

## **County of Kings Purchasing Guidelines**

The purpose of the County of Kings' Purchasing Division is to ensure that all conduct, in reference to the procurement of goods and services, is in accordance with the procedures set forth by the Board of Supervisors, the California Public Contract Code, the California Government Code and other applicable laws of the State of California. We also ensure that in any purchase transaction, the requirements for competition have been met, bidding and negotiation have been conducted in accordance with applicable policies, and no conduct of compromise to the public trust is present.

We recognize the important services rendered by our vendors in helping to fulfill our requirements in a cost effective and efficient way. The vendor is our partner in this process, our link to needed resources and technology and, as such, extremely valuable to the County and its operation. The Purchasing Division is committed to helping all vendors have a mutually beneficial business relationship with the County. This can only be accomplished by working together.

All goods and services procured by the County of Kings are done by way of the purchase order process, or for small and emergency purchases, the official Procurement Card (VISA). An official County of Kings order contains an authorized purchase order number and signature. It is the only recognized method for the purchase of goods and services obligating the County for payment.

### **Helping you succeed:**

The Purchasing Division provides assistance to the County departments by identifying qualified vendors, preparing bid documents, coordinating the bidding process, and analyzing vendor responses. Purchasing also provides assistance to prospective vendors by identifying potential opportunities, sharing vendor information with departments, and helping vendors understand the County of Kings policies and bidding procedures.

Making an initial contact with the Purchasing Division is a critical first step to successfully participate in the procurement process. Although we have an open door policy, we recommend that you call and schedule an appointment prior to visiting the Purchasing Division. This will guarantee seeing the appropriate person and we will be better prepared to learn about your company. When you meet with Purchasing, please be prepared to discuss your level of distribution, line cards, references, bonding capability, and any other information you feel will help us understand your products and services. A well-planned and productive meeting will help us to help you.

If you are contacted directly by a County employee, you are to inform the Purchasing Division. This will ensure that the proper policies and procedures are followed to save you time, effort, and increase your opportunities of doing business with the County of Kings.

### **Types of purchases:**

It is the practice of the County to price all purchases whenever practical. This is accomplished by soliciting competitive quotations, bidding procedures, or by negotiated pricing arrangements. Decisions in awarding purchase orders are based upon a vendor's compliance with County specifications, price, delivery, service, terms and conditions, location, or other relevant factors. Different types of purchase awards are as follows:

### **Formal Bids and Contracts.**

Consistent with the California Public Contract and Government Codes, the County solicits Requests for Quotes (RFQ), Requests for Proposals (RFP) or other formal methods of procurement for

contracts exceeding \$50,000 for equipment, goods or services, and exceeding \$130,000 for public works projects. Formal bids may utilize legal advertising, detailed specifications or statements of work, and a formal bid opening at a prescribed date and time. Formal bids are awarded by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Kings. Contracts resulting from the formal bid process may be of several types:

**Firm or Fixed Price Contracts.** Awarded for a specified quantity of goods or services. According to the terms of the contract, delivery may be in one or several shipments.

**Price Agreements.** Awarded for anticipated amounts during a certain time period. These contracts are binding for the full time period regardless of quantity.

**Construction Contracts.** Awarded for a specific public works project. These contracts have additional requirements such as bid, performance and payment bonds, insurance requirements, and must be performed by a licensed contractor.

**Service Contracts.** Awarded for services such as maintenance of equipment or professional services. These contracts are awarded based upon the criteria set forth in the Request for Proposal.

**Informal Quotations and Contracts.** The informal quotation and bid process is used for purchases under the formal bid limits. Purchase orders and contracts resulting from the informal bid process are for a wide variety of goods and services. The award of informal purchases is made by the Purchasing Manager. There are two types of informal quotations normally used:

**Written Quotations.** Informal written quotations are solicited by email, mail or fax without the formalities of a public bid opening or advertising.

**Telephone Quotations.** In many situations, telephone quotations are used to purchase goods and services. You may be assured that any and all telephone quotations will merit the same integrity as a written quotation.

**Procurement Card.** Occasionally, Procurement Cards are set up to allow authorized individuals or departments to purchase low cost/emergency items on an as-needed basis. Procurement Cards are subject to the limitations provided in the County's Purchasing Policy.

### **Shipments:**

It is important that your shipments are addressed exactly as shown on the purchase order. Each shipment must have a packing slip affixed to the outside of the package showing the County of Kings purchase order number and exact delivery address. Failure to identify the shipment properly may cause delays in the receiving and payables process, and may be justification for refusal of the shipment. Partial shipments are not desirable and are not encouraged unless shortness of supply demands split shipments.

### **Invoice/Payment:**

The Finance Department is responsible to ensure that all legal and procedural requirements have been met prior to authorizing payments to vendors. In order to facilitate the timely processing of payments, the following information must appear on your invoice to the County of Kings:

1. The entire County of Kings purchase order number.
2. The vendor name as shown on the purchase order.
3. An invoice number and date of preparation.
4. The vendors' federal identification number.
5. A detailed description and part or item number of material ordered to ensure proper identification.

6. The quantity of goods or services provided.
7. The unit and extended prices of the goods or services provided.
8. The terms, location and date of delivery.
9. Any applicable discounts.

Invoices should not be sent prior to shipment, and remember that the County of Kings purchase order number must appear on all invoices. It is the intent of the County to pay all approved invoices on a timely basis. Incomplete invoices may result in a delay of this process. Invoices should be sent in duplicate to:

**County of Kings**  
**Auditors Office**  
1400 W Lacey Blvd  
Hanford CA 93230  
(559)582-3211

### **Helpful Hints:**

Selling to the County of Kings is not as difficult as you may envision. Some helpful hints to interested vendors include:

- Request, complete and return a Vendor Qualification Form.
- Keep in contact with the Purchasing Division to help identify potential opportunities and to make sure you are on the bid list for the commodities that you sell.
- Respond to every Bid Invitation even if your response is "No Bid". This tells us that you cannot bid at this time but would like to continue to receive Bid Invitations.
- Carefully read Invitations to Bid and Requests for Quotation. Ask questions of the Purchasing Division to clear up any doubt.
- Remember that receiving a purchase order from County of Kings carries with it the obligation to supply the ordered goods or services at the agreed-upon price, at the promised time, and without the need for Purchasing's intervention, renegotiation, or continued expediting.
- Full performance of contractual obligations will help your company earn a favorable evaluation, and present opportunities for further participation in our purchasing program.

### **What you can do as a vendor to help us:**

Do not deliver goods or services to County of Kings without a purchase order number. If you question the validity of a number, call the Purchasing Department. **Note:** Invoices cannot be paid without a valid purchase order. Also...

- Tell us if our specifications for a product can be improved to provide better performance, a longer product life, and/or lower cost.
- Keep us supplied with your latest catalogs and current prices.
- Keep us informed of any problems with shipments, back-order situations, plant closings or impending shortages.
- Deliver on-time the exact items described in the purchase order.
- Refrain from offering gifts or gratuities or anything that could be construed as such.
- Call the Purchasing Division for appointments.
- Notify the Purchasing Division of any address changes.

For more information on doing business with the County, please contact the Purchasing Division