SERVICE COORDINATION SUPPORT

COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Chapter: 5.0	FINANCE	**Number:**	5.1.05
Section: 3.0	PURCHASING CYCLE	**Issue Date:**	September 24, 2008
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1.0 DEFINITIONS

Consulting services: Expert or strategic advice provided for consideration and decision-making.

Invitational competitive procurement: A written request sent to at least three qualified suppliers.

Open competitive procurement: A procurement opportunity posted through an electronic tendering system accessible to suppliers.

Procurement value: The total estimated commitment, excluding sales taxes and including optional extensions. A procurement must not be divided to avoid an approval or competitive requirement.

U.S. business: A business that meets the definition in the current Buy Ontario Procurement Directive.

2.0 POLICY AND PURPOSE

- SCS purchases the goods and services needed to support coordinated, responsive services and sound organizational operations. Procurement decisions must protect public funds, maintain service quality and continuity, and be fair, open, accountable and defensible. This policy applies to Board members, employees, consultants and anyone acting for SCS in procurement.
- SCS follows the Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive, the Buy Ontario Procurement Directive, applicable trade agreements, SCS signing authorities and other legal requirements.
- At SCS, this includes purchases for corporate operations, technology, professional and consulting services, facilities and service-delivery supports purchased directly by SCS. It does not change the separate rules governing client-approved funding, service plans or payments made under SCS funding and service agreements.
- Procurement must be approved before it begins. The requestor defines and manages the operational need. Finance confirms the procurement method, budget authority and documentation. The authorized signing authority approves the commitment. SCS separates requesting, approval, commitment, receipt and payment responsibilities wherever practical. Where staffing or operational circumstances limit separation, Finance documents an appropriate compensating control.

3.0 PROCUREMENT METHOD

Procurement	Value	Minimum process
Goods, non-consulting services and construction	Under $10,000	Use a reasonable purchasing method and obtain approval under the SCS approval authority schedule.

Procurement	Value	Minimum process
Goods, non-consulting services and construction	$10,000 to under $139,000	Invitational competition is recommended. Invite at least three qualified suppliers and obtain written bids.
Goods, non-consulting services and construction	$139,000 or more	Open competitive procurement is required unless a permitted exception applies.
Consulting services	Under $139,000	Invitational or open competition is required, regardless of value.
Consulting services	$139,000 or more	Open competitive procurement is required.

4.0 PROCEDURE



Visual summary only. The detailed requirements in this policy govern.

SCS procurement steps

Plan and approve

- Define the need, scope, deliverables, timing, full procurement value and available budget.
- Obtain approval under the SCS approval authority schedule before contacting suppliers or making a commitment.
- Disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest at the start and throughout the process.

- Confirm the applicable Buy Ontario requirements, including Ontario or Canadian business preference and the current restriction on U.S. businesses.
- Use an existing vendor-of-record or other available purchasing arrangement where required by provincial direction.

Compete fairly

- Give suppliers the same requirements, information and deadlines.
- For open procurements, post documents through an accessible electronic tendering system. For procurements from $139,000 to $368,000, allow at least 15 calendar days for responses. Allow more time for complex or higher-risk procurements.
- Set the mandatory and rated criteria, weighting, evaluation method and tie-breaking method before the competition begins. Give price the maximum justifiable weighting.
- Keep supplier information confidential. Late bids must not be evaluated.
- Use an evaluation team. Each evaluator must sign conflict-of-interest and confidentiality declarations and complete an evaluation matrix.
- Award to the compliant bid with the highest evaluation score. Keep the evaluation and decision fully documented.

Contract and notify

- Have the contract reviewed and signed by the authorized SCS signing authority before goods or services begin. If an urgent interim purchase order is used, document the reason and obtain approval.
- Include the agreed scope, deliverables, price, expenses, term, extension options, performance expectations, dispute process and termination rights.
- For procurements of $139,000 or more, post the award after the contract is signed, including the supplier name, contract dates and extension options. Inform unsuccessful suppliers that they may request a debriefing within 60 calendar days.
- Do not extend or materially change a contract beyond what was included in the competition without the required approval and review as a possible non-competitive procurement.

Manage and retain records

- The staff member responsible for the purchase monitors deliverables and supplier performance, confirms receipt, approves invoices and reports concerns to Finance.
- Pay only in accordance with the contract and on detailed invoices that support payment. Recover overpayments promptly.
- Keep the complete procurement record in a recoverable form for seven years. Protect confidential and commercially sensitive supplier information.

Non-competitive and emergency procurement

- Non-competitive procurement may be used only where permitted by applicable trade agreements. The business reason, supporting evidence and approval must be documented before the procurement begins. For goods and non-consulting services, approval must be one level higher than the authority required for a competitive procurement. Non-competitive consulting services require approval by the Executive Director below $1,000,000 and by the Board at $1,000,000 or more.
- The Buy Ontario Procurement Directive does not apply to a procurement needed for an urgent and unforeseen emergency. The decision, approval, supplier selection and cost must still be documented under SCS emergency procedures.
- SCS must exclude a U.S. business unless an exception in the Buy Ontario Procurement Directive applies. Any exception requires documented justification and approval at a level comparable to the Executive Director.

Responsibilities

- Requestor or accountable director: Defines the operational need and outcomes, confirms the available budget, supports the competition, monitors delivery and supplier performance, and confirms that invoices match the contract and goods or services received.
- Finance, Admin and HR Director: Determines or confirms the procurement route, supports the competitive process, verifies approvals and documentation, advises on exceptions and Buy Ontario requirements, and oversees the official procurement record.
- **Bid Evaluation team:** Evaluates bids fairly against the published criteria and protects confidential information.
- **Executive Director, Board or other authorized signing authority:** Approves and signs commitments within the SCS Approval Authority Schedule and signing requirements.
- **All participants:** Follow the Procurement Code of Ethics and disclose conflicts of interest.

4.0 ATTACHMENTS

5.0 REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, 2010
- Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive, effective April 13, 2026
- Buy Ontario Act (Public Sector Procurement), 2025
- Buy Ontario Procurement Directive, effective April 13, 2026
- Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive
- SCS Procurement Code of Ethics
- SCS approval authority schedule, Conflict-of-Interest policy and Signing Authority policy