

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What happens to my requisition once it gets to purchasing?

Once purchasing gets your requisition, it is reviewed for completeness. A complete requisition will have the following information:

- Correct account code
- Department name and contact person
- Notation of at least 3 quotes received with vendor name and dollar amount
- Complete list of items needed including quantity, packaging and price
- Correct extended pricing for items with a quantity greater than 1
- Complete specifications for items that must be bid by purchasing
- Total price that includes line item pricing for all items on requisition, tax, shipping (if applicable) and the total amount for the requisition
- Appropriate signatures – budget manager, division chair, etc
- Notation that the end-user checked state contracts for the items needed

If there are items on the requisition that are considered equipment, Purchasing will forward the requisition to management for signature.

### 2. Why does it take so long to process my requisition?

Some examples of what delays a requisition includes:

- Purchasing must request additional information from the end-user such as specifications
- End-user did not note if state contracts were checked for needed items, purchasing will do so
- Correct account codes
- Routing requisition to get required signatures

### 3. Why do I have to get quotes?

Competition is the corner stone of public purchasing. GTCC must seek competition wherever and whenever possible. GTCC's policy states that it is the end-user's responsibility to seek competition for requisitions that total \$0 to \$4,999.

### 4. Why can I not purchase a state contract item from a non-state contract vendor?

GTCC's policy states that GTCC will purchase items from a state contract if the items are on state contract. However, GTCC has loosened that policy to allow purchases from a non-state contract vendor if savings prove to be in GTCC's best interest. You should understand that if state contract items are purchased from another source, GTCC is required to file a report with the state showing the state

contract price and the price actually paid. The end-user should document this on the requisition when submitted to purchasing.

5. Why are some items not on state contract when I want to purchase them from a state contract vendor?

It is the item that is considered state contract and not the vendor. Therefore, select items from a vendor may be on state contract but not all items that the vendor may sell.

6. What happens if my selected vendor is not registered with e-procurement?

If a desired vendor is not registered on e-procurement, it is the end-user's responsibility to get that vendor to register. Send the vendor to [www.pandc.nc.gov](http://www.pandc.nc.gov) and follow the links to e-procurement.

7. What is an eQuote?

An eQuote is an electronic method that is currently used by the purchasing department to solicit competition for requisitions that are between \$5,000 and \$10,000. It is a faster way to seek written competition. However, not all vendors are registered for eQuote so eQuote is not used as often as it could be.

8. What does purchasing do?

Purchasing is responsible for overseeing the purchasing of goods and services for the college. Purchasing assures that all policies and procedures are followed and that competition is sought wherever possible.

9. How does a vendor get added to GTCC's vendor list?

GTCC maintains a HUB vendor list to assist in including HUB vendors on bids and quotes. No official bid list is maintained for commodities or services. Purchasing uses Vendor Link and registered e-procurement vendors when searching for vendors of a particular commodity or service.

10. Why do I have to include specific vendors when seeking competition?

Specific vendors are not required to be included in your process for competition. You are, however, required to include at least one HUB when seeking competition. The State of North Carolina and GTCC have a policy that notes that 10% participation in providing goods and services is to be from HUB vendors.

11. If my selected vendor is the only vendor that I know that supplies what I need, why does Purchasing still bid it out?

A vendor must be able to document that they are the sole source provider of an item. Documentation is a letter from the vendor stating that he/she is the only provider, manufacturer, etc of that particular item. That means the vendor is the only provider in the United States.

12. If I have gotten 3 quotes, why does purchasing turn around and issue a bid package?

Procedures require that if the total dollar amount of the purchase is \$5,000 or greater, purchasing must handle the competition by issuing a written bid package. As noted earlier, if the purchase is between \$5,000 and \$10,000, Purchasing may elect to use eQuotes. If the purchase is over \$25,000, it will be sent by Purchasing to Raleigh to handle.

13. Why do I have to provide so much detail on my requisition?

A complete description will assure that you get exactly the item that you need.

14. If I can get a better deal and a better product from a vendor that is not low bid, why can I not purchase what I want?

Bids are awarded to the lowest, responsive, responsible bidder that meets specifications. This means that a bid is awarded to the lowest priced bidder that met all of the specifications in the bid package. Justification must be documented for each low bid that does not meet specs and therefore is not awarded the bid.

15. Does GTCC have a set-aside for HUB vendors?

There is no set aside for any vendor, including HUB vendors. All awards, bids and quotes, are awarded to the lowest, responsive, responsible bidder that meets specifications.

16. When do I seek competition and when does the Purchasing department handle it?

The end-user is responsible for seeking competition for requisitions that total \$0 to \$4,999. It is purchasing responsibility to seek competition if the requisition totals \$5,000 or over.

17. Why do we send requisitions to Raleigh to P&C or ITS?

GTCC's delegation is \$25,000. Any orders anticipated to exceed that amount must be sent to Raleigh to handle. P&C (Purchase and Contract) handle commodities. ITS handles technology related requests. Purchasing serves as the main contact between Raleigh and GTCC.

18. Who signs requisitions for technology related items, projectors, etc?

Sandie Kirkland signs all requisitions for technology related items. In fact, MIS prefers to actually write up the requisition. Please contact Susan Marshall for assistance. Beverley Gass approves all requisitions for projectors and AV related equipment.

19. Why does purchasing reject some bids?

Reasons bids may be rejected include:

- specifications of items bid do not meet specifications provided in bid package
- bid package was not signed by the bidder
- bid package was received late in the purchasing department
- lowest bid is over budget and additional funds are not available
- specifications provided in the bid package were found to be in error
- lowest bidder cannot meet the required delivery date if delivery was made an award criteria in the bid package

The above list includes some of the reasons bids may be rejected. Other reasons may arise upon review of bids received.

20. How do I know when I am supposed to include an addendum in my bid package?

Addendas are additional information provided to potential bidders. The addenda may include additional specifications, clarification of specifications, a change in bid opening date, etc. An addendum will state if it must be signed and returned. If the addendum does not state that it must be returned, then it is not a mandatory part of the bid.

21. I offered a better product for less money than the bidder that was awarded the bid. Why did I not get the award?

Bids are reviewed by purchasing and by the end-user to determine if the item bid meets the specifications as stated in the bid package. A lower bid may have been rejected based on the specifications of that item compared to the specifications required in the bid package.

22. Why do I have to check state contracts? Why can purchasing not do that?

The end-user is the most knowledgeable on the items needed and can determine if the items needed are what are on state contract. Often reqs include a part number and a brief description and it would be difficult for purchasing to determine if the state contract item is spec'd exactly as the item on the req. Purchasing will assist in identifying the state contract that like items can be found and request that the end-user determine if the item on state contract can be used.

23. How do I know that an addendum has been issued?

It is the potential bidder's responsibility to assure that he/she has included any and all addendas in a bid package when submitted. The potential bidder should check the state's IPS system which is where GTCC posts bids.

24. Why can I not sign contracts and maintenance agreements that are related to my area?

Often contracts and other agreements contain verbiage that the state does not allow to be included in such agreements. Purchasing reviews all contracts and other agreements to assure that verbiage is correct and that prohibited clauses are not in the agreement.

25. Why do I have to get a fast purchase order number from purchasing when I am in a hurry to get the needed item?

Purchasing is responsible for assuring that all policies and procedures are adhered to for each and every purchase. By issuing an emergency purchase order number, purchasing is able to track that purchase as well as have it matched up to a receiving record and an invoice. It also provides an audit trail for that purchase for questions that may arise at a later time. A purchase made without a purchase order number (that is not made with an authorized p-card) is considered an unauthorized purchase and the end-user could be held responsible for payment of the invoice.

26. What is the difference in a fast purchase order, a pressing need and an emergency order?

- FAST PURCHASE - A fast purchase is used when the end-user has a need that must be handled immediately. The dollar amount is less than \$5,000 and thus does not need to be bid. The end-user has determined an immediate need and verified best source, price, delivery to meet that need. The end-user contacts purchasing, requests a purchase order number and places the order with the vendor. (S)he then completes a requisition and forwards that to purchasing along with the fast purchase order number.
- PRESSING NEED – An unforeseen need arises that must be handled immediately. This may be due to contractor delays, breakdown of equipment, increased usage or other justified reason. If the purchase is over \$5,000, purchasing may determine and document a pressing need. Negotiations may be handled with a known vendor or a quick quote package issued, if time permits. Justification and handling is documented in detail.
- EMERGENCY PURCHASE – An emergency purchase is made if a situation causes a danger to lives, property or the continuation of a vital program and can the situation can only be rectified by an immediate purchase. The end-user is to document the situation and forward a req to purchasing immediate. If time is extremely critical, an email to purchasing can get the purchase moving while the end-user completes the req. If over \$5,000, purchasing will handle a bid/quote package or document the need to move forward without that documentation.

27. What is a p-card?

A p-card is a procurement card or credit card that is issued to an employee of the College. It is used to make small dollar purchases.

28. How do I get a procurement card?

P-cards are issued to employees that have justified their need to make quick, small dollar purchases. Employees must not be on probation of any kind, including new-hire probation. The employee will complete a p-card request, securing proper signatures and forward to the Director of Finance for final approval. The requestor must attend a mandatory training session on how to use the p-card and the reporting process that is required each month. Once all approvals are secured and the end-user has completed the training, the Director of Purchasing will request the p-card from the bank and issue the card to the requestor.

29. If I have a p-card, do I still need to complete a requisition for my purchases?

Requisitions are not required for p-card purchases. However, the cardholder must complete a monthly statement reconciliation report and forward to purchasing along with receipts for each and every purchase made with the p-card.

30. Purchasing has placed an order for me and it comes in wrong. What happened?

A number of things can happen that results in receiving an incorrect item. Reasons can include, but are not limited to, an incorrect part number on the requisition, a picking error by the vendor, a keying error by purchasing.

31. Can I lower the amount on my blanket purchase order so I don't have to bid every time?

Whether on a blanket order or an order for specific items, no purchase can be separated or dollar amounts lowered to avoid the competitive process.

32. Purchasing just bid these exact same items for me a couple of months ago. Why must I go through the bid process again?

Bids are awarded for the specific item(s) and quantity that is noted in the bid. Therefore, if an additional need is determined, the process will be repeated for the new purchase.