. All requests to purchase any technology-related equipment, software, or services must be

approved by the Information Technology Department.

25. General Municipal Law Section 103 allows for the County to standardize on a particular type of material or equipment. Standardization allows for purchase of a specific model or type of equipment or supply but does not limit the vendors. A standardization resolution must be approved by at least two-thirds of all Board members and must state the reasons of efficiency or economy. The adoption of such a resolution does not eliminate the necessity for conformance to the competitive bidding requirements.
26. In the event that a quote or invoice includes supplemental charges for tariffs, the County reserves the right to verify the validity and accuracy of such rates, request additional information from the vendor, and adjust the award or invoice to reflect the actual verified rate.
27. Claims for goods or services for over \$1000 for which no Purchase Order was issued are prohibited.
28. This policy and procedures shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the appropriate jurisdictional committee of the Board of Legislators. The County Administrator may from time to time solicit comments from Department heads concerning this policy and procedure.
29. The County will not be deemed responsible for commitments made circumventing procedures required under this policy.
30. Instances of failure to comply with this policy as identified by the County Auditor or Purchasing Agent shall be reported to the County Administrator. The County Administrator shall keep the Chairman of the Board and the appropriate jurisdictional committee of the Board advised as to compliance with this policy and procedures.

QUOTATION PROCEDURES:

1. Formal competitive bidding will be utilized whenever required by law and shall be conducted in accordance with the County's Administrative Policy. When determined to be in the interest of the County, the Purchasing Agent may require competitive bidding even when such bidding is not legally required.
2. The Department, with the assistance of the Purchasing Department, shall solicit quotes for required purchase of all materials, equipment and supplies, including the leasing of equipment and securing of contractual agreements for services in compliance with this Policy. The Department must upload the quote(s) and any other required documentation within the ERP system when requesting a Purchase Order. In instances where a quote is not required, as outlined below, decisions will be made based on reliable market information, and in the best interest of the County.
3. A quotation shall mean a statement, written or verbal with confirmation, by a vendor setting

forth the price and terms and conditions under which the vendor will furnish the goods or services.

4. The County Purchasing Agent and County Administrator shall be responsible for compliance with this Policy.
5. Quotes must be obtained for all items as outlined below unless they are available from an approved contract, including but not limited to:
 - a. New York State Contracts available through Office of General Services (OGS) <https://www.ogs.ny.gov/purchase/searchbrowse.asp>
 - b. Contract awarded by Jefferson County through the competitive bid process.
 - c. Contract awarded by another municipality (i.e., county, town, village) in which the contract allows for “piggybacking” to be extended to other municipalities.
 - d. Preferred Source pursuant to Sections 175(a) and 175(b) of the New York State Finance Law.
 - e. National Cooperatives.
6. Where required, a minimum of three providers shall be solicited. If three providers are not solicited, or if fewer than three responses are received conditions supporting fewer solicitation shall be documented and approved by the Purchasing Agent.
7. Public Works applies to those items or projects involving labor or both materials and labor where Prevailing Wages apply. The Purchasing Department will have the responsibility to obtain the Prevailing Wage Schedule.
8. Written quotations will contain a minimum of the following information:
 - a. A complete description of the item, or scope of services to be accomplished.
 - b. Special conditions; i.e. delivery, installation, trade-ins, discounts, shipping fees, etc.
 - c. Total cost.
9. All quotations shall be documented and attached to the applicable purchase order and shall be maintained in the Purchasing Department records files.
10. Quotations will serve as the basis for the selection of a supplier and will provide the supporting documentation for purchase orders and contracts issued by the Purchasing Department.
11. Exceptions to utilizing quotations based upon unusual circumstances such as lack of available vendors shall be approved in writing by the Purchasing Agent.
12. Professional services requiring special or technical skills, training, or expertise are not

subject to competitive bidding procedures. The Purchasing Agent will determine if the professional services exception applies under state requirements. It is the County's intent to seek competition either through the use of a Request for Proposals (RFP) or by requesting written or verbal quotations, when in the best interest of the County.

13. A "true lease" refers to a lease agreement where the lessee pays for the use of an asset without obtaining ownership rights over it. True leases are not subject to bidding under General Municipal Law. Jefferson County policy requires that, unless the lease is on an approved contract, quotes must be obtained and submitted to the Purchasing Department for review and approval. For a true lease exemption to be utilized, it must be in the best interest of the County.
14. If the lowest quotation is rejected, a memorandum shall be prepared by the Purchasing Department or other official involved in the contract award explaining in detail the reasons for rejection. Such a memorandum shall be filed with any contracts or purchase orders issued in connection with the procurement.

RESOLUTION REQUIREMENTS:

Resolutions of the Board of Legislators are often part of the purchasing process and as such, it is organizationally prudent to outline when resolution of the Board of Legislators is required. Resolutions are required when:

- a. Whenever the budget requires modification in excess of the authority of the Budget Officer.
- b. For authorization to sign a contract in excess of \$20,000, except for a contract with a State or Federal agency for a grant program previously authorized by the Board of Legislators that contains future authorization language.
- c. For policy changes, major initiatives, or potentially sensitive issues. Check with Administration for guidance.
- d. Other items as required by law. Check with Administration or County Attorney for guidance.

CONTRACTUAL SIGNING AUTHORITY

1. Contract Signatory & Review:

All vendor contracts must adhere to the following process:

- a. Upon County Attorney approval, Department Heads may approve and sign contracts that do not exceed \$10,000 on an annual basis.
- b. Upon County Attorney Approval, the County Administrator may approve and sign contracts that do not exceed \$20,000 on an annual basis.
- c. Contracts that exceed \$20,000 on an annual basis require approval of the Board of Legislators, review by the County Attorney, and signature of the Chairman of the

Board.

2. Departmental Exceptions to Signing Authority:

Certain departments are empowered with additional signing authority either statutorily, or through Board of Legislators action due to the nature of the business performed. In such instances, review by the County Attorney is still required as outlined in Section 1.

a. Airport-

- i. The Director of Aviation, or his designee, may enter into contracts, agreements, obligations, and other commitments on behalf of the County of Jefferson in regard to operations of the Watertown International Airport, the FBO, and all business transactions associated therewith, provided the financial obligation assumed against or revenue yielded to the County of Jefferson thereunder does not exceed \$55,000 per agreement, per year.
- ii. That for specific purpose of ordering, requisitioning and contracting for the purchase of aviation fuel, the aforementioned financial limitation shall not exceed \$175,000 per year, per order.

b. Social Services- 18 NYCRR Section 405.1(a) & 18 NYCRR section 346.4

- i. The Commissioner of Social Services, with the exception of foster care maintenance services and child care services, is authorized to purchase services for eligible individuals from local public agencies, private nonprofit agencies or organizations and private proprietary agencies. Foster care maintenance services may be purchased only from authorized agencies as defined in [SSL 370(10)]. Services for children with handicapping conditions provided in accordance with article 89 of the Education Law may be purchased from private proprietary agencies or organizations, and private nonprofit agencies or organizations. Specific child care services may be purchased only from those providers designated in Part 415 of NYCRR Title 18. Purchase of services and foster care maintenance must be made pursuant to a written contract in accordance with the requirements of 18 NYCRR 405.3.
- ii. The Support Collection Unit may enter into written purchase of service agreements with private providers to assist with the functions required under 18 NYCRR Part 415. 18 NYCRR section 347.4(b) entitled Cooperative agreements and purchase of service agreements provides that "[e]ach local social services district may enter into written purchase of service agreements with other local agencies or private providers to assist the local district with the child support functions for which it is responsible.

c. Highway Department-

- i. In compliance with the provisions of Locally Administered Federal Aid

Procedures Manual (LAFA) of the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), the authority to approve documents required for Federal or State aided transportation projects, is hereby delegated to the duly appointed County Highway Superintendent, with the exception of Non-Standard Feature Approval, Design Approval, and Contract Document Approval. Such documents for approval by the Superintendent include but are not limited to SEQR determinations, Right-of-Way Certificates, State and federal permits, utility relocation and/or railroad agreements and reimbursement requests. The excepted documents will be approved by the Chairman of the Board of Legislators.

DEFINITIONS:

1. "Best Value" shall mean the basis for awarding contracts for services to the offeror, which optimizes quality, cost and efficiency, among responsive and responsible offerors.
2. A "Blanket Purchase Order" shall mean a purchase order which is used to one vendor for a specific period for items frequently purchased.
3. "Competitive Bid" shall mean a formal written statement by a vendor setting forth their terms under which the vendor will furnish supplies or services. Competitive bid requirements and limits are established by state statute.
4. "Collusion" shall mean actions, contrary to law, of two or more persons to determine in advance the winning bidder or proposer of a contract, let, or to be let, for competitive bidding or proposals by the County or any other such acts prohibited by law.
5. An "Emergency Purchase" shall mean an exception to the competitive bidding process due to a situation arising out of an accident or unforeseen occurrence or condition, the circumstances must affect public buildings, public property, or the life, health, safety, or property of the County's residents; and the situation must require immediate action which cannot await competitive bidding.
6. "Electronic Bidding" shall mean sealed bids delivered to the Purchasing Office prior to the bid opening date, following the delivery method described by the County (sealed bids sent to the Purchasing Office via mail or in person will continue to be accepted.)
7. "Purchase Order" shall mean a formal notice to a vendor to furnish the supplies or services described in detail thereon.
8. "Quotation" shall mean an informal notice (either oral or written) by a vendor setting forth the terms under which he will furnish supplies or services.
9. "Request" shall mean a request to the Purchasing Agent for one or more items or services necessary to carry on or improve a particular function.
10. "Requestor" shall mean the Department head, or his authorized subordinate, initiating a request for goods or services.
11. "Sole Source" shall mean a procurement in which only one supplier can supply the required commodities or services
12. "Specifications" shall mean a written description of needed supplies, equipment or services setting forth in a clear and concise manner the characteristics of the items and/or services to be purchased and the circumstances under which the purchase will be made.
13. "Vendor" shall mean a supplier of goods or services.

REFERENCES:

1. County Law: Sections 362 (3), 408-a, 625
2. General Municipal Law: Sections 103, 103-d, 103 (4), 104, 104b, 105, 106
3. Jefferson County Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 353 of 1988 and No. 338 of 1991
4. Jefferson County Board of Legislators Resolution No. 105 of 2011 and No. 264 of 2018
5. New York State Technology Law: Section III
6. New York State Labor Law: Section 8
7. Jefferson County Board of Legislators Resolution No. 193 of 2024
8. Jefferson County Board of Legislators Resolution No. 101 of 2025
9. Jefferson County Board of Legislators Resolution No. 217 of 2026

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Ryan Piche
County Administrator

APPENDIX A

FEDERAL PURCHASING REGULATIONS

Any purchases to be made using State or Federal funding must be completed and monitored according to the Uniform Administrative Requirement, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Award (2 C.F.R. 200).

A link to the CFR can be found on the Jefferson County website.

All Federal Grant usage within Jefferson County is subject to these policies and procedures due to the fact that Jefferson County exceeds the annual threshold for this requirement.

For the purchasing of goods and services using Federal funding, all Jefferson County Purchasing Policies and Procedures are to be followed.

In addition, the following procedures must be followed:

1. Vendors must be vetted using the U.S. Federal Government's System for Award Management (SAM) before the purchase and/or contract is completed. Vendors must be run through this system before each purchase to ensure that they are not suspended or debarred from federally funded transactions. If a department is going to make a purchase using Federal funding, they must notify either the Purchasing Department or the County Treasurer and request a vendor check before the purchase is made. All vendors will be required to register on the SAM website.

2. Bonding Requirements for work performed are as follows:

- a. Bid Bond 5% of total bid
- b. Performance Bond 100% of total bid
- c. Payment Bond 100% of total bid

It is the responsibility of the requesting Department Head to ensure that all Federal Purchasing Regulations are followed for the purchase and monitoring of contractor performance as a result of that purchase.