



WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY

Purchase Order Policy

WHY DO WE USE PURCHASE ORDERS?

The use of purchase orders ensure that goods and services are selected responsibly, ethically, and take into consideration: value, price, service, terms, and adherence to University standards. A purchase order is a contractual agreement between Western New England and the vendor and is the communication to the seller of our purchase request.

WHEN IS A PURCHASE ORDER NEEDED?

A purchase order or “PO” is used for goods or services with a total expected cost of:

University Wide	\$10,000 and up
OIT / Facilities Mgmt.	\$20,000 and up

HOW DO I REQUEST A PURCHASE ORDER?

A “PO” is requested by initiating a Purchase Requisition or “REQ”.

HOW DO I INITIATE A PURCHASE REQUISITION?

Submit via E-mail to procurement@wne.edu. Type “PO” in the subject line and attach a completed electronic Purchase Requisition form (which can be found at <https://www.1.wne.edu/procurement/purchasing.cfm>), a W-9 if a new vendor, a price quotation from the vendor, and two additional competitive quotes if \$10,000 or more. E-mail must come from the authorized departmental buyer or dean/chair or department head.

HOW LONG WILL APPROVAL TAKE?

Providing the REQ is completed correctly, approval can take up to three business days. If follow-up or further clarification or approval is needed, this can delay the process.

Procurement Services will base approvals on the completion of the REQ inclusive of all required documentation (bids or quotes). The following information is required:

- Vendor’s name, address, E-mail address, fax and telephone numbers, W-9 (for new vendor) and contact person.
- Specifications written in clean and simple language that provides an accurate description of the physical, technical or functional components of the goods (including model numbers when appropriate) or services. This can be in the form of a price quotation or a “quote”
- Quantities with appropriate unit of measure.
- Branding, use of University logo, must be approved by Marketing and External Affairs.
- Delivery – contact person, location, and how shipment be delivered to campus.
- Appropriate general ledger account number for goods and/or services with available funds.
- Appropriate signatory authority – department head/chair or direct supervisor. Any change to a REQ will require the same approval process.
- REQs for purchases \$100,000 or more require the approval from the VP of Finance and Administration, if there is no fully executed contract or agreement.

WHAT IF THERE IS A CONTRACT OR AGREEMENT?

All fully executed contracts and agreement must be attached to the purchase order requisition. All contracts and agreements valued at \$100,000 or more must be approved by VP for Finance and Administration.

WHEN IS AN ADDITIONAL QUOTE OR COMPETITIVE BID REQUIRED?

ADDITIONAL QUOTES

- University Wide** **\$10,000-\$49,999 requires three written quotes**
- OIT/ Facilities Mgmt.** **\$25,000-\$99,999 require three written quotes**

COMPETITIVE BIDS

The University provides specifications to prospective vendors such as quantity, timeline, pricing, and terms with the intent of gaining the best and most competitive proposal for a specific project. A minimum of three qualified bids is required, a vendor that chooses not to bid would be considered one of the three minimum vendors.

- University Wide** **\$50,000 and over requires a bidding process for at least three vendors**
- OIT/ Facilities Mgmt.** **\$100,000 and over requires a bidding process for at least three vendors and pre-approval from the VP of Finance of Administration**

WHEN IS A BID NOT NEEDED?

- Sole Source (unique manufacturer), Sole Acceptable Source (vendor with expertise), or Sole Acceptable Brand – goods and/or services that are unique, compatibility with existing equipment standardization, quality, etc. (Sole Source vendors are approved by Procurement Services).
- Emergency Repair/Purchase – critical time frame to maintain operations. Lack of planning does not constitute an emergency.
- Software upgrades – due to licensing restrictions, software is available only from the manufacturer (needs approval from the CIO of OIT).
- Service agreement for specific manufacturer and Project Continuity to ensure University standards.
- Membership, accreditation, legal, or existing multi-year University contracts – not including entering into a new contract.
- Consortium Vendor: (E & I, MHEC, PACE, Sourcewell, US Communities, etc.).

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

- A requisition converted into a purchase order reduces the available budget funds in the account charged and creates an encumbrance.
- A purchase order can only be used in the fiscal year it is issued and will not roll over into a new fiscal year.
- No new purchase orders are issued in the month of June for the current fiscal year. Only PO's from the upcoming fiscal year will be issued.
- All purchase orders will be closed by June 30th, including those that have not been completed. In the event the PO is still active, the PO will be re-entered in the new fiscal year unless the vendor associated with that PO has been paid.

VENDOR SELECTION

Procurement Services partners with other higher education institutions and leverages greater buying power through consortiums. Contact Procurement Services for a list of preferred consortium vendors. E&I, Massachusetts Higher Education Consortium (MHEC), Purchasing Association of Cooperative Entities (PACE), etc.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES

Furniture, window treatments, rugs, etc. must pass state and local fire codes.

Purchase and receipt of controlled chemicals or hazardous materials requires a Materials Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). The Environmental, Safety, & Recycling Manager must be contacted to obtain this and for the materials to be released from Mail Services.

When ordering specialized or large equipment, contact Facilities Management for confirmation of equipment's requirements (i.e. electrical, HVAC, size/weight, etc.) to ensure that the unit will fit inside doorways and/or elevators and the location is structurally sound.

Firearms or weapons will **NOT** be purchased with the exception of Public Safety.

Trade-ins – Contact Procurement Services prior to trading in for serial number(s) and other information that is necessary.

SIGNATURE AUTHORITY

The intent of this section is to define when, and under what circumstances, contractual and purchase agreements encumbering the University require approvals in addition to that of the responsible individual with budgetary authority. Any person acting as an agent to the University with budgetary authorization may contact a vendor. These discussions however will be preliminary in nature, acting only as a starting point for University staff to learn more about a good or service.

No University employee may obligate the University to any contractual or purchase agreement for which available funds have not been identified and approved regardless of the dollar amount.

No University employee, regardless of their budgetary authority and the prior identification and approval of funds, may obligate the University to any contractual or purchase agreement that exceeds \$500,000 without the approval of the Vice President for Finance and Administration and the President.

The preceding clauses notwithstanding, any contractual or purchase agreement regardless of dollar amount that would obligate the University beyond regular and customary payments for goods and services must be approved by the appropriate member of President's Staff.

Subsequent to the satisfaction of the preceding clauses and as appropriate, in the absence or unavailability of the appropriate member of the President's Staff, the Vice President for Finance and Administration and/or the President shall sign on behalf of the University.

All documents executed under this policy must be maintained by the appropriate member of the President's Staff in accordance with the University's record retention policy.

Revised July 12, 2021