

OSPI Child Nutrition Programs

Procurement Reference Sheet

Simplified Acquisitions Method

The Simplified Acquisition procedures, sometimes referred to as three bids and a buy, may be utilized for the purchase of products or services when the total purchase amount is higher than the micro-purchase threshold but does not exceed the Simplified Acquisition Threshold. The Simplified Acquisitions method was formerly referred to as Small Purchase procedures.

Simplified Acquisition Thresholds

Federal Threshold	State Threshold for Public Schools	State Threshold for Public Schools - Washington Grown Foods
\$350,000 or less	\$75,000 or less	\$350,000 or less

Requirements

- The simplified acquisition method applies when the total dollar amount does not exceed \$75,000, unless the product is Washington-Grown food (as defined in [RCW 15.64.060](#)), in which case the threshold is increased to \$350,000.
- Sponsors must document the use of the simplified acquisition option in written procurement procedures.
- Sponsors must use the most restrictive threshold.
- A written solicitation detailing the product requirements must be developed, ensuring each vendor contacted receives identical information. Products may not be purchased until the sponsor has determined the exact specifications needed.
- Competition is required. Price quotes must be solicited from at least two vendors for purchases ranging from \$15,000 to \$40,000, and from three vendors for purchases ranging from \$40,000 to \$75,000 (\$350,000 for WA Grown) to ensure full competition.
- Sponsors must include applicable federal contract provisions in solicitations, including but not limited to the Buy American Provision.
- When soliciting by phone, the solicitation details must be read to potential vendors, ensuring all vendors receive the same product specifications.
- Price quotes and all other information discussed with responsive bidders must be documented, including but not limited to vendor name; contact method; name of the person providing the price quote; price quoted; and date the price quote was obtained.
- Quotes should be evaluated to ensure respondents are responsive and responsible in accordance with all aspects of the specifications.

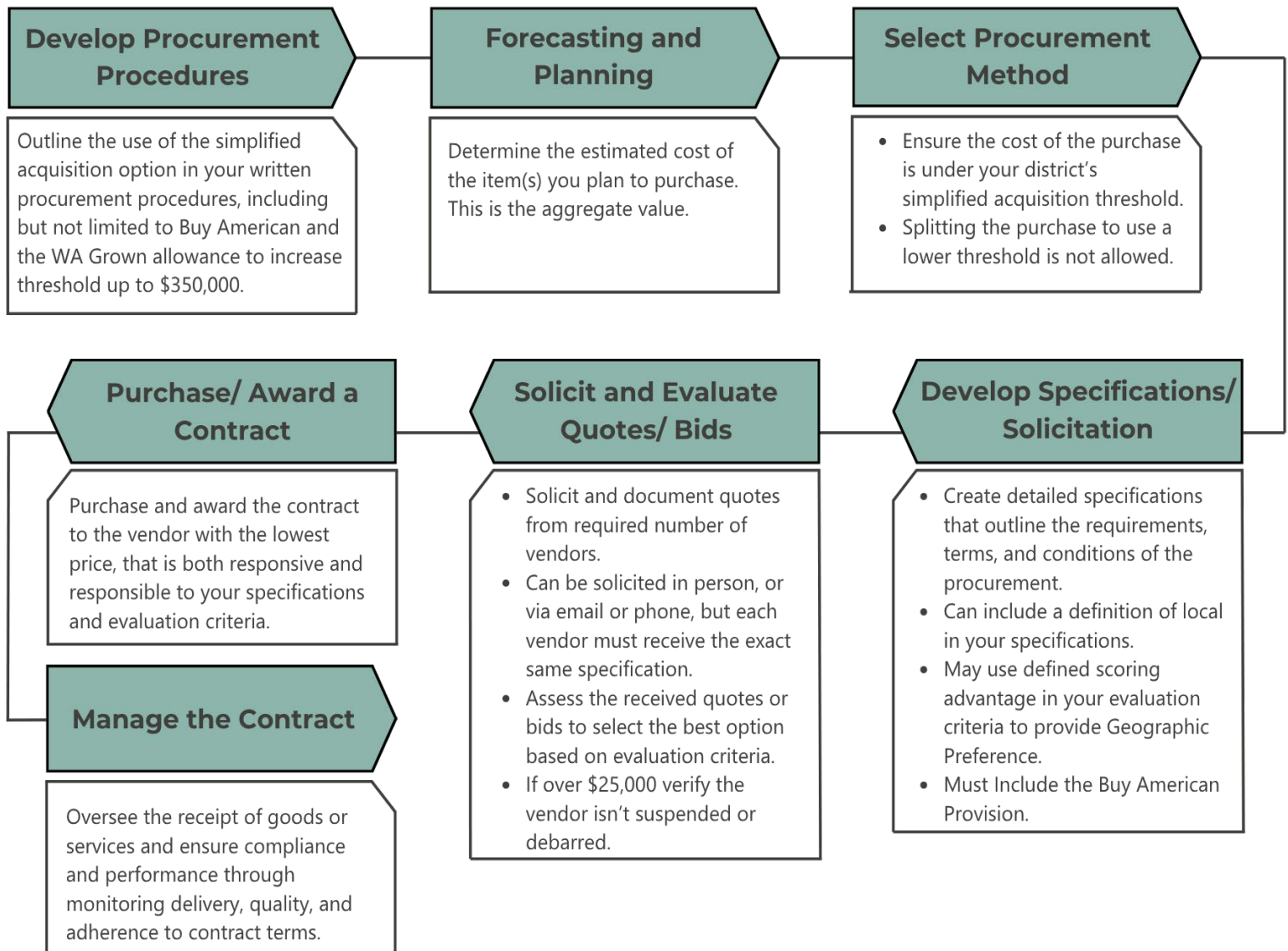


- All procurement records must be kept for three years plus the current year from the date the last invoice is paid, regardless of the procurement method used.

Considerations

- Sponsors can set stricter thresholds in their procurement policies.
- Include additional solicitation specifications to target local products.
- Apple a definition of “local” in the product specification and/or apply a defined scoring advantage if the product is eligible for Geographic Preference. See [OSPI Geographic Preference Reference Sheet](#).
- Deliberately buying smaller quantities to stay under the simplified acquisition threshold is prohibited.
- Sponsors can award based on the quote per individual item or the lowest overall price for all items in the solicitation.

Simplified Acquisition Procurement Process



Checklist

- ☐ Identify what product(s) are needed, in what quantity and when.
- ☐ Confirm that the purchase is eligible for simplified acquisition procedures based on the aggregate value of the purchase and your organization's procurement policies and procedures. Consider whether consolidating purchases would be more cost-effective.
- ☐ Develop a solicitation which may include:
 - Introduction outlining local goals, and preference.
 - Specifications with the description of goods desired.
 - Delivery and packing requirements.
 - Evaluation criteria that detail measurable standards or benchmarks, guiding the review and scoring of vendor quotes.
- ☐ Identify and contact a minimum of three vendors and provide identical solicitation details to all vendors.
- ☐ Document all bids, quotes, and correspondence, including vendor name, contact method, name of person providing quote, price quoted, date quote was received.
- ☐ Evaluate bidders' responses to your specifications to determine which are responsive and responsible.
- ☐ Verify the successful vendor is not suspended or debarred for purchases over \$25,000 per year.
- ☐ Award the contract to the most responsive and responsible bidder at the lowest price, document why the vendor was selected, and why unawarded bids were rejected. Arrange for purchasing, ordering, and delivery.
- ☐ Manage the contract by monitoring invoices and product quality to ensure vendors perform according to the agreed upon prices, specifications, technical requirements, terms, and conditions. Maintain documentation of any returns or exchanges.
- ☐ Retain all records for three years plus the current year.

Utilizing Local

- SFAs can utilize RCW 28A.335.190 and the "Washington Grown" exception to raise their Simplified Acquisition Threshold to \$350,000. For more information, see the [OSPI Washington Grown Reference Sheet](#).
- Districts can choose to request quotes from only local sources.
- Utilizing grant funding that requires you to purchase locally grown foods (i.e. Washington Grown) justifies a separate solicitation from general food procurement.
- Districts can include an introduction section to the solicitation that highlights their local sourcing goals, grant requirements and an overview of their farm to school programing.

Reference

- [2 CFR Part 200 Subpart D - Procurement Standards](#)
- [7CFR 210.10 National School Lunch Program](#)
- [7CFR 215.14a Special Milk Program](#)
- [7CFR 220.16 School Breakfast Program](#)
- [7CFR 225.17 Summer Food Service Program](#)
- [7CFR 226.22 Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)
- [7CFR 250.50 Contract requirements and Procurement for FSMC](#)
- [RCW 28A.335.190 Common School Provisions Bid Procedures](#)

Resources

- [OSPI CNS Procurement webpage](#)
 - OSPI Procurement Reference Sheet
 - [OSPI Simplified Acquisition Template – Local Procurement](#)
 - OSPI Geographic Preference Reference Sheet
 - OSPI Washington Grown Reference Sheet
- [OSPI - CNS Procurement in Child Nutrition Programs Trainings](#)
- [OSPI Procurement Vocabulary Reference Sheet](#)

Acronym Reference

- CFR – Code of Federal Regulation
- CNS – Child Nutrition Services
- OSPI – Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- RCW – Revised Code of Washington
- SFA – School Food Authority
- USDA – United States Department of Agriculture

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