

**A. PURPOSE:**

This procedure describes the process of procuring items and services that are needed by the Division of Scientific Services to meet and support the normal operating requirements of the laboratory system.

**B. RESPONSIBILITY:**

**Quality Section:** responsible to maintain the list of approved vendors within Qualtrax.

**Deputy Director (DD) and Assistant Directors (AD):** responsible to ensure that purchasing paperwork is correctly completed and forwarded to the appropriate channels and to use vendors that are on the approved vendor list. Additionally they may direct that a vendor be provided with a "Suppliers Evaluation" form GL-6.1 to vendors as needed.

**Assistant Director of the State Forensic Science Laboratory (ADFL):** responsible to oversee the purchasing and grant application process for the laboratory. Additionally the ADFL may direct that a vendor be provided with a "Suppliers Evaluation" form GL-6.1 to vendors as needed.

**All employees:** responsible to utilize the proper channels to request needed materials and to use approved vendors for the purchase of all critical items. Additionally they are responsible to properly document the receipt of supplies received.

Individual Unit personnel initiate the purchase process for items and/or services, under the overall guidance of Supervisory personnel. The administrative staff performs processing of purchasing paperwork. It is the responsibility of the individual Unit to ensure that the purchasing coordinator is provided with the correct information for the specific items and/or services that are needed.

Any employee involved in the purchasing of critical materials (instruments, reagents, software renewals) is responsible to use an approved vendor or to take action to obtain approval for a new vendor.

**C. DEFINITIONS:**

**Purchasing Coordinator:** anyone (however titled) assigned to the task of preparing documents for purchasing and to the task of tracking orders. The Purchasing Coordinator also fills out ePro requisitions. This is usually an office assistant, secretary or administrative assistant.

**Critical items:** any item that will affect the quality of testing performed.

**Approved vendors:** vendors of supplies or services whom are either:

ISO 17025, ISO 17020, ISO 17043, ISO17032, ISO Guide 34 or equivalent certified or have completed a laboratory survey to demonstrate their ability to provide products or services that meet the requirements of the laboratory.

Note: ISO 9001 cannot be used for critical supplies that can influence the test results. A supplier evaluation form must accompany any ISO 9001 certification.

**Service:** this can be a repair of an instrument, a calibration, or a verification/validation of equipment (such as balances or hoods that will demonstrate that they are in proper working condition).

**ILAC:** International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation

**NIST:** National Institute of Standards and Technology

**BIPM:** International Bureau of Weights and Measures (Bureau International des Poids et Mesures)

#### **D. PROCEDURE:**

1. When an item or service needs to be purchased this will be communicated to the Unit Supervisor or their designee. Those arranging for purchasing must assess and ensure the suitability of the products to be purchased for any supply that may affect the quality of the laboratory activity. For items other than office supplies, vendors must be on the DSS 'Laboratory Approved Vendor' list which is maintained within Qualtrax.

Top Management will assess purchase requests based on the availability of funding, cost and urgency and determine and approve appropriate funding.

Purchasing is broken in to the following categories:

- a. Supplies deemed critical
  - b. Reference materials
  - c. Services
  - d. General Supplies
2. Approved Vendors:
    - a. A list of 'Laboratory Approved Vendors' will be maintained within Qualtrax. Vendors on this list can be used for the purchase of critical items and services. If a product or service is required that is not provided by a vendor on the list, the individual requesting the item must work with the administrative staff (or designee) to gain such approval prior to purchasing the item.
    - b. Vendors are considered automatically approved if they are ISO 17025 accredited or similar (i.e., ISO Guide 34) and the scope of their accreditation meets the needs of the laboratory (i.e., a vendor that is accredited to calibrate DOT road scales may not be accredited to calibrate analytical scales). For reference materials vendors must be accredited to ISO 17034 (see Reference Materials section below).
      - i. If a vendor is not on the approved vendor list it must first be determined whether they can supply the item or service needed to the specifications required. If not automatically approved by their scope of accreditation (as stated in 2.b), the vendor will be supplied with a questionnaire (See GL-6:1). Upon satisfactory review of the completed questionnaire, the vendor can be added to the approved vendor list by a Deputy Director, Assistant Director, member of the Quality Section, or the Director (or designee).

- ii. Documentation of approval is maintained with the 'Laboratory Approved Vendor List.'
3. Purchasing Methods:
- a. In general, supplies can be obtained through purchase orders, blanket purchase orders, or through the use of a purchasing card (state credit card).
- i. **Purchase orders (PO):** obtained by submitting a request through an ePro requisition. This request is forwarded for approval through administration to headquarters and the Department of Administrative Services (if the request involves an IT related item).
- (a) **ePro Requisition:** electronic submission of purchasing requests. Allows tracking of request approval status and purchase orders.
- ii. **Blanket Purchase orders:** These are PO's set up for vendors that may be used repeatedly throughout the year. These PO's set aside funds that are anticipated to be used with the vendor throughout the fiscal year.
- iii. **Purchasing Cards (P cards):** State issued credit cards. Specific Managers have purchasing cards assigned to them. When an item is needed, usually on an emergency basis, the purchasing card can be used to facilitate the purchase. Specific guidelines are set forth by the State of Connecticut for the use of these cards. The DESPP Purchasing Department is responsible to explain the proper use of the card. It is the responsibility of the cardholder to comply with those regulations. The use of P-Cards is limited and generally reserved for approved emergency purchases.
4. Purchasing Critical Items: (Supplies deemed critical, meaning they may affect the quality of the laboratory activity).
- i. The Unit designee will verify the requirements of the needed materials and obtain a quote for the items from the approved vendor. Requirements may include concentration of a chemical, grade of glassware or similar parameters.
- ii. The Section Deputy Director, Assistant Director or other designee will review the request and approve/deny the purchase. They will then determine the proper method of purchasing.
- iii. Once approved and the payment method determined, the purchase request is given to the Purchasing Coordinator to complete the order.
- (a) If the purchase involves grant funding then approval is needed by the Grant Coordinator for the DESPP.
- (b) If a PO is required an ePro requisition will be completed by the Purchasing Coordinator. The Director or their designee approves all ePro requests. A PO will be issued once approvals are made.

- (c) If a P-card or blanket PO is used, the Purchase Coordinator or designee can communicate with the company to complete the purchase. If purchases are made by the P-card holder the order paperwork will be sent to the Purchase Coordinator.
  - b. When the laboratory receives the items, it is the responsibility of the Unit designee to ensure that the items received are of the quality requested.
    - i. Concentration, volume or any other critical detail of the purchased item (which can affect testing) will be assessed.
    - ii. If the Unit designee finds that something was received that was not intended, they will alert the Unit Supervisor (or designee). They will work with the Section Manager and/or ADFL to determine how to correct the issue.
    - iii. To indicate that the item is acceptable, an appropriate notation is made next to the item listed on the packing slip. The packing slip is initialed and dated to indicate items received and any issues should be noted. The appropriate notation can be a check mark next to the item or other similar notation.
    - iv. Return the checked, initialed and dated packing slip to the Purchasing Coordinator for filing.
    - v. All chemicals/reagents shall be marked with the date received, on the actual item(s).
  - c. Some equipment may require a CT DESPP asset tag for asset inventory purposes. An asset inventory audit of all tracked equipment takes place in conjunction with the Asset Control Section within DESPP, as designated by the Department. The DESPP inventory control number may be used as the unique identifier for pieces of equipment. It is recommended that the corresponding PO number be placed on such items. Additionally for equipment purchased through a grant it is suggested that the grant number be placed on the equipment.
    - (a) Equipment that does not have an asset control tag, but is involved in the analytical case results will be uniquely identified by individual Units. This may include equipment such as repeat pipettes.
  - d. Purchased equipment must be stored in a manner as to not negatively affect their suitability for use or quality.
5. Reference Materials:
- i. Vendors used for the purchase of reference materials must be a reference producer that is accredited to ISO 17034 by an accrediting body that is a signatory of ILAC.
  - ii. The scope of the vendor's accreditation must meet the specifications of the reference materials.
  - iii. The Unit requiring the reference material will obtain a quote from a vendor that meets the requirements above. The Unit will verify that the quoted items meet the needs of the testing.

- iv. When the laboratory receives the reference material(s) it is the responsibility of the Unit designee to ensure the suitability of the item(s).
- v. Concentration, volume or any other critical detail of the purchased reference material (which can affect its use as a reference material) will be assessed as appropriate.
- vi. If the Unit designee finds that something was received which was not intended, they will alert the Unit Supervisor.
- vii. To indicate that the item is acceptable, an appropriate notation is made next to the item on the packing slip. The packing slip is initialed and dated to indicate items received and any issues are noted. The appropriate notation can be a check mark next to the item or other similar notation.
- viii. Return the checked, initialed, and dated packing slip to the Purchasing Coordinator for filing.
- ix. Appropriate documentation of the reference material (such as a certificate of analysis form) will be maintained by the Unit per Unit SOPs.
- x. All reference items will be marked with the date received on the item or their proximal container.
- xi. Purchased materials will be stored in a manner to prevent deterioration as per guidance provided in Unit SOPs.

#### 6. Purchasing Services:

When the need for service is identified, the appropriate Manager will be informed. A quote will be obtained and upon approval by the appropriate Manager the request will be submitted to obtain a PO. Upon receiving the PO the Unit designee will arrange for the service. The exact requirements (such as acceptance criteria in the case of calibration services) will be communicated to the vendor.

##### i. Calibration of analytical equipment:

Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors (or their designees) are responsible to ensure that instrument calibration schedules are met within their sections. The Quality Section is responsible to ensure that the calibration schedule for general laboratory items (such as pipettes, balances and weights) is met.

(a) The vendor must be traceable to a National Metrology Institute (NIST or BPIM).

or

(b) The vendor must be accredited to ISO/IEC 17025 by an accrediting body that is a signatory of ILAC.

(c) The scope of the accreditation for the vendor must meet the needs of the service to be provided.

- (d) If for any reason a vendor meeting the needs of the DSS cannot be obtained the vendor must be approved by the Assistant or Deputy Director of the Unit and a member of the Quality Section. A Supplier Evaluation form (GL-6.1) must be completed. The record of the review will be maintained in Qualtrax.
  - (e) When a quote is acquired, approval for payment must be obtained prior to scheduling the service. The Unit ADFL, AD or DD will determine the appropriate payment method.
  - (f) The service cannot be scheduled until the payment has been approved.
  - (g) Once the calibration is complete the person arranging the service will initial the vendor paperwork. When possible, services for annual validations/verifications will be grouped together for efficiency. Multiple copies of the service record may be maintained within multiple units.
  - (h) Record of the calibration will be provided to the appropriate Unit Lead or Supervisor. This will be maintained in the instrument maintenance logbook or as per Unit SOPs.
  - (i) Calibration certificates provided from the vendor will be maintained as specified in Unit SOPs.
- ii. General maintenance of equipment:
- (a) Vendors must meet the needs of the DSS for the service to be performed.
  - (b) When the need for service is identified (whether it is an annual check of a specific item or due to the need for a repair) the Unit Lead or Supervisor will contact Management to inform them of the need and to determine the proper payment method.
  - (c) Payment approval will be obtained prior to scheduling the service.
  - (d) The Unit designee will contact the approved vendor and arrange for the service. Some services are on a pre-scheduled time frame and vendors may contact the DSS to schedule these services.
  - (e) Once the service is complete the person arranging the service will initial the vendor paperwork as needed.
  - (f) For instrument repair:
    - (i) Repair documents will be given to the Unit Lead or Supervisor or their designee. A copy will be provided to the Purchasing Coordinator and a copy will be maintained in the instrument maintenance log or binder for the instrument.
    - (ii) The invoice, repair order or other such document provided by the vendor will be initialed and dated to indicate the service was performed. This will then be given to the purchasing coordinator; the Unit may maintain a copy for their records.

(iii) Units will follow Unit SOPs regarding performance checks after instrument maintenance.

(g) For annual maintenance (such as for hoods) the person requesting the service, generally this will be a member of the Quality Section, will document the validation/verification for the item(s).

(i) The initialed and dated invoice, repair order, or other such document provided by the vendor will be forwarded to the Purchasing Coordinator.

(ii) A copy of the documentations may be maintained within the Units(s) as proof of the service. When possible, services for annual validations/verifications will be grouped together for efficiency. Multiple copies of the service record may be maintained within multiple Units.

(h) Individual Units may require specific performance checks on instruments to determine if the maintenance work completed was suitable for the needs of the Unit. Guidance for these performance checks is detailed in Unit specific SOPs.

7. Purchasing Non-Critical Items:

- a. Purchasing of non-critical items is done in the same manner as critical items, however the Unit designee is not required to verify what is received; this can be performed by the Purchasing Coordinator or others.
- b. Upon receipt of the supplies or materials, all packing slips, with the date and initials of the person verifying the quantities received, will be forwarded to the Purchasing Coordinator. If needed, the Unit that purchased the item may keep a copy of the packing slip for their records. The purchasing coordinator will maintain a file of the packing slips for a minimum period of five years.

8. Quotes:

- a. For laboratory purchases, shipping fees should be included with the total cost represented on the quote from the vendor. Some vendors that have state contracted pricing may include shipping.
- b. Taxes should not be included on quotes. If needed the CT Tax exempt number can be provided by the Purchasing Coordinator.

E. REFERENCES:

1. CT State Contracting Portal <https://portal.ct.gov/Services/Working-with-the-State/State-Contracting-Portal>
2. CT State contracting Portal Search [https://biznet.ct.gov/SCP\\_Search/Default.aspx?AccLast=1](https://biznet.ct.gov/SCP_Search/Default.aspx?AccLast=1)