

# ■ Procurement

## Helpful Definitions

- **Aggregate Purchase Amount** – The estimated or actual dollar value of any purchase or group of purchases capable of being secured from a single vendor on a given date or within a purchase period.
- **Approved Vendor List** – A list of vendors who have demonstrated the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of a proposed procurement, consideration being given to contractor integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance, and financial and technical resources. Vendors not on the list must be permitted to qualify as part of a particular procurement.
- **Certified Product Analysis Statement** – A Certified Product Analysis Statement form, signed and dated by the food manufacturer, can be utilized to document the contribution a commercially prepared food item makes toward meeting menu requirements. Unlike the CN labeled product, the Certified Product Analysis Statement provides no warranty against audit claims. However, should an audit exception be made following analysis of the product, the school district may have a legal recourse against the food manufacturers submitting the signed statement.
- **Code of Conduct** – Standards of conduct that shall govern the performance of the school district’s officers, employees or agents in contracting for payment and expending program funds. **State and federal procurement regulations require each school district to maintain a written code or standards of conduct.**
- **Commercial Item Descriptions** – Product descriptions that describe key, salient characteristics. USDA Food Quality Assurance Staff is researching industry standards on foods not covered by regulation and developing lengthy descriptions for products that include all their salient characteristics (sample on pages 24.10-24.14).
- **Competitive Proposals, i.e., a Request for Proposal** – Means a method of procurement whereby a technical proposal is solicited that explains how the prospective contractor will meet the objectives of the solicitation and a cost element that identifies the costs to accomplish the technical proposal. While price alone is not the sole basis for award, price remains the primary consideration when awarding a contract under the competitive proposal award.
- **Competitive Sealed Bids, i.e., and Invitation for Bid** – Means a formal method of procurement in which sealed bids are publicly solicited, i.e., through an Invitation to Bid, resulting in the award of a firm-fixed price contract to the responsible bidder whose bid is responsive to the IFB, conforms with all the material terms and conditions of the invitation for bids, and is lowest in price. In this case, the IFB must be publicly advertised and bids must be solicited from an adequate number of known suppliers, providing them with sufficient time to respond prior to the date set for the opening the bids.
- **Contract** – (1) a legally enforceable agreement between two (or more) parties where each promises to do (or not to do) something, (2) the writing or document containing such an agreement.
- **Drop Delivery** – Delivery to one location within the school district authority, such as a central warehouse. The school district assumes responsibility for delivery to the schools.
- **EEO Clause** – A provision required in instructions to the vendors for contracts that exceed the small purchase threshold or \$100,000, whichever is less. The provision or clause requires the vendor’s compliance with Executive Order 11246, entitled “Equal Employment Opportunity,” as amended by Executive Order 11375 and as supplemented in Department of Labor regulations (41 CFR Part 60). “No individual shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, subjected to discrimination under or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with, any such program because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap or political application or belief.”
- **Fixed- price** – Means a price that is fixed at the inception of a contract and is guaranteed for a specific period of time.
- **Formal Bid** – Common name for the purchase method of using competitive sealed bids. Formal bid or competitive sealed bid is one option allowed for contracting for goods and/or services by federal regulations whenever the aggregate purchase amount exceeds each district’s small purchase threshold or \$100,000, whichever is less.
- **Procurement** – Is the process of obtaining goods and/or services in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations.
- **Purchases of Produce** – As amended, effective October 1, 2008, the NSLA allows institutions receiving funds through the Child Nutrition Programs to apply a geographic preference when procuring

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unprocessed locally grown or locally raised agricultural products. This applies to operators of all of the Child Nutrition Programs, including the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, Special Milk Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, and Summer Food Service Program, as well as to purchases of fresh produce for these programs by the Department of Defense.

**Geographic preference may only be applied to the procurement of unprocessed agricultural products which are locally grown and locally raised.**

- **Request for Proposal – Competitive Proposals** – A method of procurement whereby a technical proposal is solicited that explains how the prospective contractor will meet the objectives of the solicitation and a cost element that identifies the costs to accomplish the technical proposal. While price alone is not the sole basis for award, price remains the primary consideration when awarding a contract under the competitive proposal award. In this instance, a school district may open the proposal upon receipt and begin the negotiation process for the offered goods/services.
- **Small Purchase Threshold** – Small purchases for securing services, supplies or other property that do not cost more than \$100,000 or do not exceed the local SFA small purchase threshold. When purchases are under this amount, price or rate quotations shall be obtained from an adequate number of qualified sources and purchase procedures are relatively simple and informal. Documentation must be retained 3016.36(b)(9).
- **Specification** – A clear and simple description of an item or service that is identifiable with the current market, is capable of being checked, is fair and protective, and allows maximum competition in purchasing. The use of clear specifications is required with any method of purchasing.
- **Standards of Identity** – Food standards that are regulated by the FDA which describe the nature and character of a given item and specify the kinds and amounts of ingredients that must go into a product. The standard of identity for a specific food tells what is in it, how it is made, how the product looks and sets limits, such as fat and moisture content.
- **Terms and Conditions** – As they pertain to the vender, specific requirements in the contract that are binding and communicate the district's expectations in regard to the vendor's performance in connection with the district's purchase. Examples of foodservice specific terms and conditions might include inspections for wholesomeness, conditions of delivery, requirements for packaging and provisions for making substitutions when necessary.

Federal Procurement Standards Sec. 3016.36

(a) *States.* When procuring property and services under a grant, a State will follow the same policies and procedures it uses for procurements from its non-Federal funds. The State will ensure that every purchase order or other contract includes any clauses required by Federal statutes and executive orders and their implementing regulations. Other grantees and subgrantees will follow paragraphs (b) through (i) in this section.

(b) *Procurement standards.* (1) Grantees and subgrantees will use their own procurement procedures which reflect applicable State and local laws and regulations, provided that the procurements conform to applicable Federal law and the standards identified in this section.

(2) Grantees and subgrantees will maintain a contract administration system which ensures that contractors perform in accordance with the terms, conditions, and specifications of their contracts or purchase orders.

(3) Grantees and subgrantees will maintain a written code of standards of conduct governing the performance of their employees engaged in the award and administration of contracts. No employee, officer or agent of the grantee or subgrantee shall participate in selection, or in the award or administration of a contract supported by Federal funds if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, would be involved. Such a conflict would arise when:

- (i) The employee, officer or agent,
  - (ii) Any member of his immediate family,
  - (iii) His or her partner, or
  - (iv) An organization which employs, or is about to employ, any of the above, has a financial or other interest in the firm selected for award.
- The grantee's or subgrantee's officers, employees or agents will neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value from contractors, potential contractors, or parties to subagreements. Grantee and subgrantees may set minimum rules where the financial interest is not substantial or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal intrinsic value. To the extent permitted by State or local law or regulations, such standards or conduct will provide for penalties, sanctions, or other disciplinary actions for violations of such standards by the grantee's and subgrantee's officers, employees, or agents, or by contractors or their agents. The awarding agency

may in regulation provide additional prohibitions relative to real, apparent, or potential conflicts of interest.

(4) Grantee and subgrantee procedures will provide for a review of proposed procurements to avoid purchase of unnecessary or duplicative items. Consideration should be given to consolidating or breaking out procurements to obtain a more economical purchase. Where appropriate, an analysis will be made of lease versus purchase alternatives, and any other appropriate analysis to determine the most economical approach.

(5) To foster greater economy and efficiency, grantees and subgrantees are encouraged to enter into State and local intergovernmental agreements for procurement or use of common goods and services.

(6) Grantees and subgrantees are encouraged to use Federal excess and surplus property in lieu of purchasing new equipment and property whenever such use is feasible and reduces project costs.

(7) Grantees and subgrantees are encouraged to use value engineering clauses in contracts for construction projects of sufficient size to offer reasonable opportunities for cost reductions. Value engineering is a systematic and creative analysis of each contract item or task to ensure that its essential function is provided at the overall lower cost.

(8) Grantees and subgrantees will make awards only to responsible contractors possessing the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of a proposed procurement. Consideration will be given to such matters as contractor integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance, and financial and technical resources.

(9) Grantees and subgrantees will maintain records sufficient to detail the significant history of a procurement. These records will include, but are not necessarily limited to the following: rationale for the method of procurement, selection of contract type, contractor selection or rejection, and the basis for the contract price.

(10) Grantees and subgrantees will use time and material type contracts only –

- (i) After a determination that no other contract is suitable, and

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(ii) If the contract includes a ceiling price that the contractor exceeds at its own risk.

(11) Grantees and subgrantees alone will be responsible, in accordance with good administrative practice and sound business judgment, for the settlement of all contractual and administrative issues arising out of procurements. These issues include, but are not limited to source evaluation, protests, disputes, and claims. These standards do not relieve the grantee or subgrantee of any contractual responsibilities under its contracts. Federal agencies will not substitute their judgment for that of the grantee or subgrantee unless the matter is primarily a Federal concern. Violations of law will be referred to the local, State, or Federal authority having proper jurisdiction.

(12) Grantees and subgrantees will have protest procedures to handle and resolve disputes relating to their procurements and shall in all instances disclose information regarding the protest to the awarding agency. A protestor must exhaust all administrative remedies with the grantee and subgrantee before pursuing a protest with the Federal agency. Reviews of protests by the Federal agency will be limited to:

(i) Violations of Federal law or regulations and the standards of this section (violations of State or local law will be under the jurisdiction of State or local authorities) and

(ii) Violations of the grantee's or subgrantee's protest procedures for failure to review a complaint or protest. Protests received by the Federal agency other than those specified above will be referred to the grantee or subgrantee.

(c) *Competition.* (1) All procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner providing full and open competition consistent with the standards of §3016.36. Some of the situations considered to be restrictive of competition include but are not limited to:

(i) Placing unreasonable requirements on firms in order for them to qualify to do business,

(ii) Requiring unnecessary experience and excessive bonding,

(iii) Noncompetitive pricing practices between firms or between affiliated companies,

(iv) Noncompetitive awards to consultants that are on retainer contracts,

(v) Organizational conflicts of interest,

(vi) Specifying only a "brand name" product instead of allowing "an equal" product to be offered and describing the performance of other relevant requirements of the procurement, and

(vii) Any arbitrary action in the procurement process.

(2) Grantees and subgrantees will conduct procurements in a manner that prohibits the use of statutorily or administratively imposed in-State or local geographical preferences in the evaluation of bids or proposals, except in those cases where applicable Federal statutes expressly mandate or encourage geographic preference. Nothing in this section preempts State licensing laws. When contracting for architectural and engineering (A/E) services, geographic location may be a selection criteria provided its application leaves an appropriate number of qualified firms, given the nature and size of the project, to compete for the contract.

(3) Grantees will have written selection procedures for procurement transactions. These procedures will ensure that all solicitations:

(i) Incorporate a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product, or service to be procured. Such description shall not, in competitive procurements, contain features which unduly restrict competition. The description may include a statement of the qualitative nature of the material, product or service to be procured, and when necessary, shall set forth those minimum essential characteristics and standards to which it must conform if it is to satisfy its intended use. Detailed product specifications should be avoided if at all possible. When it is impractical or uneconomical to make a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements, a "brand name or equal" description may be used as a means to define the performance or other salient requirements of a procurement. The specific features of the named brand which must be met by offerors shall be clearly stated; and

(ii) Identify all requirements which the offerors must fulfill and all other factors to be used in evaluating bids or proposals.

(4) Grantees and subgrantees will ensure that all prequalified lists of persons, firms, or products which are used in acquiring goods and services are current and include enough qualified sources to ensure maximum open and free competition. Also, grantees and subgrantees will not preclude potential bidders from qualifying during the solicitation period.

(5) Grantees and subgrantees will ensure that all prequalified lists of persons, firms, or products which are used in acquiring goods and services are current and include enough qualified sources to ensure maximum open and free competition. Also, grantees and subgrantees will not preclude potential bidders from qualifying during the solicitation period.

(d) *Methods of procurement to be followed.* (1) Procurement by *small purchase procedures.* Small purchase procedures are those relatively simple and informal procurement methods for securing services, supplies, or other property that do not

cost more than the simplified acquisition threshold fixed at 41 U.S.C. 403(11) (currently set at \$100,000). If small purchase procedures are used, price or rate quotations shall be obtained from an adequate number of qualified sources.

(2) Procurement by *sealed bids* (formal advertising). Bids are publicly solicited and a firm-fixed-price contract (lump sum or unit price) is awarded to the responsible bidder whose bid, conforming with all the material terms and conditions of the invitation for bids, is the lowest in price. The sealed bid method is the preferred method for procuring construction, if the conditions in §3016.36(d)(2)(i) apply.

(i) In order for sealed bidding to be feasible, the following conditions should be present:

(A) A complete, adequate, and realistic specification or purchase description is available;

(B) Two or more responsible bidders are willing and able to compete effectively and for the business; and

(C) The procurement lends itself to a firm fixed price contract and the selection of the successful bidder can be made principally on the basis of price.

(ii) If sealed bids are used, the following requirements apply:

(A) The invitation for bids will be publicly advertised and bids shall be solicited from an adequate number of known suppliers, providing them sufficient time prior to the date set for opening the bids;

(B) The invitation for bids, which will include any specifications and pertinent attachments, shall define the items or services in order for the bidder to properly respond;

(C) All bids will be publicly opened at the time and place prescribed in the invitation for bids;

(D) A firm fixed-price contract award will be made in writing to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. Where specified in bidding documents, factors such as discounts, transportation cost, and life cycle costs shall be considered in determining which bid is lowest. Payment discounts will only be used to determine the low bid when prior experience indicates that such discounts are usually taken advantage of; and

(E) Any or all bids may be rejected if there is a sound documented reason.

(3) Procurement by *competitive proposals*. The technique of competitive proposals is normally conducted with more than one source submitting an offer, and either a fixed-price or cost-reimbursement type contract is awarded. It is

generally used when conditions are not appropriate for the use of sealed bids. If this method is used, the following requirements apply:

(i) Requests for proposals will be publicized and identify all evaluation factors and their relative importance. Any response to publicized requests for proposals shall be honored to the maximum extent practical;

(ii) Proposals will be solicited from an adequate number of qualified sources;

(iii) Grantees and subgrantees will have a method for conducting technical evaluations of the proposals received and for selecting awardees;

(iv) Awards will be made to the responsible firm whose proposal is most advantageous to the program, with price and other factors considered; and

(v) Grantees and subgrantees may use competitive proposal procedures for qualifications-based procurement of architectural/engineering (A/E) professional services whereby competitors' qualifications are evaluated and the most qualified competitor is selected, subject to negotiation of fair and reasonable compensation. The method, where price is not used as a selection factor, can only be used in procurement of A/E professional services. It cannot be used to purchase other types of services though A/E firms are a potential source to perform the proposed effort.

(4) Procurement by *noncompetitive proposals* is procurement through solicitation of a proposal from only one source, or after solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate.

(i) Procurement by noncompetitive proposals may be used only when the award of a contract is infeasible under small purchase procedures, sealed bids or competitive proposals and one of the following circumstances applies:

(A) The item is available only from a single source;

(B) The public exigency or emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation;

(C) The awarding agency authorizes noncompetitive proposals; or

(D) After solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate.

(ii) Cost analysis, *i.e.*, verifying the proposed cost data, the projections of the data, and the evaluation of the specific elements of costs and profits, is required.

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(iii) Grantees and subgrantees may be required to submit the proposed procurement to the awarding agency for pre-award review in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(e) *Contracting with small and minority firms, women's business enterprise and labor surplus area firms.* (1) The grantee and subgrantee will take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that minority firms, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible.

(2) Affirmative steps shall include:

(i) Placing qualified small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises on solicitation lists;

(ii) Assuring that small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises are solicited whenever they are potential sources;

(iii) Dividing total requirements, when economically feasible, into smaller tasks or quantities to permit maximum participation by small and minority business, and women's business enterprises;

(iv) Establishing delivery schedules, where the requirement permits, which encourage participation by small and minority business, and women's business enterprises;

(v) Using the services and assistance of the Small Business Administration, and the Minority Business Development Agency of the Department of Commerce; and

(vi) Requiring the prime contractor, if subcontracts are to be let, to take the affirmative steps listed in paragraphs (e)(2) (i) through (v) of this section.

(f) *Contract cost and price.* (1) Grantees and subgrantees must perform a cost or price analysis in connection with every procurement action including contract modifications. The method and degree of analysis is dependent on the facts surrounding the particular procurement situation, but as a starting point, grantees must make independent estimates before receiving bids or proposals. A cost analysis must be performed when the offeror is required to submit the elements of his estimated cost, e.g., under professional, consulting, and architectural engineering services contracts. A cost analysis will be necessary when adequate price competition is lacking, and for sole source procurements, including contract modifications or change orders, unless price reasonableness can be established on the basis of a catalog or market price of a commercial product sold in substantial quantities to the general public or based on prices set by law or regulation. A price analysis will be

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used in all other instances to determine the reasonableness of the proposed contract price.

(2) Grantees and subgrantees will negotiate profit as a separate element of the price for each contract in which there is no price competition and in all cases where cost analysis is performed. To establish a fair and reasonable profit, consideration will be given to the complexity of the work to be performed, the risk borne by the contractor, the contractor's investment, the amount of subcontracting, the quality of its record of past performance, and industry profit rates in the surrounding geographical area for similar work.

(3) Costs or prices based on estimated costs for contracts under grants will be allowable only to the extent that costs incurred or cost estimates included in negotiated prices are consistent with Federal cost principles (see §3016.22). Grantees may reference their own cost principles that comply with the applicable Federal cost principles.

(4) The cost plus a percentage of cost and percentage of construction cost methods of contracting shall not be used.

(g) *Awarding agency review.* (1) Grantees and subgrantees must make available, upon request of the awarding agency, technical specifications on proposed procurements where the awarding agency believes such review is needed to ensure that the item and/or service specified is the one being proposed for purchase. This review generally will take place prior to the time the specification is incorporated into a solicitation document. However, if the grantee or subgrantee desires to have the review accomplished after a solicitation has been developed, the awarding agency may still review the specifications, with such review usually limited to the technical aspects of the proposed purchase.

(2) Grantees and subgrantees must on request make available for awarding agency pre-award review procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc. when:

(i) A grantee's or subgrantee's procurement procedures or operation fails to comply with the procurement standards in this section; or

(ii) The procurement is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold and is to be awarded without competition or only one bid or offer is received in response to a solicitation; or

(iii) The procurement, which is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold, specifies a "brand name" product; or

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(iv) The proposed award is more than the simplified acquisition threshold and is to be awarded to other than the apparent low bidder under a sealed bid procurement; or

(v) A proposed contract modification changes the scope of a contract or increases the contract amount by more than the simplified acquisition threshold.

(3) A grantee or subgrantee will be exempt from the pre-award review in paragraph (g)(2) of this section if the awarding agency determines that its procurement systems comply with the standards of this section.

(i) A grantee or subgrantee may request that its procurement system be reviewed by the awarding agency to determine whether its system meets these standards in order for its system to be certified. Generally, these reviews shall occur where there is a continuous high-dollar funding, and third-party contracts are awarded on a regular basis.

(ii) A grantee or subgrantee may self-certify its procurement system. Such self-certification shall not limit the awarding agency's right to survey the system. Under a self-certification procedure, awarding agencies may wish to rely on written assurances from the grantee or subgrantee that it is complying with these standards. A grantee or subgrantee will cite specific procedures, regulations, standards, etc., as being in compliance with these requirements and have its system available for review.

(h) *Bonding requirements.* For construction or facility improvement contracts or subcontracts exceeding the simplified acquisition threshold, the awarding agency may accept the bonding policy and requirements of the grantee or subgrantee provided the awarding agency has made a determination that the awarding agency's interest is adequately protected. If such a determination has not been made, the minimum requirements shall be as follows:

(1) *A bid guarantee from each bidder equivalent to five percent of the bid price.* The "bid guarantee" shall consist of a firm commitment such as a bid bond, certified check, or other negotiable instrument accompanying a bid as assurance that the bidder will, upon acceptance of his bid, execute such contractual documents as may be required within the time specified.

(2) *A performance bond on the part of the contractor for 100 percent of the contract price.* A "performance bond" is one executed in connection with a contract to secure fulfillment of

all the contractor's obligations under such contract.

(3) *A payment bond on the part of the contractor for 100 percent of the contract price.* A "payment bond" is one executed in connection with a contract to assure payment as required by law of all persons supplying labor and material in the execution of the work provided for in the contract.

(i) *Contract provisions.* A grantee's and subgrantee's contracts must contain provisions in paragraph (i) of this section. Federal agencies are permitted to require changes, remedies, changed conditions, access and records retention, suspension of work, and other clauses approved by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy.

(1) Administrative, contractual, or legal remedies in instances where contractors violate or breach contract terms, and provide for such sanctions and penalties as may be appropriate. (Contracts more than the simplified acquisition threshold)

(2) Termination for cause and for convenience by the grantee or subgrantee including the manner by which it will be effected and the basis for settlement. (All contracts in excess of \$10,000)

(3) Compliance with Executive Order 11246 of September 24, 1965, entitled "Equal Employment Opportunity," as amended by Executive Order 11375 of October 13, 1967, and as supplemented in Department of Labor regulations (41 CFR chapter 60). (All construction contracts awarded in excess of \$10,000 by grantees and their contractors or subgrantees)

(4) Compliance with the Copeland "Anti-Kickback" Act (18 U.S.C. 874) as supplemented in Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR Part 3). (All contracts and subgrants for construction or repair)

(5) Compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. 276a to 276a-7) as supplemented by Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR Part 5). (Construction contracts in excess of \$2000 awarded by grantees and subgrantees when required by Federal grant program legislation)

(6) Compliance with Sections 103 and 107 of the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. 327-330) as supplemented by Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR Part 5). (Construction contracts awarded by grantees and subgrantees in excess of \$2000, and in excess of \$2500 for other contracts which involve the employment of mechanics or laborers)

(7) Notice of awarding agency requirements and regulations pertaining to reporting.

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(8) Notice of awarding agency requirements and regulations pertaining to patent rights with respect to any discovery or invention which arises or is developed in the course of or under such contract.

(9) Awarding agency requirements and regulations pertaining to copyrights and rights in data.

(10) Access by the grantee, the subgrantee, the Federal grantor agency, the Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their duly authorized representatives to any books, documents, papers, and records of the contractor which are directly pertinent to that specific contract for the purpose of making audit, examination, excerpts, and transcriptions.

(11) Retention of all required records for three years after grantees or subgrantees make final

payments and all other pending matters are closed.

(12) Compliance with all applicable standards, orders, or requirements issued under section 306 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 1857(h)), section 508 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1368), Executive Order 11738, and Environmental Protection Agency regulations (40 CFR part 15). (Contracts, subcontracts, and subgrants of amounts in excess of \$100,000)

(13) Mandatory standards and policies relating to energy efficiency which are contained in the state energy conservation plan issued in compliance with the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (Pub. L. 94-163, 89 Stat. 871).

[53 FR 8044, 8087, Mar. 11, 1988, as amended at 60 FR 19639, 19641, Apr. 19, 1995]

### Debarment and Suspension

“Debarment and suspension” actions have received a lot of attention recently as a result of state and federal investigations and prosecutions of dairies, bakeries and related individuals involved in bid rigging on contracts to supply food products to local school districts participating in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. The purpose of this information is to explain how the USDA handles debarment and suspension actions and how these administrative actions affect school districts.

Debarment and suspension actions result in the exclusion of companies or individuals from participating in certain transactions involving federal nonprocurement programs at both the state agency and school district levels. These actions are not imposed as punishment but rather are initiated in the public interest and to protect the federal government.

In general, debarment and suspension actions are imposed on companies and individuals for causes set forth in the nonprocurement debarment and suspension regulations. Nonprocurement generally means activities that involve federal assistance other than direct federal procurement. Such causes include a conviction or civil judgment for violation of federal or state antitrust statutes as well as other offenses and activities indicating a lack of business integrity.

A school district is prohibited from contracting with a company or individual that has been debarred or suspended. This prohibition does not extend to contracts in existence at the time of the debarment/suspension. Rather, it applies to new contracts and extensions or renewals of existing contracts equaling or exceeding the district’s small purchase threshold or \$25,000 - whichever is lower. It also applies to contracts for audit services, regardless of dollar amount.

Furthermore, the prohibition does not apply to **proposed** debarments.

While a school district is prohibited from contracting with a company or individual that has been debarred or suspended, a debarment, suspension or **proposed** debarment action does not excuse a company or individual from fulfilling existing contracts involving federal nonprocurement programs.

However, as indicated above, the school district may not extend or renew an existing contract with a debarred or suspended company or individual.

To ensure that the school district does not enter into a contract with a debarred or suspended company or individual, each school district must conform to one of three options for each covered procurement.

1. Check the “Excluded Parties List System” (EPLS). The EPLS is available on the Internet at: <http://epls.arnet.gov>. This is the simplest and recommended method. Document the date and results.
2. Collect a certification that the entity is neither excluded nor disqualified. The school district would need to devise its own form, as the previous federal form is no longer in use.
3. Include a clause to this effect in the procurement document/contract.



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## Certification Regarding Lobbying

The “Certification Regarding Lobbying” form shall be completed only if the vendor is lobbying on behalf of a specific school district. *See certification regarding lobbying form on page 24.18.*

## Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

The “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities” form must be completed to disclose lobbying activities pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352. *For form and instructions, see pages 24.19-24.20*

## Buy American Requirement

The Buy American provisions are found in the regulations of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) at 7 CFR 210.21(d) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) at 7 CFR 220.16(d). Districts/Sponsors must ensure that all procurements using funds from the nonprofit school food service account comply with the Buy American provisions to the maximum extent practicable. This includes foods that are sold to students as a la carte food items.

Actions that districts/sponsors can take to comply with the Buy American requirements are:

- Including a Buy American clause in all procurement documents (product specifications, bid solicitations, requests for proposals, purchase orders, etc.);
- Monitoring contractor performance;
- Requiring suppliers to certify the origin of the product;
- Examining product packaging for identification of the country of origin; and
- Asking the supplier for specific information about the percentage of U.S. content in the food product.

## National Food Service Management Institute Resources

- Choice Plus: A Reference Guide for Foods and Ingredients
- Cooperative Purchasing for Child Nutrition Programs
- First Choice: A Purchasing Systems Manual for School Food Service- second edition now available
- Guide for Purchasing Foodservice Equipment
- NFSMI Insight – Purchasing Decisions for Cost-effective Implementation of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Quality Receiving Practices for Healthy School Meals



### LOCAL PURCHASING

**Q:** *According to the new farm bill regulation, institutions receiving funds through the Child Nutrition Programs may apply a geographic preference when procuring unprocessed locally grown or locally raised agricultural products. Does this mean competition does not need to occur and schools can simply pick a farmer to provide them with fresh, unprocessed vegetables?*

**A:** *No. The most important principle to a good procurement is that it is competitive and allows for free and open competition. An institution must still get quotes from several farmers when procuring unprocessed locally grown or locally raised agricultural products, so that competitors have an opportunity to compete for the bid.*

**Q:** *According to the new Farm Bill regulations, institutions receiving funds through the Child Nutrition Programs may apply a geographic preference when procuring unprocessed locally grown or raised agricultural products. How is “local” defined? For example, could a school only accept bids/offers for unprocessed agricultural products from local farmers within a 50 mile radius?*

**A:** *Due to the geographic diversity in each state, the institution responsible for the procurement has the discretion to define the area for any geographic preference (e.g., state, county, region, etc.). However, it is important to keep in mind that local preference should not be defined in a way that unnecessarily limits competition.*

**BUY AMERICAN**



**Q:** Section 104(d) of the William F. Goodling Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-336) added a Buy American provision, Section 12(n) of the NSLA (42 USC 1760 (n)) requiring that a school food authority, to the maximum extent practicable, purchases domestic USDA foods or products. Does this provision extend to other products like paper plates, equipment, or software?

**A:** No. The Buy American provision applies to domestic USDA foods or products, meaning an agricultural commodity that is produced in the United States, and a food product that is processed in the United States substantially using agricultural USDA foods that are produced in the United States.

**Q:** A report accompanying the Buy American provision also states that a food product processed in the United States “substantially” using agricultural USDA foods produced in the United States means that over 51% of the final processed product consists of agricultural USDA foods that were grown domestically. Should the packaging of a product be factored in as a portion of this final processed product?

**A:** No. The packaging of a product is not included in the requirement that over 51% of the final processed product consists of domestic agricultural USDA foods.

**TRANSFERRING EQUIPMENT**

**Q:** A new charter school in a district is starting its operations using a public school building; however, the district stripped the building of all food equipment, desks and chairs, etc. the state would like to survey other districts in the area in search of surplus equipment used in connection with other Federal programs to ensure the charter school is able to provide meals under the NSLP and SBP. The charter school does have an agreement with the state agency to participate in the programs provided they get the equipment. Is it permissible for the charter school to receive surplus equipment that is transferred from the public schools?

**A:** If the charter school plans to participate in both the NSLP and SBP, then yes, it is fine for the state to locate surplus equipment to ensure that the charter school can function and provide meals under these programs. According to 3016.32(c)(1), when the equipment is no longer needed for the original program or project, the equipment may be used in other activities currently or previously supported by a Federal agency. Therefore, since the charter school is seeking surplus equipment for the purpose of being utilized in a federally sponsored activity (that is, school food service), this transaction is acceptable.

**Q:** Can a school board sell school food service equipment to a non-profit organization for less than the market value?

**A:** It depends upon the current per-unit fair market value. 7 CFR 3016.32(e)(1) sets forth that items of equipment with a current per-unit fair market value of less than \$5000 may be retained, sold, or otherwise disposed of with no further obligation to the awarding agency. This means that as long as the current fair market value of the equipment is less than \$5000, it may be sold for less than the market value. However, 7 CFR 3016.32(e)(2) states that items of equipment with a current per-unit fair market value in excess of \$5000 may be retained or sold and the awarding agency shall have the right to an amount calculated by multiplying the current market value or proceeds from the sale by the awarding agency’s share of the equipment.

# PROCUREMENT

## CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

**Applicable to Grants, Subgrants, Cooperative Agreements, and  
Contracts Exceeding \$100,000 in Federal Funds.**

Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction and is imposed by Section 1352, Title 31, U.S. Code. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

- (1) No federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of a Federal contract, the making of a Federal grant, the making of a Federal loan, the entering into a cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of a Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
- (2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of congress, or an employee of a Member of congress in connection with this Federal grant or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying", in accordance with its instructions.
- (3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all covered subawards exceeding \$100,000 in Federal funds at all appropriate tiers and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

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Company

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Address of Company

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City

State

Zip Code

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Name of Submitting Official

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Title of Submitting Official

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Signature

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Date

# PROCUREMENT

## DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES

Complete this form to disclose lobbying activities pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352

Approved by OMB  
0348-0046

(See reverse for public burden disclosure.)

<b>1. Type of Federal Action:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> a. contract <input type="checkbox"/> b. grant <input type="checkbox"/> c. cooperative agreement <input type="checkbox"/> d. loan <input type="checkbox"/> e. loan guarantee <input type="checkbox"/> f. loan insurance	<b>2. Status of Federal Action:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> a. bid/offer/application <input type="checkbox"/> b. initial award <input type="checkbox"/> c. post-award	<b>3. Report Type:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> a. initial filing <input type="checkbox"/> b. material change <b>For Material Change Only:</b> year _____ quarter _____ date of last report _____
<b>4. Name and Address of Reporting Entity:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Prime <input type="checkbox"/> Subawardee Tier _____, if known:  Congressional District, if known:	<b>5. If Reporting Entity in No. 4 is a Subawardee, Enter Name and Address of Prime:</b>  Congressional District, if known:	
<b>6. Federal Department/Agency:</b>	<b>7. Federal Program Name/Description:</b>  CFDA Number, if applicable: _____	
<b>8. Federal Action Number, if known:</b>	<b>9. Award Amount, if known:</b> \$ _____	
<b>10. a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant</b> <i>(if individual, last name, first name, MI):</i>	<b>b. Individuals Performing Services</b> <i>(including address if different from No. 10a)</i> <i>(last name, first name, MI):</i>	
<b>11.</b> Information requested through this form is authorized by title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. This disclosure of lobbying activities is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed by the fir above when this transaction was made or entered into. This disclosure is required pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352. This information will be available for public inspection. Any person who fails to file the required disclosure shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.	Signature: _____ Print Name: _____ Title: _____ Telephone No.: _____ Date: _____	
<b>Federal Use Only:</b>		Authorized for Local Reproduction Standard Form LLL (Rev. 7-97)

# PROCUREMENT

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION OF SF-LLL, DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES

This disclosure form shall be completed by the reporting entity, whether subawardee or prime Federal recipient, at the initiation or receipt of a covered Federal action, or a material change to a previous filing, pursuant to title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. The filing of a form is required for each payment or agreement to make payment to any lobbying entity for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with a covered Federal action. Complete all items that apply for both the initial filing and material change report. Refer to the implementing guidance published by the Office of Management and Budget for additional information.

1. Identify the type of covered Federal action for which lobbying activity is and/or has been secured to influence the outcome of a covered Federal action.
2. Identify the status of the covered Federal action.
3. Identify the appropriate classification of this report. If this is a follow-up report caused by a material change to the information previously reported, enter the year and quarter in which the change occurred. Enter the date of the last previously submitted report by this reporting entity for this covered Federal action.
4. Enter the full name, address, city, State and zip code of the reporting entity. Include Congressional District, if known. Check the appropriate classification of the reporting entity that designates if it is, or expects to be, a prime or subaward recipient. Identify the tier of the subawardee, e.g., the first subawardee of the prime is the 1st tier. Subawards include but are not limited to subcontracts, subgrants and contract awards under grants.
5. If the organization filing the report in item 4 checks "Subawardee," then enter the full name, address, city, State and zip code of the prime Federal recipient. Include Congressional District, if known.
6. Enter the name of the Federal agency making the award or loan commitment. Include at least one organizational level below agency name, if known. For example, Department of Transportation, United States Coast Guard.
7. Enter the Federal program name or description for the covered Federal action (item 1). If known, enter the full Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number for grants, cooperative agreements, loans, and loan commitments.
8. Enter the most appropriate Federal identifying number available for the Federal action identified in item 1 (e.g., Request for Proposal (RFP) number; Invitation for Bid (IFB) number; grant announcement number; the contract, grant, or loan award number; the application/proposal control number assigned by the Federal agency). Include prefixes, e.g., "RFP-DE-90-001."
9. For a covered Federal action where there has been an award or loan commitment by the Federal agency, enter the Federal amount of the award/loan commitment for the prime entity identified in item 4 or 5.
10. (a) Enter the full name, address, city, State and zip code of the lobbying registrant under the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 engaged by the reporting entity identified in item 4 to influence the covered Federal action.  
(b) Enter the full names of the individual(s) performing services, and include full address if different from 10 (a). Enter Last Name, First Name, and Middle Initial (MI).
11. The certifying official shall sign and date the form, print his/her name, title, and telephone number.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act, as amended, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB Control Number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is OMB No. 0348-0046. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0046), Washington, DC 20503.