

**Geauga County Public Library
Operating Policy Manual**

SECTION: EXECUTION OF CONTRACTS AND PROCUREMENT
NUMBER: 331
EFFECTIVE DATE: DECEMBER 17, 2024

The Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of prudence, fairness, and compliance with all applicable statutes for the library's purchasing function.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

All expenditures of library funds require a purchase order, except expenditures from those accounts defined by the Auditor of State as allowing direct charges, such as salaries, certain benefits, and tax collection fees. A purchase order is a contract between the library and a vendor or vendors to pay funds for goods or services. Purchase orders are signed by the Fiscal Officer and Director, who certify that the expense is legal, that funds have been previously appropriated by the Board of Trustees, and that monies are either available or in the process of being collected prior to signing.

The Director, as chief administrative officer of the library, or the Assistant Director, in the absence of the Director, shall have the authority to purchase items of equipment or any supplies needed for the routine and normal operation of the library for which funds have been appropriated. Library materials are purchased by the Technical Services department following established procedures.

Furthermore, the Director, or the Assistant Director, in the absence of the Director, shall have the authority to sign, approve, and otherwise endorse service agreements, contracts for the lease of circulating materials and subscriptions, and other operating and maintenance agreements necessary for the safety and protection of the library, its property, staff, and the general public for which funds have been appropriated.

Board approval shall be required for contracts, if such approval is required by law or if the contract represents an agreement extending beyond one year and for contracts exceeding a value of \$25,000. The Director shall report monthly to the board the nature and cost, if any, of any agreements or contracts entered into on behalf of the library in the previous month.

As a political subdivision of the State of Ohio, the library is exempt from paying state sales and use tax, and Federal excise taxes. It is the responsibility of the employee purchasing goods or services to notify the vendor that the library is tax-exempt and to provide proper documentation as required.

REQUESTS FOR QUOTATIONS AND PROPOSALS

For those purchases not falling under the requirements of section 3375.41 of the Ohio Revised Code as detailed at the end of this section, quotations for prices are required for the purchase of individual goods over \$10,000 or service over \$30,000 in total for as long as the current Fiscal

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Officer in in office. Contracts with one vendor for a similar good or service cannot be split in order to override this requirement. The employee wishing to purchase individual goods over \$10,000 or services over \$30,000 in total must secure at least two written quotes from two different vendors, with three quotes preferred.

If it is determined by the Director that there is only one vendor that specializes in this type of good or service, a quotation from only one vendor will be acceptable.

The only exceptions to the threshold are:

- Telecommunications services which are governed through the Universal Services Administrative Company (USAC) federal E-rate program for public libraries
- Goods or services obtained by utilizing or price matching a publicly bid cooperative purchasing agreement
- Proprietary software systems and support agreements used by the library
- Annual maintenance contracts
- Ongoing purchases of library materials
- Legal services for administration

Board approval by a two-thirds vote of the full board shall be required for contracts involving the lease, purchase, sale, or disposal of real property regardless of the value and according to pertinent laws. (See ORC 3375.35, 3375.41)

The board will follow bidding procedures outlined in ORC 3375.41 for contracts to construct, demolish, alter, repair, or reconstruct a library or make any improvements or repairs except in cases of urgent necessity or for the security and protection of library property. In addition, special rules as described in ORC 153.65-153.71 will be followed for the purchase of professional design services.

During construction, change orders in the amount of \$20,000 or less can be negotiated by the Director without prior board approval so that work is not interrupted. The total amount of these change orders cannot exceed the project contingency budget. All change orders must be approved by the board at their next regular or special meeting.

Contracts or change orders with the same vendor for related goods or services cannot be split in order to override the approval requirement.

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