Frequently Asked Purchasing Questions

1. How do I rent a vehicle?

Vehicle rental is a state contract item with Enterprise. In order for the payment to be made directly from CES to Enterprise an agency travel card must be used. If an employee chooses to pay for the rental thru the contract vendor, the employee may be reimbursed for the expense by submitting a personal reimbursement request (PURCH 330). If you are unable to locate a rental vehicle, contact the purchasing staff at 501/671-2296.

2. What is the purchase limit for Office Depot?

The purchase limit is $1,000 per order. Normally the AOS in each department or county is the individual authorized to place the Office Depot orders.

3. Do I have to buy from State Contract if I can find a better deal?

State contracts are competitively bid and generally offer the best deal for the state. If an item is on a mandatory contract, the purchase must be made from that contract.

4. Can I make a purchase of a state contract item using my Personal Credit Card and get reimbursed?

No, you should use the CES purchase order system or a P-Card. Under special circumstances this might be approved, but you must get prior approval from the Purchasing Manager before any purchase is made. Contact purchasing or accounts payable for further information.

5. Who can enter a Requisition?

The only individuals authorized to enter requisitions are those who have been set up in Banner AND who have passed the on-line requisitions course. The on-line Banner Requisition Course can be found in SPOT, under the Training Tab and then by clicking on Learn.uaex.edu to search for the requisition course. After successfully completing and passing the course, you will be given access to enter on-line requisitions in Banner.

6. Who can give me information about my budget, how much I have available to spend, what is my balance?

Budget information is available in e-print. For specific budget questions you should contact Yolanda Harden (501-671-2054) or Jackie Yarbrough (501-671-2045).
7. Can I buy goods for CES from a CES employee?

   No, this is not allowable under state law.

8. Do you have to take the lowest bid on a Quote Bid?

   If the lowest bid meets all the specifications and they can supply the items as requested, the low bid must be accepted.

9. Can I tell another bidder what bids I have received and the bid prices?

   You cannot disclose any bid information until after the bid has been awarded.

10. I got specs from a particular vendor whom has always been good to us over the years. Can I give this vendor any kind of preference?

    No, there is no preference law in the State of Arkansas.

11. When I got bids, one of the bidders said, “If my quote is the winning bid we will give you a 40 inch flat screen.” Is there any problem with accepting a gift?

    Gifts should never be accepted in the performance of your job.

12. I do not like the brand of computers that CES purchases. Can I select another brand if I tell the IT Department this is what I’m used to since I have this type at home?

    No, you must have a specific reason as to the performance of the substitute machine you are requesting verses the computer brand used by CES and the IT Director must approve the purchase before a substitute can be ordered.

13. My State truck needs tires. I want to purchase the tires from a certain dealer because they are friends of my family and will give us a special price that is less than the State Contract price. Is this okay?

    No, there is a mandatory contract for tires and all tires must be purchased through the contract. All tire purchase requests must be submitted to the purchasing office at LRSO and the purchasing office will order the tires.
14. I have an out-of-town meeting during lunch. Will CES pay for my lunch?

   According to state policy, only individuals in travel status requiring an overnight stay will be reimbursed for meals. For clarification of the policy, please contact the accounts payable office at LRSO or review the policy guidelines found in the Extension Policy Manual.

15. I noticed that Wal-Mart has better prices on their office supplies. If I purchase office supplies at Wal-Mart using my Personal Credit Card, can I get reimbursed?

   No, office supplies are on a mandatory state contract through Office Depot.

16. We took quotes for painting our office. The low bid and the subsequent PO was for $4,900. While the painter was here we found other areas that needed painting. He charged an additional $1,000. Can we pay the additional amount from the original purchase order?

   No, the original purchase request should be for the maximum amount of the work to be performed at the time of the initial order. Any additional work should be on a separate PO and should be approved prior to the additional work being done. Since the total amount will exceed $5,000, quotes should be taken for the additional work.

17. We need carpet for our County office and have selected the style and type of carpet we want. Can we single-source this brand since it matches our décor perfectly?

   No, you may select the specifications that match your carpet but you cannot single source this item since many companies might sell this particular carpet.

18. During our staff meeting, we discussed some upgrades to our office. The Staff Chair and our District Director has approved the upgrades. One of our agents went out and purchased the items the next day. Can we do the Requisition after-the-fact?

   No, purchases are not officially authorized without an agency issued purchase order. Purchase requests made after the fact are not approved under the Arkansas Purchasing Law.

19. I need to order items for SNAP ED; can I order these through a catalog?

   It is best to go online and check for availability of the items and verify the estimated date of shipment. The item may be out of stock or discontinued. This information will be helpful to know before you place your order since there is a deadline for receipt of merchandise.
Frequently Asked Purchasing Questions

20. I need to pay my registration ASAP….how can I do that?

You may pay with your P-Card if you are trying to meet a registration deadline. If there is not an immediate deadline, then you should enter an on-line requisition and a Purchase Order and Check will be processed.

21. I am having trouble with Requisitions, who should I contact?

Call Jo Ann Fish 501/671-2296 or Karen Clark 501/671-2060 to answer any questions you may have.

22. I cannot enter a fund or org number in Banner, what should I do?

Contact Yolanda Harden (501-671-2054) to determine if you have the necessary access for the fund or org number. If the access is not available, your supervisor will need to contact Yolanda and give approval for you to have access to enter the new fund or org.

23. I cannot order with a new fund or org number in Office Depot, what should I do?

You should have your supervisor contact Jo Ann Fish 501/671-2296 or Karen Clark 501/671-2060, for you to be given access.

24. When entering a requisition in Banner, I realized that it is a new vendor, what should I do?

Contact the vendor and request a W-9 (Tax Form). If the vendor does not have one, we can e-mail a blank form to them. The completed W-9 form should be faxed to Jo Ann or Karen and we will set them up in Banner. Once the vendor has been set-up in Banner, the purchasing staff will contact you with the vendor number and you can enter your requisition.

25. When in entering a requisition, I need to add extra information about the new vendor, where would I put that?

You would enter the information In the Document Text. Click on Options on the top left of your page, and it will have a drop down option list, choose Document Text (click on), and it will open the document text form—from there you will need to click on the next block to be able to enter on the 1st line (under the green bar line). It has 50 characters per line, that can be entered; hit the down arrow button on your keyboard to go to the next line. You will be able to enter as many lines as needed.

This is where you would enter information for new vendor, contract number, phone, fax, proposal information, bid number etc.
Frequently Asked Purchasing Questions

26. On my requisition, I cannot enter all I need to on the description line, what should I do?

You click on Options and follow the instructions as above, but click on Item Text instead of Document Text. (You will have as many lines as needed.)

This is where you would enter information about the item. (Part number, Serial number, etc.)

NOTE: REMEMBER-DOCUMENT TEXT IS INFORMATION ABOUT THE DOCUMENT (REQUISITION AS A WHOLE)

ITEM TEXT IS INFORMATION ONLY ABOUT THE ITEM ITSELF.

We are here to help so don’t hesitate to call on us – Your Purchasing Staff!