

GTCC

Purchasing Manual

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INTRODUCTION

This manual is intended to provide you with the general rules needed to prepare a purchase requisition. It applies to the acquisition of all equipment, materials, supplies, printing, and services, through outright purchase, rental, lease, or lease-purchase.

All community colleges are required by General Statute 115D-58.5 to purchase all supplies, equipment and materials by contracts made by or with the approval of the Division of Purchase and Contract (P&C) of the Department of Administration.

The State's purchasing program is based on sound competitive purchasing procedures. The importance of seeking competition exists at all levels of expenditure. Fostering competition is an attitude more than a procedure. It is reflected in the way specifications are written, in searching for new sources of supply, in attempting to make procurement documents simple and inviting, and in everyday courteousness shown to prospective suppliers and contractors. Where competition is not sought, or obtained, the reason must be valid and documented.

Price is not the only consideration in seeking competition. Other factors include: terms and conditions, delivery schedules, lead times, types and degrees of service required, inspection and testing procedures, transportation and delivery costs, warranties and guarantees required, etc.

Price is only one factor considered
in seeking competition.

DEFINITIONS

AGENT: A person who, by expressed or implied agreement, is authorized to act for the institution in business dealings with a third party.

AGREEMENT: (“meeting of the minds”) resulting from an offer and an acceptance.

BUYER: Authorized agent of the institution to buy, purchase or enter into contract with a supplier.

COMMODITIES: Any like group of equipment, materials, or supplies.

COMPETITION: The fair and open solicitation of offers from more than one source; the receipt of offers from more than one qualified source.

EMERGENCY: A situation which endangers lives or property and which can be rectified only by immediate on-the-spot purchase (or rental) of equipment, supplies, materials, printing, or contractual services.

eQUOTE: A solicitation for competition issued by the purchasing department through the e-procurement system for purchases \$10,000 or less.

FREIGHT ON BOARD (FOB): The FOB determines how freight charges for your order will be paid. The state’s term mandates that GTCC use “FOB Destination”. Freight charges will be paid by vendor to GTCC’s Jamestown location or other location as specified on the purchase order.

EQUIPMENT: An item that represents an investment of money that can be capitalized. The “stand-alone” item retains its original shape and appearance with use and does not lose its identity through the incorporation into a different or more complex unit or substance.

The State categorizes a piece of equipment as being one single item totaling over \$1000 per item, all in-cost, which includes purchased price, applicable tax and shipping charges.

GTCC separates equipment into 2 categories:

1. Major Equipment = over \$1000 for each individual item
2. Minor Equipment = under \$1000 for each individual item

INVITATION FOR BID (IFB): The formal advertised written solicitation document used by the Division of Purchase and Contract **and by GTCC** for seeking competition and obtaining offers.

LEASE: A contract conveying use of a commodity for a designated period of time in return for established periodic payments.

LEASE-PURCHASE: (Conditional Sales Contract) A contract in which the established periodic payments are applied to fulfill the payment obligations for ownership of the commodity.

NEGOTIATION: The act of making a purchase, lease, lease-purchase, or rental agreement, by an authorized agent of the institution under the following conditions:

- When all offers have been rejected,
- When the use of the standard solicitation document is not appropriate,
- Where there is a sole source,
- When an emergency or pressing need arises.

OFFER: The term may refer to a proposal, quote, or bid submitted in response to a Request for Proposal, Request for Quotation, Invitation for Bid, or Negotiation.

OPEN MARKET CONTRACT: A contract for the purchase of a commodity or contractual service not covered by a term contract.

PRESSING NEED: A need arising from unforeseen causes including, but not limited to, delay by contractors, delay in transportation, breakdown in machinery, or unanticipated volume of work, and which can be rectified only by immediate on-the-spot purchase (or rental) of equipment, supplies, materials, printing, or contractual services.

PURCHASE: The act of acquiring a needed item or service by an authorized agent of the institution. The acceptance of an offer to sell, lease, lease-purchase, or rent. An item or contractual service acquired as a result of a valid agreement between an authorized agent of the institution and a seller.

RENTAL: A contract for the right to use a commodity for a period of time, usually with payments made at intervals over the period of use, and normally providing for short notice of cancellation.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: An alternate acquisition method to the IFB. Customary to use for quotations for services.

REQUEST FOR QUOTE: An informational written procurement document used for seeking competition and obtaining offers.

SOLE SOURCE: When an item or service is available from only one source.

STATEWIDE TERM CONTRACT: A term contract handled by the Division of Purchase and Contract for all agencies and institutions of the state, unless exempted by statute, rule, or special terms and conditions specific to the contract.

TERM CONTRACT: A contract generally intended to cover all normal requirements for the commodity or contractual service, for a specified period of time, based on estimated quantities only. Sometimes referred to as “contract”, “requirements contract”, or “indefinite quantity contract”.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASAP	As soon as possible
ARO	After receipt of order
BOM	Bill of Material
EOQ	Economic Order Quantity
HUB	Historically Underutilized Business
IFB	Invitation for Bid
P&C	Purchase and Contract Division
QPL	Qualified Products List
RFQ	Request for Quote
RFP	Request for Proposals
SC	State Contract
SOW	Statement of Work
SPO	State Purchasing Officer
U/M	Unit of Measure
ICQ	Independent Contractor Questionnaire
PSA	Professional Service Agreement

PURCHASING BEHAVIOR

Ethical practices are a major concern in the realm of public purchasing. While laws and rules mesh to provide a mechanism for public purchasing, only people can make it work. Impediments to the process must be detected early and safeguards provided at all levels.

ETHICS

All public, purchasing personnel shall be entirely cognizant of the necessity of ethical behavior.

Everyone¹ involved in the purchasing process is held accountable to the following principles and standards of purchasing practice:

1. The purchasing power of the State shall not be used for private advantage or gain². Employees or other individuals will not process orders for articles for ownership.
2. Avoid the intent and appearance of unethical or compromising practice in relationships, actions and communications.
3. Refrain from any private business or professional activity that would create a conflict between personal interests and the interests of the institution.
4. Refrain from soliciting or accepting money, loans, credits or prejudicial discounts and the acceptance of gifts, entertainment, favors, or services from present or potential suppliers which might influence, or appear to influence purchasing decisions.
5. Do not discuss with suppliers: cost information, bid information or trade secrets. Handle all information of a confidential or proprietary nature with due care and proper consideration of ethical and legal ramifications and governmental regulations.

¹ “Everyone” involved in the purchasing process applies to every person who engages with a supplier at any level, for any reason. This includes, but is not limited to: requests for products information, inquiries into pricing, design, repairs, replacements, quote information or generating a requisition for purchase.

² “Private advantage or gain” refers to using the association of the State or GTCC to receive products, favors, services, or discounts for personal use. **Packages received on the GTCC receiving dock should never be addressed to an individual first, GTCC second.** Any package received addressed in this manner is subject to inspection. Anyone found in violation of this general statute is subject to immediate dismissal.

INTEGRITY

Fairness and impartiality in all phases of the process are an essential ingredient in public purchasing. Integrity is manifested through fairness, openness, honesty, objectivity, and impartiality.

Similar to other service organizations, the purchasing department's justification is the quality of the service it renders. The purchasing process cannot be both effective and self-serving; the two are incompatible. Fairness is required in expending public funds. No matter how strongly a user may prefer a particular product or service to others, equivalent products and services must be given every reasonable consideration.

RESPONSIBILITY

According to statute, if any institution contracts for the purchase or lease of any commodities, printing or services *contrary to statutes or rules*, such contract/purchase shall be void and of no effect.

If any unauthorized agent of an institution contracts for the purchase or lease of any commodities, etc., such contract shall be void and of no effect.

In addition, anyone making such illegal purchases is personally liable for the costs incurred.

DELEGATIONS

DELEGATIONS Dollar Level of Authorization

\$25,000+ purchases must be referred to the Division of Purchase and Contract for an Invitation for Bid or request for waiver by the purchasing department.

\$10,000-\$25,000 purchases require written solicitation of competition. These written solicitations, or requests for quotations (RFQ), must be generated by the purchasing department.

\$5,000 - \$9999 purchases require written solicitation for competition. The purchasing department, at its sole discretion, may elect to issue an eQuote or an RFQ.

\$2,500-\$4,999 purchases require telephone solicitation of competition. The end user should generate these verbal solicitations; however, orders are placed by the Purchasing Department.

\$2,500 or less, competition should be sought whenever possible.

PURCHASES > \$25,000 (excluding tax and shipped FOB destination)

These purchases must be referred to the Division of Purchase and Contract (P&C) for an Invitation for Bid or request for waiver of competition, generated by the purchase department. P&C is authorized by Administrative Rule to inquire into the need for, and the level of quality of, the items and services requested.

1. *IFB, Invitation for Bid*

- When the Division of Purchase and Contract receives the purchase requirements, specifications are reviewed for completeness and accuracy. Minimum IFB cycle time is 45 days. This cycle time, depending on the completeness of specifications or complexity of requirements, could easily be extended 6-8 months.
- Bids are received at P&C, opened and reviewed for completeness and then forwarded to GTCC Purchasing for review. Depending on the commodity, the GTCC Purchasing Department will recommend a supplier for contract award or contact the using department for input.
- Once GTCC recommends a supplier for contract award a written request is presented to the State Board of Award for approval.

2. *Request for Waiver* - Depending on the circumstances, a written request for waiver of competition can be sent to the State Board of Award for approval. It is imperative that a strong case be drawn before such request is forwarded. The GTCC Purchasing Department makes the final decision whether a request for waiver is constituted.

PURCHASES \$10,000 to \$25,000 (excluding tax and shipped FOB destination)

This dollar purchase requires a written Request for Quotation (RFQ). This written solicitation must be generated by the GTCC Purchasing Department and must include terms and conditions applicable to the requirement. Once bids are received, the GTCC Purchasing Department reviews and analyzes the results. Depending on the commodity, the GTCC Purchasing Department can either submit the request for purchase or may contact the using department for input. All transactions must be documented. This includes a record of all quotes received and written reason for award to other than low quote. Written reasons for waiver, emergency and pressing need transactions shall also be made a matter of record. The final decision for contract/purchase award rests with the GTCC Purchasing Department.

PURCHASES \$5000 to \$9999 (excluding tax and shipped FOB destination)

Competition for purchases in this dollar range is to be solicited by the Purchasing Department. The department may solicit competition by issuing an eQuote or by issuing an RFQ. Once quotes are received, the Purchasing Department will review and analyze the results. The department may request input from the using department prior to award of the quote. The final decision for contract/purchase award rests with the GTCC Purchasing Department.

PURCHASES \$2,500 to \$4,999 (excluding tax and shipped FOB destination)

These purchases require a verbal quote. This verbal solicitation should be generated by the end user and should specify terms and conditions to be made part of the contract. The end user must forward documentation of quotes received to the Purchasing Department before the order is processed. Quotes received may be written on the requisition before submitting the requisition to the purchasing department. The end user must forward documentation of quotes received to the Purchasing Department before the order is processed. Quotes received may be written on the requisition before submitting the requisition to the purchasing department. All transactions must be documented. This includes a record of all quotes received, written and verbal, and written reason for award to other than low quote. GTCC's Purchasing Department requires at least one of the quotes received is from a HUB vendor. Written reasons for waiver, emergency and pressing need transactions shall also be made a matter of record. The final decision for contract award rests with the GTCC Purchasing Department.

PURCHASES < \$2,500 (excluding tax and shipped FOB destination)

Competition should be solicited wherever possible and documented on the face of the requisition. No written quotations are required, however, all transactions must be documented. Written reasons for emergency or pressing need shall also be made a matter of public record by

attaching a written explanation. The final decision for contract award rests with the GTCC Purchasing Department.

According to state law, purchase *requirements cannot be divided in order to keep them under the established expenditure delegation amount.*

According to GTCC policy ~~state law~~, *no one may purchase any supplies, materials, equipment or services covered by a statewide contract from any other sources.*

PROCUREMENT CARD

The procurement card program is designed to provide a quick turnaround on the purchase of small dollar items with a reduction in paperwork, approvals and time. To view the Procurement Card Policy and Procedures go to the GTCC website. See Faculty and Staff under Policies and Procedures. Go to <http://technet.gtcc.cc.nc.us/inside/forms.htm> to obtain a Procurement Card Application and Employee Agreement form on line.

CORRECTION ENTERPRISE

The North Carolina General Statutes give preference to Correction Enterprises for the items and products manufactured by them. This means that Correction Enterprises will be given priority over state contract items. Items that can be provided by Correction Enterprises can be found on their website at <http://www.doc.state.nc.us/eprise/products/>. Items include wooden furniture such as desks and bookcases, chairs, tables, janitorial supplies, oils, paints, and safety supplies.

When a need arises in your department, you should check the products at Correction Enterprises first. If they have similar items, contact them for samples or additional information. If the items that they have do not meet your needs, you are to request and receive a certificate of waiver from them stating that they could not meet your needs.

If you cannot purchase the needed item from Correction Enterprises, you are to note on your requisition that you contacted Correction Enterprises and that they could not provide a suitable item. You are also to attach the certificate of waiver to your requisition.

Your next step will be to select your item from state contract and submit your requisition to purchasing to be processed.

PURCHASE REQUISITION

Completed purchase requisitions must include the following information:

1. **REQUESTED BY:** the person initiating the requisition.
2. **DATE:**
3. **SUPPLIER:** must include supplier name, street address, city, state, zip, and phone number and fax number.
4. **CHARGE TO NUMBER:** department budget code.
5. **SHIP TO:** check the appropriate box and remember to **INCLUDE** the name of the person to whom the GTCC Receiving should deliver the package.
6. **VENDOR #1, #2, #3:** required on all requisitions over \$2,500. If requisition total is less than \$5,000, evidence of competition sought by end user should be completed in this section. Suggested vendors should be listed for all other purchases.
7. **QUANTITY:** amount you need to have purchased.
8. **UNIT:** unit of measure (U/M) = each, box, carton, pounds, etc.

QUANTITY u/m must equal PRICE u/m

Example:

3 each @ 1.25 each

NOT

3 each @ 12.50 box

9. **COMMODITY NUMBER:** complete if known, referenced on state contracts
10. **DESCRIPTION:** what you are requesting to have purchased. Along with description include: color, size, model number, catalog number, and any other information to describe the item requested for purchase.

If, by your description, the GTCC Purchasing Department cannot identify **WHAT** you have requested or **WHY**, your requisition will be held. You will be notified that your requisition cannot be processed without additional information.

1. **UNIT PRICE:** price per unit of measure ordered, see item #8.
2. **TOTAL PRICE:** (extended unit prices) price per unit times quantity ordered.
3. **SUBTOTAL:** total of all extended costs of requisition
4. **SALES TAX:** *applicable for all items* purchased, except subscriptions and labor.
5. **SHIPPING CHARGE:** required information. When requesting prices, ask about shipping charges. If shipping charges do not apply, fill in “N/C” – no charge.

6. **APPROVALS:**

All supply requisitions require signature of:

Department Budget Manager
Buyer and/or Purchasing Department

All equipment requisitions require signature of:

Department Budget Manager
Vice President

Executive Vice President or Vice President of Administrative Services Purchasing
Department

Director of MIS for Technology related purchases
Commercial Art Instructor for Audio Visual purchases

All requisitions submitted to the Purchasing Department are keyed into the NC e-Procurement System. NC e-Procurement uses the internet for creating and submitting requisitions for approval. Once the requisition completes the approval process, it will be converted into a purchase order.

eRequisitioning

As end-users are trained, they will begin entering requisitions into the NC e-procurement system for processing.

The requisition will be keyed and forwarded through an electronic approval process for approval by the respective supervisors. The supervisor will review the e-requisition and elect to e-approve the requisition or reject the requisition if it is not approved for purchase. Once approved, the e-requisition is electronically forwarded to the Purchasing Department for processing.

Select departments may be set up to have the e-requisition forwarded directly to the Purchasing Department once it has been entered into NC e-Procurement.

Other departments may be set up for electronic approval of the requisition by their supervisor and then a paper copy of the requisition may be forwarded to the VP of Administration for final approval before being sent to the Purchasing Department.

Once the e-requisition has been electronically forwarded to the Purchasing Department, the Purchasing Technician will print out the requisition and review it for correctness. He/she will check for state contract items to assure that procedures are being followed. If all is correct, the Purchasing Technician will convert the e-requisition to a purchase order.

A copy of the e-requisition and the purchase order are sent back to the requisitioner for his/her files.

Without required signatures your requisition is unauthorized.
If you are submitting an unauthorized requisition AFTER the purchase, you could be held personally financially liable for payment.

BLANKET PURCHASE ORDERS

The procedure for blankets will be as follows:

1. All blankets must have a start date and an expiration date. That date will be 7/1/XX thru 6/30/XX. This date may change depending on budget requirements for the year. The Purchasing Department will begin reviewing blanket orders in late March or early April to determine what blankets need to be closed before the end of the fiscal year. Purchasing personnel may notify the requisitioner for information related to the open order-
2. In the past, two, three or even four blanket purchase orders may have been issued for the same department to the same vendor over the course of the year. Since blanket orders will now be issued to cover the fiscal year, the requisitioner should determine the dollar amount needed for the year.
If the amount is \$2,500 to \$4,999, a minimum of three (3) quotes will be needed in order to award the blanket PO. The requisitioner is to get these quotes following the same process as for regular purchase orders. The requisitioner should document the vendors and dollar amounts quoted on the top of the requisition before sending the requisition to the Purchasing Department. If the total is over \$5,000, the Purchasing Department will need to get formal, written bids. To quote or bid blankets, the end-user will need to provide a list of 10-15 items that they anticipate using.
The items will be representative only and no commitment will be made to purchase those particular items. It will be a basis for cost comparison only.
3. All blankets should list names of employees eligible to make purchases from the blanket.
4. All blankets should have a "not to exceed" amount for each order against the blanket. For example, "no invoice to exceed \$250".

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

EMERGENCY/PRESSING NEED PURCHASES

There are some instances that require making a FAST purchase – without waiting for a requisition to make its way through the purchase order process. The State defines these types of purchases to be Emergency Purchases or Pressing Need Purchases.

Emergency: a situation which endangers lives or property and which can be rectified only by immediate on-the-spot purchase (or rental) of equipment, supplies, materials, printing, or contractual services.

Pressing Need: a need arising from unforeseen causes including, but not limited to, delay by contractors, delay in transportation, breakdown in machinery, delay or cancellation of a program or class, or unanticipated volume of work, and which can be rectified only by immediate on-the-spot purchase (or rental) of equipment, supplies, materials, printing, or contractual services.

The State allows agencies to make FAST emergency/pressing need purchases if the following procedure is followed:

1. FAST purchases have to be authorized by the GTCC Purchasing Department. Call the GTCC Purchasing Department for a verbal, fast purchase order number BEFORE making the purchase.
2. FAST purchases should receive prior approval from the department budget manager by the requisitioner.
3. FAST purchases, after the purchase, still have to be channeled through the requisition process.
4. FAST purchases must be documented on the face of the requisition; by the requisitioner as to why this purchase was considered an emergency or pressing need purchase.
5. ALL RECEIPTS, invoices, and packing slips must be attached to the requisition.

NOTE: *Anyone making a FAST purchase without prior approval from the Purchasing Department can be held PERSONALLY LIABLE for the cost of said purchase.* The GTCC Purchasing Department can refuse to process any questionable FAST request. The GTCC Purchasing Department can refuse to process for payment any questionable follow-up requisition or payment request. The State Auditor can refuse the use of state, county, and special funds for FAST purchase, after-the-fact, requiring the requisitioner to “pay back” the institution.

See Section V-5 at <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/agpurman.htm> for more details. There are some instances that require making a FAST purchase – without waiting for a

SOLE SOURCE VENDORS

Definition: A sole source vendor is a company or person who sells a product or service that meets the unique needs of the purchaser; generally, **sole source** means the one and only source for the product or service in the United States (minimum). If a manufacturer has dealers or distributors anywhere in the country, it is not a true sole source; having regional, state, or area dealers or distributors does not constitute sole source.

Examples: The following are examples of sole source vendors:

- A new computer software company sells software that they developed and that can only be purchased from them.
- A piece of equipment the College has breaks down and the required parts and repair service can only be obtained from the one local company authorized by the manufacturer to sell and service in this state/country.

Documentation: Any knowledge of or justification for using a "sole source" vendor must be noted on the requisition for consideration by the Purchasing Department. If technical specifications are the justification, note them in detail for comparison to existing products and sources. If possible, attach the following documentation to the requisition:

- sole source letter from manufacturer
- descriptive literature
- photographs
- diagrams
- technical data, etc.

Approval: If the purchase is properly justified, approved, and within the College's local limit of \$25,000, it can be processed without submitting to the N.C. Division of Purchase and Contract.

NOTE: If the purchase exceeds the local limit of \$25,000, it will be forwarded to the [N.C. Division of Purchase and Contract](#) with all accompanying data for evaluation. If the purchase is approved, the College will proceed with the order.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AGREEMENTS & CONTRACTED SERVICES

All Professional Service Agreements (PSA's) and Contracted Service Agreements must be processed through the GTCC Purchasing Department. The PSA form is to be submitted for both professional service and contracted service agreements. The PSA itself suffices as the purchase requisition. Rather than having to process the usual requisition and a PSA, the original PSA with all information, including budget code and approval signature(s), is forwarded to the GTCC Purchasing Department where it will be approved and a purchase order issued.

This change in procedure is necessary to facilitate tax reporting for independent contractors and to encumber budget allocated for contractors as soon as we are aware of the obligation.

NOTE: All contracted service suppliers are required to provide the GTCC Purchasing Department with proof of insurance prior to beginning work.

<http://technet.gtcc.cc.nc.us/inside/forms.htm> to obtain a PSA form on-line.

Contracted Services: Generally, terms of service contracts should not exceed a one-year term; however, an exception to this rule occurs where a vendor must make a significant investment in equipment to perform the service. In these cases, a contract term with an initial one-year term, with renewals up to three years may be considered.

See V-7 at <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/agpurman.htm> to see that “rules applying to service contracts do not apply to community colleges”. As a result, GTCC is responsible to set policy for purchase of services. The following is the policy adopted by GTCC:

Under G.S. 115D-58.5(a) community colleges are governed by State Purchase & Contract in the purchasing of supplies, equipment, and materials. There is no reference in the General Statutes as to how community colleges are to acquire services. Given this lack of statutory authority, GTCC elects, when in the best interest of the college, to acquire services patterned after those procedures for purchasing supplies. Professional service agreements and specialized services are examples of services that may be utilized without seeking additional competition. GTCC is responsible for awarding all service contracts and competition MUST be sought where available.

CHECK TO ACCOMPANY ORDER

Some suppliers require payment prior to the shipping of product. This is known as a “check to accompany order” request. Documentation requesting prepayment should be included on the face of the requisition.

After typing items to be purchased on the requisition, type “CHECK TO ACCOMPANY ORDER” in capital letters. Dropping down a few lines on the requisition, briefly describe why prepayment is required. The GTCC Purchasing Department, after processing a purchase order, will forward the supplier a copy of the order to the GTCC Business Office where a check will be issued and mailed with the purchase order.

CHANGES TO PURCHASE ORDERS

Changes to purchase orders already accepted by a supplier, must be requested by or made with consent of the GTCC Purchasing Department. Most suppliers are willing to make reasonable changes to orders without penalty to the purchaser.

A purchase order written to a supplier represents acceptance of an offer and is considered a binding contract. Breaking the contract in order to make changes to or cancel an order requires consent of both parties.

Once both parties consent to the changes, changes are made to the purchase order in Datatel and a revised purchase order is automatically sent to the vendor.

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RETURNING PRODUCT TO SUPPLIERS

The GTCC Purchasing Department must be notified prior to returning any product to a supplier. Permission to return must be granted by the supplier. Information required to obtain return authorization *includes*, but is not limited to:

1. Purchase order number
2. Item number on the purchase order
3. Description of item to be returned
4. Quantity to be returned
5. Reason for return
6. Replacement or refund requested.

MAINTENANCE/SERVICE CONTRACTS

- Service or maintenance contracts are usually the most economical method of maintaining equipment
- The original manufacturer or their service agency best maintains specialized critical equipment. It is advisable to consider having this type coverage.
- Parts and supplies are not generally covered by maintenance contracts; however, the cost of labor, travel and service calls can usually justify this type of contract.

PROCEDURE

A service/maintenance contract is initiated by submitting a requisition and an unsigned copy of the contract to the GTCC Purchasing Department. Any parts and supplies not covered by the maintenance contract require a separate confirming requisition at the time of the actual service request. Call the GTCC Purchasing Department to receive a FAST verbal purchase order number before returning any equipment, covered by a maintenance contract, for service. The PO number acts as a tracing, confirmation, verification number for your equipment. *Service is requested directly to the manufacturer or service agency by the department requiring service.*

NOTE: Copiers that are distributed throughout the college and maintained by Central Stores are covered by a contract negotiated and administered by the GTCC Purchasing Department. Maintenance agreements for typewriters and departmental copiers are requested by the using department and approved and administered by the GTCC Purchasing Department. *Computers*

are not generally covered by maintenance contracts as we have our own in-house staff trained for computer repairs.

PRINTING

Print jobs that can be completed by the GTCC Duplicating Center are to be handled by that department and no competition is required.

Although competition is not required for purchases less than \$2,500, end-users are encouraged to solicit competition due to the competitive nature of print jobs.

Printing specifications should include:

- **Item** (what it is...report, form, brochure, book, etc.)
- **Quantity** (how many do you want; will you accept overruns...if so, what percentage will be accepted and guaranteed for payment.) Industry is +/- 10%.
- **Size** (number of pages, finished page size, number of parts to the form, etc)
- **Construction** (how it is made...folds, binding, carbon, interleaf, etc.)
- **Copy** (what is in the item...text, photos, line drawing; how is it given to the printer...manuscript, camera-ready copy, boards, photos, negatives, slides, diskettes...size, language, format, etc.)
- **Printing** (what should the item look like...number of ink colors, halftones, separations, bleeds, screens, foil stamping, embossing, etc.)
- **Proofs** (what kind do you want to see, or do you? Page, blueline, composite, progressive color, color key, etc.)
- **Stock** (what surface is the ink to be put on...kind/grade of text and cover, vinyl, cardboard, etc.)
- **Samples** (an ample number of the previous job should be sent to include with the solicitation.)
- **Packaging** (how should the item be packaged when you receive it; any unusual or special packaging instructions.)
- **Special Instructions** (be specific.)
- **Delivery** (when will the project be ready to be given to the printer, when would you like to have the item, when must you have the item, where should the item be delivered. Specify that vendor delivery is FOB Destination.)

COST OF PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Every State agency publishing a public document, other than one published for the principal purpose of sale to the public, shall cause the following statement to be printed adjacent to the identification of the agency responsible for the publication:

“(Number of copies) copies of this public document were printed at a cost of \$_____, or \$_____ per copy.”

The term “cost” shall include printing costs in the form of labor and materials and any other identifiable design, typesetting and binding costs.

Any public document without a statement of cost shall not be mailed or distributed at public expense.

See section VII-4 at <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/agpurman.htm> that shows that community colleges do not have to follow P&C rules for printing purchases.

CENTRAL STORE ORDERS

Requisitions for supplies from our Central Store should be forwarded directly to the Director of Auxiliary Services for approval. The Director of Auxiliary Services will forward approved requisitions directly to Central Store for processing. **Do not send Central Store requisitions to Purchasing.** Routing them through the Purchasing Office only delays the process.

DUPLICATING

Duplicating requisitions should be forwarded directly to the Director of Auxiliary Services for approval. The Director will forward approved requisitions directly to Duplicating for processing.

PRINTING ORDERS

The GTCC Duplicating Center should first be considered for all printing needs. If the Duplicating Center cannot meet your needs, you should prepare a requisition and forward to the Purchasing Office. Please refer to the section of this memo labeled “determination of bid requirements” in deciding how to handle individual print jobs that must be contracted.

SPECIFICATIONS

The primary purpose of a *purchase specification* is to provide a basis for obtaining a product or service that will satisfy a particular need at an economical cost. ***Specifications are defined as a detailed and exact written statement of particulars, prescribing materials, dimensions, or workmanship for something to be built, installed or manufactured.*** Specifications should be written to encourage, not discourage competition consistent with seeking overall economy for the purpose intended.

There are two general types of specifications:

1. A standard specification is originated and developed by the Contracts and Standards Section of Purchase and Contract (P&C). It is comprehensive in nature and intended for repeated use.
2. The institution originates the other type of specification.

When a specification is adopted as a standard, it becomes applicable to all purchases generally. Standard specifications are available from the Contracts and Standards Sections through GTCC’s Purchasing Department.

State P&C also has an approved qualified products list (QPL) that identifies products approved after an evaluation procedure. The essential characteristic of this procedure is the examination and pre-qualification of brands and models of products on the basis of samples and tests. Manufacturers are invited to submit products for evaluation and inclusion to the list. This list is intended to be used to compare quality and pricing for like or similar items needed for the college. Only manufacturers with products on the QPL list can be solicited for offers of those specific products. This list is published at <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/> under the Term Contracts section. GTCC cannot purchase items from QPL in an effort to avoid competition. These items are not considered to be on state contract and therefore are for reference only.

Where articles are to be used for educational or training purposes, by handicapped persons, or for test and evaluation or research purposes, special or overriding consideration may be given to the waiver of competition and the award of contracts.

ADVERTISING

GTCC must advertise bids for purchases of commodities greater than \$10,000. Advertising is accomplished via posting to the State Purchase and Contract web-site or via local advertisement methods. In addition, GTCC may advertise non-required Quotes on the P&C web-site but must follow P&C rules. To view the State Purchase & Contract Purchase Manual go to: <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/advertis.pdf> . The Purchasing Department is responsible for all advertising of quote/bid documents placed on the IPS system for the college.

HUB UTILIZATION POLICY

See HUB Policy under separate heading. By reference here, the College Plan to Increase Participation by HUB in the Procurement of Goods and Services is incorporated into this manual.

PROTEST PROCEDURES

A party wanting to protest a contract awarded to a solicitation must submit a written request to the GTCC Purchasing Officer. This request must be received by GTCC within thirty (30) consecutive calendar days from the date of the contract award, and must contain specific sound reasons and any supporting documentation for the protest. Note: Contract award notices are sent only to those actually awarded contracts and not to every person or firm responding to a solicitation.

END-USER DISPUTES

In order to avoid end-user disputes after receipt of goods or services, the Purchasing Department will work closely with the end-user to be sure that product descriptions, specifications, etc. will

meet the needs of the end-user. The Purchasing Department may, at its discretion, elect to have the end-user review quotes or bids received to provide input prior to the actual award of the contract.

In the event that the end-user does have a dispute, the end-user will notify the supplier and the Purchasing Department of the problem. The end-user will make every effort to resolve the issue directly with the supplier. In the event that no resolution is reached, the end-user will request the Purchasing Department to become involved. This request must include the purchase order number, the supplier name, contact name, a description of the problem and an outline of what has taken place to date. Purchasing will then take the lead in reaching a resolution that is in the best interest of GTCC.

CONSTRUCTION VERSUS STANDARD PURCHASE DETERMINATION

GTCC shall review the items being included in a construction/renovation project and remove any items that they consider are non-related to the actual construction/renovation of the building. Items that are considered commodities, or just furnishings, to complete the project for use, shall be handled in accordance with the normal purchasing rules. Items that are usually removed from construction/renovation projects may include carpet, office panel systems, food service equipment, and furniture. If the college determines that one of these items, or any item that is normally handled as a commodity purchase, is best suited for inclusion in the construction/renovation project, their justification shall be documented in writing for public record. In most instances, for buildings under construction, the carpet, office panels, etc. may not be pulled out of the construction contract. For renovation projects, in most cases, items such as carpet may be pulled out as a separate commodity.

APPENDIX

REQUIRED REPORTING

- Historically Underutilized Business Report – Quarterly - Due Nov 1, Feb 1, May 1, and Aug 1. (<http://www.doa.state.nc.us/hub/>)
- Purchasing Flexibility Report – Semi-Annually – Due Feb 1 and Aug 1.
- Conflict of Interest Form – Annually (required by GTCC)
- Recycle Report – Annually – Due Nov 15th (<http://www.p2pays.org/stag/>)
- Office of Information Technology Services (due early June).

RESOURCES

NC Community College System: <http://www.ncccs.cc.nc.us/webfs/index.html>

NC Community College System Purchase Manual:

<http://www.ncccs.cc.nc.us/webfs/Documents/Eq-Procedures%20Manual.PDF>

NC Purchase & Contract: <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/>

NC P&C Purchasing Manual: <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/agpurman.htm>

NC P&C – State Contract Search: <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/nfshp.htm>

NC P&C - locate HUB vendors: <http://www.ips.state.nc.us/ips/Vendor/srchven.asp>

NC P&C – Specification Examples: <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/splist.htm>

NC P&C IT Procurement: <http://www.its.state.nc.us/ITProcurement/>

GTCC Resource Website: <http://technet.gtcc.cc.nc.us/inside/>

eProcurement: <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/pandc/> in the center of the page for catalog, vendors, etc.

END USER RESPONSIBILITIES (Maintenance and Service Contracts)

1. End User will identify all Service and Maintenance Contracts used by his/her Department. Typically, a blanket PO is prepared annually for services supported by a contract.
2. Notify the Purchasing Department of all Service and Maintenance arrangements, regardless of whether GTCC has a copy of the signed contract on file.
3. End User will contact Vendor to obtain Vendor Contract (signed and dated by the vendor). Any contract supplied by the vendor must contain the following statement “The attached North Carolina General Contract Terms & Conditions are considered part of this agreement and supercede vendor terms and conditions”. A copy of these Terms may be found at GTCC’s website <http://technet.gtcc.cc.nc.us/inside/forms.htm> . Purchasing may help in obtaining Contract.
4. End User reviews the Vendor Contract for accuracy. For example – Is GTCC still using the services provided in the contract? Is the equipment listed under the maintenance agreement still used by GTCC? Does the Vendor’s current year invoice bill us the amount stated (agreed upon) in the Vendor Contract?
5. End User will forward a copy of the Contract and Requisition to Purchasing for processing. The Contract will be held in the Service and Maintenance Contract File. Retain a copy of the Vendor Contract for your files. Purchasing will not process requisitions unless a Contract is on file in the Purchasing Office.
6. Purchasing signs Vendor Contract on behalf of GTCC and forwards signed copy to vendor along with official Purchase Order. Remember, Purchasing must review ALL contracts before they are signed.
7. Requisitions for Service/Maintenance Contracts, including software support, should be coded to account # 535400 in the Department benefiting from the service. Budget to cover the expenditure will need to be identified and transferred to cover the cost.
8. Purchasing verifies that a Vendor Contract is on file in the Purchasing Department before processing the Requisition. The Contract Inventory excel file is helpful for this verification process.
9. Periodically, Purchasing will distribute the Service and Maintenance Contract Inventory List to End Users. End Users may find the list useful for the following:
 - Annual Purchase Order preparation process.
 - To identify expiring contracts and possibly seek another vendor for service, if applicable.
 - Identify aged contracts that need to be updated (many contracts automatically renew; however, these contracts should be updated, at minimum, every 3 years.
 - Avoid unnecessary repair costs for assets covered under maintenance contracts.

10. Purchasing and Finance will use the Inventory List to perform the following:
 - Identify opportunity for cost savings (volume discounts) where multiple departments may be using the same vendor.
 - Calculate Prepaid Expenses.
 - Comply with accounting standards, which require a copy of the Contracts be on file to support expenditures.
11. End User should notify Purchasing in writing if dissatisfied with service for any reason. Many of these contracts require up to 90 advance written termination notices.

SPECIFICATION GUIDANCE

(To be prepared by end-user)

1. What are you buying? This should include: An accurate description of the item, item numbers, model numbers, quantity needed, and list of additional components needed to complete the system.
2. Is this a sole source? Why? If yes, obtain letter stating such from the vendor.
3. Are there specifications? These specifications should not be photocopies from literature but typed specifications that you can use.
4. If it is brand specific, why? What brand?
5. Is installation needed? If yes, must be included in bid or order.
6. Is training needed? Major training or general instruction to user?
7. Do you have any special delivery needs? Deadline for delivery? Inside delivery?
8. What kind of warranty is provided or required?
9. Do you need a maintenance contract for this kind of item?
10. Would used, refurbished or demo equipment be acceptable?
11. What kind of service do you need for the equipment?
12. Is there a suggested vendor? Who? Provide contact information.
13. For purchases greater than \$25,000 review the “Standard Paragraphs” on the P&C Website <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/divforms.htm> to see if any should be added to your specifications or view <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/splist.htm> for example specifications.

ANNUAL TRAINING MEMO FOR STAFF

**GUILFORD TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE
MEMORANDUM
September 12, 200X**

TO: All GTCC Faculty and Staff

FROM: Manager, Procurement and Inventory Control

SUBJECT: GTCC Purchasing Guidelines

When initiating requests for commodities, the following guidelines established by the North Carolina Community College System and the North Carolina Department of Administration, Purchase & Contract Division must be followed:

PURCHASE ORDER REQUIREMENT

A purchase order is required before a purchase is made or receipt of any materials and/or services is accepted. An employee should not make a purchase expecting to be reimbursed without prior approval from the Purchasing Department. GTCC is not responsible for payment of any purchases obtained without prior authorization. This includes purchases made for reimbursement and purchases invoiced through a vendor. Purchases approved for reimbursement should not exceed \$XXX. **EMPLOYEES PURCHASING ANY MATERIALS WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN OR VERBAL AUTHORIZATION FROM THE PURCHASING OFFICE MAY BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYMENT OF SUCH PURCHASES.** If an emergency purchase order is needed, please call the Purchasing Office or come by the office with an approved request for supplies and we will expedite your order, as needed.

PURCHASING FROM OR THROUGH A COLLEGE EMPLOYEE

Every reasonable effort shall be made to avoid making purchases from or through an employee of the college. Prior written approval from the State Purchasing Office (SPO) is required in instances that may develop where the college desires to make a purchase from college personnel. In deciding whether to grant such approval, the SPO shall consider the type item or service needed, the prevailing marking conditions, whether competition is available, the cost involved, and the effects of doing business with the employee.

USE OF PURCHASING POWER FOR PRIVATE GAIN

The purchasing power of the state or the college cannot be used for private advantage or gain. Purchases under contracts made by the college, shall not be allowed for personal use out of private funds, nor shall the college place orders for articles for ownership by employee or other individuals.

DETERMINATION OF EQUIPMENT vs. SUPPLY ITEM

Any one item costing \$1,000 (including tax) or more is considered equipment, unless the item is expendable, such as software. Software purchases should be charged to supply budgets. Any one item costing less than \$1,000 (including tax) is considered a supply item.

STATE CONTRACT PURCHASES

The State Purchasing Office has established statewide term contracts. **These contracts should be the first source of supply after checking Correction Enterprise for any item that is on contract.** Any item available on state contract has been through a formal bidding process with State Purchase and Contract, so bids on this level are not usually required. The contract information is available on the Internet: <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/nfshp.htm> These contracts must be used. Products are on contract, not suppliers. However, equipment or supplies listed on state contract must be purchased from vendors listed on the contract in accordance with state laws.

GTCC, as a rule, does not exercise the flexibility given to community colleges by GS115. Time is required to handle additional bids, quotes, etc and to track potential savings. This is a costly process in time and soft dollars. However, in the event that the requisitioner can provide written comparison documentation of the exact item(s) needed from a supplier versus the price of that exact item on state contract, the GTCC Purchasing Manager will give consideration based on the documented potential for savings. If the documented savings are deemed to warrant additional work, the purchase from a non-state contract item/vendor will be given consideration. The Purchasing Manager will make this determination based on cost versus benefit.

DETERMINATION OF BID REQUIREMENTS

Less than \$2,500: First, determine that state contract merchandise or equipment is not available. Quotes (generally three) should be solicited by the end user, where possible, for orders totaling less than \$2,500. Wise spending and budget accountability is everyone's responsibility; therefore always seek the best price available. The end user may obtain quotes from vendors or vendor catalogs. If quotes are obtained, please provide this information with the requisition. Complete orders totaling more than \$2,500 cannot be divided into smaller purchases to eliminate the need for quotes.

\$2,500-\$4,999.99: First, end user should determine that state contract merchandise or equipment is not available. Any complete order totaling \$2,500-\$4,999.99 requires the end user obtain a minimum of three (3) telephone quotations or cost comparisons acquired from competitors current catalogs. Please enter on your requisition a complete and detailed description of the quotes obtained. In the event the item(s) requested is a sole source purchase, a complete justification for the purchase is required. Sole source means the item is only available through one vendor. The final decision for placing an order rests with the Purchasing Office.

\$5000 - \$9999: The Purchasing Department will determine if the best procedure for seeking competition is through eQuote or a written document. eQuotes are solicitations handled by the Purchasing Department through the NC e-Procurement System.

\$10,000 - \$25,000: First, end user should determine that state contract merchandise or equipment is not available. A complete order totaling \$10,000-\$25,000 requires written quotations obtained by the Purchasing Department. In submitting orders in this price range, end users will submit to the Purchasing Department complete specifications and/or literature as well as names, addresses, and telephone numbers of your suggested vendors. Incorrect or

incomplete information will either result in the delay of the procurement of the required supplies or equipment or procurement of an incorrect item. The end user will be consulted before the contract is awarded, but the final decision for contract award rests with the Purchasing Office.

More than \$25,000: *First, end user should determine that state contract merchandise or equipment is not available.* Any complete order totaling \$25,000 or more will be forwarded to the NC Department of Administration, Division of Purchase & Contract in Raleigh for formal written bids. Bids will be returned to the college for review of specifications and our recommendation for award. Again, please provide complete specifications and a listing of suggested vendors. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY WHEN YOU REVIEW THE BIDS AND INFORMATION RECEIVED TO MAKE SURE THAT THE ITEM THAT YOU RECOMMEND THAT WE PURCHASE MEETS THE SPECIFICATIONS THAT WERE REQUESTED.**

SPECIFICATION GUIDANCE

The State Purchase and Contract web site (www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/) “IPS & Other Bids” section and the GTCC Purchasing Department may provide examples of bid specifications. The Purchasing staff will assist you in the preparation of specifications if necessary, below is a basic specification checklist.

- 1) What are you buying? This should include: an accurate description of the item(s); item numbers, model numbers; exact quantity needed; components needed.
- 2) Is this a sole source? Why? Need letter from the vendor.
- 3) Are there specifications? These specifications should not be photocopies from literature but typed specifications that can be edited if necessary.
- 4) If it is brand specific, why? What brand?
- 5) Is installation needed?
- 6) Is training needed? Major training or general instruction to user?
- 7) Do you have any special delivery needs? Deadline for delivery? Inside delivery?
- 8) What kind of warranty?
- 9) Do you need a maintenance contract for this kind of item?
- 10) Would used, refurbished or demo equipment be acceptable?
- 11) What kind of service do you need for the equipment?
- 12) Is there a suggested vendor? Who?
- 13) For purchases greater than \$5,000, review the “Standard Paragraphs” found on the P&C Website <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/divforms.htm> to see if any should be added to your specifications or view <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/splist.htm> for example of specifications.

Purchases cannot be divided in order to keep them under the established dollar increment or to avoid the bid process. When bidding a contract, never imply to a supplier that they will get the business. Always refer your suppliers to the Purchasing Department. The final decision for any purchase is made by the GTCC Purchasing Department or the Division of Purchase and Contract.

EMERGENCY PURCHASES

Purchases of an emergency nature will be made in the same manner as regular orders except the person desiring the necessary supplies will hand-carry the requisition through the appropriate chairperson, dean, and any other necessary approval, and then to the Purchasing Office. Regardless of the emergency nature of the purchase the aforementioned purchasing guidelines must be met.

Careful planning on the part of all employees may eliminate most emergency purchases. Employees should request supplies at least ten (10) days prior to the time the materials are needed. On orders that are to be placed with out-of-town vendors, a period of four (4) weeks should be allowed. If items are to be bid, please allow, at least, thirty (30) days for the requests for quotations to be sent out and received back for review.

RECEIVING GOODS

The instructor or staff member requesting supplies and equipment will receive an “originator’s copy” of the complete purchase order at the time the order is submitted to the vendor. When the material is delivered to an office other than the Receiving Department, or picked up by someone on your staff, the end user must notify the Receiving Department of this before payment will be made to the vendor. If an item when received is broken, or if an item is back ordered, please advise the Receiving Office.

TECHNOLOGY RELATED ORDERS

All technology related orders must be coordinated through our MIS office. Please contact Susan Marshall for assistance in writing up requisitions for computers, peripherals, and software. No such orders will be processed without the approval of the MIS Office. View at the Purchase and Contract’s website for State contract information: <http://www.its.state.nc.us/ITProcurement/>.

HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES (HUBs)

A Historically Underutilized Business is a business which is majority owned or managed by one or more minority persons, women, or disabled persons. GTCC’s objective is to increase the college’s expenditures for the purchase of goods and services from HUB vendors to a goal of at least 10 percent while maintaining the integrity of sound financial practices and complying with state purchasing and contracting laws and policies. Please consider HUB vendors in all of your purchases. You may locate HUB vendors at the Purchase and Contract’s website: <http://www.ips.state.nc.us/ips/Vendor/srchven.asp>.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AGREEMENTS

In the event you need to contract with a non-employee for professional services, please adhere to the following basic procedures:

1. Be certain the individual or company should be treated as an independent contractor, rather than an employee. It is rare that the college would contract with an individual to teach. The IRS has very definitive guidelines determining when someone should be treated as an employee versus an independent contractor. The college is subject to fines and penalties when someone who should be classified as an employee is treated as an independent. If in doubt, consult with the Finance Office before entering into a contract.

2. Complete the required paperwork before the engagement begins.
 - (a) The college-approved Professional Services Agreement (PSA) form is available on the network or GTCC's web page: (<http://technet.gtcc.cc.nc.us/inside/forms.htm>).
 - (b) The requisitioner is to complete the PSA and the Independent Contractor Questionnaire. (S)he will send another copy of the Independent Contractor Questionnaire to the contractor for completion. Both questionnaires and the PSA are to be forwarded to the Purchasing Department for review.
 - (c) Purchasing reviews to determine the status of the contractor. Should the contractor be considered an independent or an employee?
 - (d) If it is determined that the contractor is an independent, then a Vendor Registration Form must be completed if the college has not previously contracted with the individual or company. The Vendor Registration Form is available on the network and on our web page.
 - (e) If it is determined that the contractor should be considered an employee, the requisitioner will complete the proper paperwork to have the contractor added to payroll.
 - (f) Certain out-of-state (non-resident) vendors are subject to a 4% state income tax. Please consult with Finance where applicable to make this determination and advise the consultant beforehand of this withholding requirement.
3. The completed, original, PSA will serve as your requisition. Purchasing will issue a purchase order if the contractor is an independent.
4. You must request an invoice from the independent contractor upon completion of the work. Once the work is completed satisfactorily, the invoice should be approved for payment and forward to Accounts Payable. The original PSA, purchase order and approved invoice will be matched up and payment processed.

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MAINTENANCE AND SERVICE CONTRACTS

All purchasing contracts must be reviewed by the GTCC Purchasing Department. Only certain individuals in the Purchasing Office are authorized to sign maintenance and service contracts on behalf of the college. Construction contracts will be reviewed by the Director of Facilities. The Director of MIS will review all IT related contracts and submit to the Purchasing Department for

final review before signing. If you wish to enter into such a contract, you should request a signed copy of the proposed contract from the vendor. The original contract should be attached to your requisition and forwarded to the Purchasing Office. Once the contract has been reviewed, one of two things will happen. Either the purchasing manager or designee will sign it and issue a purchase order; or you will be contacted if there are any questions surrounding the contract. As with all purchases, we aim to seek competition where reasonable. Students, faculty or other employees that are not designated agents shall not have the authority to enter into any contract in the name of GTCC. Any such contract will be null and void.

EQUIPMENT REPAIRS

When equipment needs to be repaired, please first make certain it is not covered under a service/maintenance contract. If the repair work needs to be contracted out, simply prepare a requisition and forward it to Purchasing. You should take responsibility for determining if the item is worth repairing (as opposed to just replacing it). If the repair constitutes an emergency, please refer to the section of this memo labeled “emergency purchases”.