



WISCONSIN SCHOOL NUTRITION **IN A NUTSHELL**

Procurement: The Process of Purchasing Goods and Services for the School Meal Programs

Management of the Procurement Process

School Food Authorities (SFAs) that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP) are required to follow procurement procedures. Procurement procedures are different whether your SFA is self-operating, has a meal service agreement, or works with a buying group/cooperative (co-op).

Requirements

Nonprofit School Food Service Account (Fund 50 for Public SFAs)

Funds from the nonprofit school food service account used to purchase goods or services must be used according to the requirements in 2 CFR 200 and the regulations in 7 CFR Part 210, 215, 220. SFAs must ensure funds used from this account support the operation and improvement of the school meals program(s) and that all expenses are allowable (i.e., necessary, reasonable, and allocable).

Procurements that are not in accordance with the government wide and program specific requirements cannot be paid using nonprofit school food service account funds.

Written Policies and Procedures

SFAs are required to have a written Procurement Manual describing policies and procedures for purchasing. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction School Nutrition Team (DPI SNT) has created a procurement manual template that provides ideas and samples, procurement best practices, terms and definitions, and information on local, state, and federal regulations.

Procurement Methods

Before purchasing goods and services, SFAs must select the proper procurement method which often depends on the estimated dollar value of the procurement. Use the DPI SNT Procurement Methods Comparison Chart as a quick reference guide to select the proper procurement method. The DPI SNT Procurement webpage describes informal, formal, and noncompetitive methods in depth.

Purchasing Templates

DPI SNT has created various purchasing templates and known vendor lists for the procurement of bread, milk, and prime vendors. These templates and vendor lists are optional to assist SFAs in the procurement process. SFAs are required to use DPI purchasing templates for meal service

agreements like Food Service Management Companies (FSMCs), Vended Meal Agreements (VMAs), and Joint Meal Agreements (JMAs).

Equipment

For equipment purchased with funds from the nonprofit school food service account with a cost that exceeds the SFA's capital threshold (or \$10,000, whichever is less), SFAs must receive approval from DPI prior to purchase, or the equipment must be on DPI's Preapproval Equipment List. Review DPI's equipment preapproval list and equipment procurement process before purchasing equipment.

Buy American

In all procurement procedures, solicitations, and contract documents, SFAs are required to include language indicating that, to the maximum extent practicable, SFAs are required to purchase domestic commodities or products. SFAs must comply with the Buy American Provision when purchasing commercial food products served in the school meals programs and track all non-domestic product(s) purchased.

Procurement Review

DPI is required to conduct Procurement Reviews (PRs) of each SFA. The PR is separate from the DPI Administrative Review (AR) but follows a similar cycle (i.e., at least once every five years). Documentation requested during the PR is either from the prior or current school year. The SFA will be notified when being reviewed.

Procurement Training and Resources

Starting School Year 24-25, school nutrition program directors, management, and staff who work on NSLP procurement activities are required to complete procurement training annually as a part of Professional Standards. USDA and DPI SNT do not require a specific amount of procurement training hours.

SFAs identify which staff work on NSLP purchasing activities and how many hours of training they require. For example, staff with minimal involvement only need a brief refresher course whereas staff who have more complex purchasing responsibilities, a few hours may be appropriate. A variety of training formats are acceptable including seminars, webcasts, self-guided trainings like reviewing this nutshell, and in person trainings, etc. Review the [DPI SNT Procurement webpage](#) for trainings and resources for your food service operation.

Reviewing this Nutshell counts for 15 minutes of professional standards training. Record training hours on your Professional Standards Tracking Tool.

Questions?

Contact a DPI Contract Specialist at dpifns@dpi.wi.gov or (608) 267-9228 with any questions.

Note: You should always consult a legal professional before entering and signing any agreement.