



MCFRS PROCUREMENT MANUAL

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INTRODUCTION

The fundamental role of public (government) procurement is to maximize the value received for the tax dollar. To do this, the MCFRS must: (1) buy competitively; (2) buy wisely; (3) foster good vendor relations; and (4) be proactive and professional in all its procurement activities, while adhering to the requirements of current County procurement regulations, policies, procedures, and programs. In doing so, the MCFRS will be able to ensure that the department is acquiring goods and services that are of the right quality, quantity, and price from the correct source and delivered to the right location at the right time.

The MCFRS Procurement Section provides administrative and technical assistance to all MCFRS organizational units in the procurement of goods and services, the processing and reporting of business-related travel, and the use of the County-issued credit cards. Working with the other MCFRS organizational units, the MCFRS Procurement Section is the agency's primary point of contact with the County's Office of Procurement, Office of the County Attorney, Risk Management Division, and Contract Review Committee for procurement and contract-related matters, and the Department of Finance for P-card and Business Travel activities.

The mission of the MCFRS Procurement Section is to provide procurement and travel-related assistance in compliance with all related requirements of the Montgomery County Code Chapter 11.B, the Montgomery County Procurement Regulations, Montgomery County Administrative Policies and Procedures, and MCFRS Policies and Procedures for the timely acquisition of quality goods and services and the efficient conduction of MCFRS business travel.

The MCFRS Procurement Section adheres to the principle that public procurement has a fundamental obligation to the public it serves to procure in accordance with the intent of laws, regulations, and policies, and strives to conduct MCFRS procurements in a fair and impartial manner. It continually seeks to perform its agency supporting functions while following the basic objectives of public procurement: integrity, efficiency, cost, and best value.

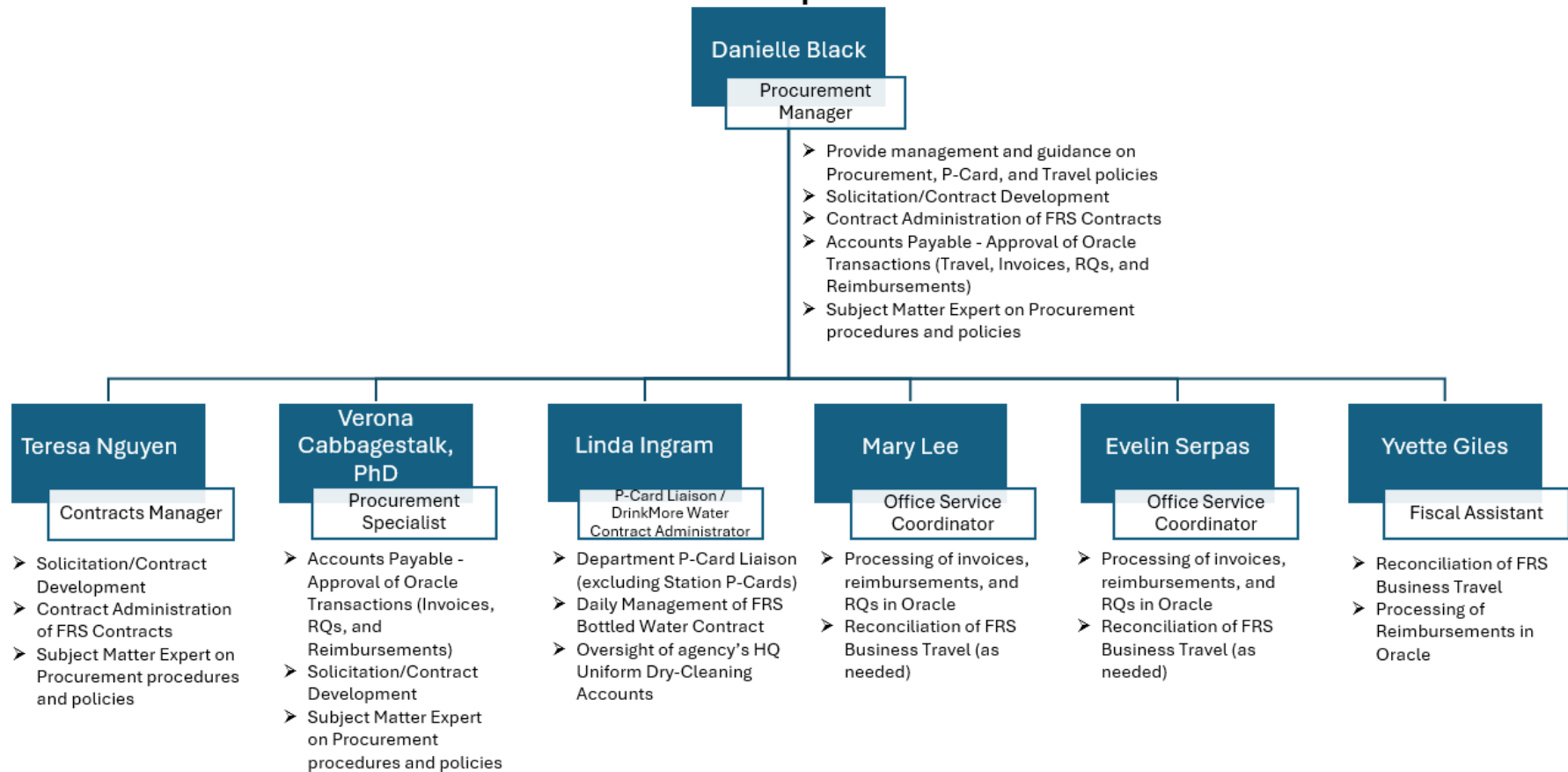
It is the goal of the MCFRS Procurement Section to ensure that MCFRS expenditures of public funds, including State and Federal Grant funds, comply with the terms and conditions of the funding source. Should State or Federal grant requirements conflict with the processes and procedures described in this manual, nothing in the manual should be construed as preventing the MCFRS from complying with the terms and conditions of the State and Federal Grant requirements.

The MCFRS Procurement Section strives to avoid any appearance of impropriety by promoting competition in an open, fair, and consistent manner. It continually seeks to issue specifications that are based on department needs and not to favor a particular vendor. Whenever possible, it encourages local small businesses and minority-owned firms to participate in MCFRS procurements.

The staff of the MCFRS Procurement Section is dedicated to supporting the department in its delivery of fire, rescue, and emergency medical services to the community. It is continually seeking to improve its service to all organizational units by offering assistance in a professional, technically competent manner.

Fiscal Management – Procurement Section

Roles and Responsibilities



SECTION 1.0: PROCUREMENT

FRS has approximately 80 active contracts available for a variety of goods and services. We also have access to most contracts managed by other County departments.

Contracts can be searched on Montgomery County's website: [Montgomery County Contracts](#). If a contract is not available through this link, please contact the FRS Procurement Manager.

1.1 PROCUREMENT CYCLE

The Procurement Cycle begins with the identification of a need for a particular good or service and ends with the disposal of the good or completion of the service. This cycle is composed of four main phases: (1) Requirements determination; (2) Procurement Decision; (3) Procurement Process; and (4) Contract Administration. An overview of the Procurement Cycle is provided in outline format below.

1. Requirements Determination

- Needs recognized or perceived by MCFRS organizational unit
- Resources identified to address needs
- Specifications and supporting documentation development and sent to the Office of Procurement
- Specifications and supporting documentation reviewed/approved by the Office of Procurement

2. Procurement Decision

- Office of Procurement confirms the appropriate method of procurement selected

3. Procurement Process

- Solicitation issued by Office of Procurement
- Responses to issued solicitation received by Office of Procurement
- Received responses tabulated/reviewed by Office of Procurement
- Received responses reviewed/evaluated by MCFRS
- Award recommendation made by MCFRS
- Contract prepared by MCFRS
- Purchase Order created by Office of Procurement
- Contract executed and Purchase ordered issued by Office of Procurement

4. Contract Administration

- Contractor/vendor performance monitored by MCFRS
- Goods and services received and accepted by MCFRS
- Payment invoice submitted by contractor/vendor
- Payment issued by MCFRS
- Ongoing contract performance monitored by MCFRS
- Contract completed or item disposal occurs

The aim of any good procurement function is to obtain goods and services of the proper quality at the best possible prices. Soliciting quotes from qualified suppliers encourages competition and lowers prices. In certain cases, however, it may be impractical to secure bids for specific types of goods or services.

1.2 MONTGOMERY COUNTY PROCUREMENT PROCESS

The Montgomery County process is overseen by the Office of Procurement. The County's

[Procurement Guide](#) can be found at [gives an overview of purchasing procedures that will aid our department to work within the County's Procurement Regulations.](#)

1.3 TYPES OF PROCUREMENTS

In Montgomery County, Formal Solicitations can include Invitation for Bids (IFB), Request for Proposals (RFP)/Best Value Procurement, Open Solicitations, and Requests for Expression of Interest. Informal Solicitations can include Direct Purchases, Emergency Purchases, Mini-Contracts, and Small Purchases. Generally speaking, informal solicitations are classified as those procurements at a dollar level below which it is not practical or cost-effective to go through the formal solicitation process.

obtain competition.

Procurements may also be accomplished through Non-competitive Procurements when there is only one known source of supply, by bridging another public entity contract, and entering into a Public Entity contract by agreement to obtain goods and services from another public entity.

1.3.1 FORMAL SOLICITATIONS

1. INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) / COMPETITIVE SEALED BIDS

A competitive sealed bid is a formal solicitation (Invitation for Bids [IFB]) requesting prices for goods, services, or construction through public notice.

Use:

- When cost is the determining award factor.
- When a purchase of goods, services, or construction will exceed \$100,000.

Overview of Solicitation Process:

<https://montgomerycountymd.gov/pro/resources/Files/General/IFBWorkflow.pdf>

MCFRS Actions:

- Identifies goods, services, or construction;
- Prepares the specifications, statement of work, and quotation sheet;
- Prepares an ORACLE requisition;
- Develops a supplemental list of suppliers;
- Develops special terms and conditions;
- Obtains insurance requirements from the Department of Finance, Division of Risk Management; and
- Determines whether a solicitation will be issued under the Local Small Business Reserve Program (LSBRP) (See section on LSBRP for additional requirements for solicitations issued under the LSBRP).
- Coordinates with other Departments, as needed, related to requirements applicable to their Solicitation (e.g, AP 6-7 (TEBS), PCI (FIN), ADA (DGS))

2. COMPETITIVE SEALED PROPOSALS (BEST VALUE PROCUREMENT)

A competitive sealed proposal is a formal procedure to solicit proposals from suppliers when competitive sealed bidding may not be practical or in the best interest of the County. The competitive sealed proposal is initiated through the Request for Proposal (RFP) process.

Use:

- An RFP is used for the procurement of professional service;
- An RFP is utilized when (1) a Using Department can generally formulate the scope of work or specifications for the services or system to be acquired; (2) there are known sources of supply; (3) competition is anticipated; and (4) the procurement is valued at \$100,000 or more;
- An RFP is used when other considerations, as well as cost, are valid criteria in the evaluation of offers;
- An RFP may also be used for the procurement of construction, goods, or nonprofessional services when the County determines that the use of evaluation criteria authorized for use in an RFP would promote the best interests of the County; and
- Approval to use an RFP instead of an IFB for the procurement of construction, goods, or nonprofessional services is subject to Procurement's approval.

Overview of Solicitation Process:

<https://montgomerycountymd.gov/pro/resources/Files/General/RFPWorkflow.pdf>

MCFRS Actions:

- Prepares the draft solicitation. The draft includes a statement of work, compensation clause, performance period schedule (contract term), method of award, evaluation criteria, proposal submissions, price adjustment provisions if applicable, other terms, and administrative requirements;
- Prepares Oracle requisition;
- Coordinates insurance requirements with Risk Management;
- Determines bonding requirements if applicable;
- Determines whether solicitation will be issued under the Local Small Business Reserve Program (LSBRP) (See section on LSBRP for additional requirements for solicitations issued under the LSBRP); and
<https://montgomerycountymd.gov/PRO/DBRC/lsbrp.html>
- Prepares package according to RFP Checklist and submits completed package to Procurement Specialist.
- Coordinates with other Departments, as needed, related to requirements applicable to their Solicitation (e.g, AP 6-7 (TEBS), PCI (FIN), ADA (DGS))

3. OPEN SOLICITATION

An open solicitation is a process in which the County executes multiple contracts with multiple contractors on a continuing basis. Each contractor must meet or exceed pre-established minimum qualifications. Examples of current open solicitation contracts include instructors, mammography services, Medicaid taxi services, and certain snow removal services.

Use:

When the County desires to award a contract to all persons who meet certain minimum pre-established qualifications.

MCFRS Actions:

- Write a solicitation plan which includes:
 1. Periodic public notices inviting potential contractors.
 2. An application process for a potential contractor to follow in order to obtain a contract under the open solicitation.
 3. Objective Criteria under which an application for a contract will be accepted or rejected, including insurance requirements approved by Finance, Risk Management.
 4. A pre-approved contract form that each successful contractor will be required to execute. (Plan package must include applicable Wage Requirement and MFD forms and an objective method of assigning work.)
 5. The cost of all contracts entered into will not exceed available appropriated funds.
 6. Insurance requirements approved by Risk Management.
 7. Obtains County Attorney approval for the pre-approved contract form;
 8. Obtains approval of the plan package from the Director, Office of Procurement;

1.3.2 INFORMAL SOLICITATIONS

1. SMALL PURCHASE

A small purchase is an informal solicitation for goods, services, or construction. It requires coordination between the Procurement Specialist and the using department. The award must be based on price, responsiveness, and responsibility. The Office of Procurement must contact a minimum of five offerors, randomly selected. At least one of the potential offerors solicited should be a minority-owned business.

Use:

When a purchase of goods, services, or construction will be valued above \$10,000 but less than \$100,000.

MCFRS Actions:

- Prepares informal solicitation (includes specifications, quote sheet, insurance requirements, compliance links, pre-approved terms and conditions-PMMD-45);
- Prepares ORACLE requisition;
- Submits [PMMD-80](#) online E-Form no less than 24-48 hours before issue of solicitation (obtains bidders list of at least five random suppliers, and any additional suppliers noted;)
- Issues Informal (posts for a minimum of five business days) and receives quotes.
- Tabulates and evaluates pricing/quotes.
- Reviews the lowest bidder, including responsiveness and responsibility.
- Drafts contract, obtains insurance, and obtains signatures on contract;

- Submits completed package to Procurement to execute contract. ([See Checklist](#))

2. MINI-CONTRACT

A Mini-Contract is an informal solicitation for professional services, but may also include goods, non-professional services, and construction if applicable. The award is based on the most advantageous offer to the County, including price and other pertinent factors/criteria. The using department must document the basis of the selection. A minimum of five offerors, randomly selected by the Office of Procurement, must be contacted. At least one of the potential offerors solicited should be a minority owned business.

Use:

When a purchase of professional services will be valued above \$10,000 but less than \$100,000.

MCFRS Actions:

- Request random vendor list and issuance from Procurement via [PMMD-80](#) online E-Form;
- Prepare and issue solicitation (send to at least five random suppliers and other suppliers noted) (see above form);
- Receive insurance requirements from Finance, Risk Management;
- Ensure the solicitation is properly advertised on the Office of Procurement's website for a minimum of five (5) business days (see above form), including required insurance, terms and conditions, and other applicable requirements;
- Determine highest ranked offeror (Evaluation criteria, including price);
- Reviews Offeror for responsibility;
- Prepares contract and receives Risk Management approval of insurance;
- Submit completed package to Procurement to review, execute, and approve Purchase Order.

3. DIRECT PURCHASES

A direct purchase is an informal procurement of goods, services, or construction by a department for \$10,000 or less. Competition should be preserved with this method to the extent practicable. Procurements with MFD firms are encouraged. When the need for a particular product or service occurs within a reasonable time frame and can be consolidated, the purchase must be consolidated and not subdivided. A standard contract term length is up to three years; some may be longer.

Use:

- When the goods, services, or construction to be purchased will not exceed \$10,000.
- Generally, when the goods, services, or construction are not provided for in a current County contract.

MCFRS Actions:

- Receives competitive quotes when practical;
- Reviews for responsibility;

- Creates an Oracle direct purchase, direct purchase order or P-Card if applicable;
- Receives delivery of the goods, services, or construction;
- Receives and approves supplier invoice; and
- Posts an Oracle direct purchase, direct purchase order, or uses a P-Card, if applicable.

4. EMERGENCY PROCUREMENT

An emergency procurement is an informal procurement of goods, services or construction required as a result of an emergency. An emergency procurement may be authorized by the Director, Office of Procurement (or designee) or by the Department Head, if the Director, Office of Procurement (or designee) is unavailable.

Use:

When existing facts constitute an emergency, i.e., any dangerous condition or unforeseen curtailment of an essential service or supply that poses an immediate danger (to health, life, or property), and the procurement of goods, services or construction, needed to alleviate the emergency, cannot be accomplished through a timely procurement using normal procedures.

Please refer to the [Procurement Regulations, Section 4.1.11](#) for more information.

MCFRS Actions:

- Requests approval to procure goods, services, or construction from the Director, Office of Procurement;
- Reviews for responsibility;
- Prepares and approves Direct Purchase Order (DPO) for payment (in limited instances, as an exception, a P-card may be used if allowed by the Department of Finance); and
- Forwards a memorandum signed by the Department Head, with a copy to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), to Procurement within five (5) days of the approval, outlining the facts and circumstances involved in the procurement. In extenuating circumstances, the Director may consider this satisfied based on the initial request, as long as it includes the requirements outlined here and the CAO was copied.

1.3.3 NON-COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENTS

1. SOLE-SOURCE

A non-competitive procurement is the acquisition of goods, services or construction without prior public notice or competition. Non-competitive procurements, sometimes referred to as sole source, require department head recommendation with justification in writing. A sole source procurement is made when there is only one source of supply known.

Use:

- When a public purpose will be served and only one source of supply is known.

- When the goods, services, or construction to be acquired are for potential or pending litigation, condemnation, or collective bargaining.
- When a grant (County, State or Federal) specifically identifies a supplier.

MCFRS Actions:

- Prepares memorandum to the Director, Office of Procurement, including justification, requesting approval of a non-competitive;
- Obtains approval from CRC if the non-competitive award is \$100,000 or greater;
- Reviews for responsibility;
- Negotiates and prepares contract documents;
- Obtains signatures of the County Attorney, Contractor, and the Department Head and Procurement (routing order may vary as approved by OCA);
- Prepares Oracle requisition;
- Obtains bonds, if required;
- Obtains a Wage Requirements Certification Form completed by Contractor, if applicable; and
- Obtains approval of insurance from Risk Management.

2. BRIDGE CONTRACTING PROCUREMENT

A bridge contract is an award made, without further competition, to a contractor using competitively solicited prices and specifications from another public entity's contract.

Use:

- When an award by another public entity was made using adequate competition (by solicitation);
- When the goods, services, or construction are materially the same;
- When the pricing is the same (or lower), prices are being charged by the other public entity;
- The contract is current; and
- When in the best interest of the County.

MCFRS Actions:

- Prepares a memorandum signed by the Department Head which supports the requirement to "bridge."
- Prepares Oracle requisition;
- Provides a copy of the supplier's competitively issued solicitation and contract , including all amendments with the public entity;
- Reviews for responsibility;
- Prepares contract and obtains appropriate signatures on contract (Department Head, County Attorney, supplier, and Procurement; routing order may vary as approved by OCA);
- Obtains bonds if required; and
- Obtains Risk Management approval of insurance certificate.

3. PUBLIC ENTITY CONTRACT

A public entity procurement is an agreement to acquire or use any goods, services, or construction with a public entity. A public entity procurement does not require public notice or non-competitive justification.

Use:

- When another public entity will provide goods, services or construction for the County; and
- When entering into an agreement with another public entity, it will serve in the best interest of the County.

MCFRS Actions:

- Prepares contract to obtain goods, services, or construction and reviews the Offeror for responsibility;
- Obtains all signatures on contract including: Public Entity, Department Head, and County Attorney;
- Prepares Oracle requisition;
- Obtains Risk Management insurance requirements and approval of insurance certificate; and
- Obtains bonds, if applicable.

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF SOLICITATION TYPES USED BY MCFRS

Solicitation Type	Contract Value	Solicitation Description	Timeframe to Execute
Informal (Small Purchase)	above \$10,000 but below \$100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal solicitation requesting pricing for goods or services • Awarded based on price, responsiveness, and responsibility • Solicitation issued by department • Issued to Local Small Business Reserves Program (LSBRP) vendors first 	3-5 months
Informal (Mini Contract)	above \$10,000 but below \$100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal solicitation requesting pricing for professional services • Awarded based on the most advantageous offer to the County, include price and other pertinent factors/criteria • Solicitation issued by department • Issued to Local Small Business Reserves Program vendors first 	3-6 months
Invitation for Bids (IFB)	above \$100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal solicitation requesting pricing for goods or services through public notice • Awarded based on price, responsiveness, and responsibility • Solicitation issued by Office of Procurement • Issued under LSBRP unless exemption approved 	6-8 months
Request for Proposals (RFP)	above \$100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal solicitation requesting pricing for professional services (sometimes for goods or services) through public notice • Awarded based on the most advantageous offer to the County, include price and other pertinent factors/criteria • Solicitation issued by Office of Procurement • Issued under LSBRP unless exemption approved 	9-12 months
Non-competitive (Sole-Source)	above \$10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition of goods or services without prior public notice or competition • Non-competitive procurements require department head recommendation with justification in writing and approval by the Office of Procurement • This procurement is made when there is only one source of supply known • Solicitation issued by Office of Procurement 	3-5 months
Bridge	above \$10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition of goods or services without prior public notice or competition • Award made to a contractor using competitively solicited prices and specifications from another public entity's contract • Bridge procurements require department head recommendation with justification in writing and approval by the Office of Procurement • Solicitation issued by Office of Procurement 	3-5 months

1.3.4 SOLICITATION PROCESS (varies depending on solicitation type)

Phase I: Solicitation Development

- FRS requestor identifies need and secures funding
- Request sent to Procurement Manager for review and approval
- FRS Procurement section works with the requestor to develop the scope of services and the solicitation package
- Once finalized, the solicitation package is submitted to the Office of Procurement (PRO) for review and advertisement

Phase II: Solicitation and Advertising

- PRO advertises solicitation for a minimum of 30 days
- PRO reviews bids received and forwards to FRS for review

Phase III: Vendor Evaluation and Selection

- FRS reviews bids received and makes an award recommendation based on pricing and/or evaluation criteria found in the solicitation
- PRO reviews and approves the award recommendation

Phase IV: Contract Negotiation and Execution

- FRS prepares contract package for selected vendor
- Office of the County Attorney and Risk Management review contract package for legality and compliance
- PRO executes the final contract and encumbers funds

SECTION 2.0: CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION

2.1. CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION

Contract Administration is the management of all actions necessary to ensure contract compliance. It is of critical importance to the overall procurement function.

The stated goal of contract administration is to ensure that the goods, services, or construction are delivered and that the contractor adheres to the specifications, terms, conditions, and price written in the contract.

The lack of effective contract administration can result in the payment of more for goods or services than called for, allowing contractors to deliver non-conforming goods or services, and delivering goods and services in less than a timely manner. All factors that adversely affect the MCFRS operation should not be tolerated.

In Montgomery County, Contract Administration is a shared responsibility between the County's Office of Procurement and the User Department, with each agency required to perform specific contract administration tasks and duties.

Contract administration is directed by an authorized government official charged with the responsibility of administering a contract with authority provided in the contract document. The Contract Administrator ensures that the goods, services, or construction are delivered, and that the Contractor adheres to the scope/specifications, terms,

conditions, and price written in the contract. The Contract Administrator also ensures the Contractor's overall performance is in accordance with the contract.

These duties are listed in the General Conditions of Contract Between County and Contractor ([PMMD-45](#)).

2.1.1 The MCFRS, as the User Department, is responsible for performing the following contract administration actions:

1. Prepare specifications that list the technical requirements for solicitations.
2. Attend pre-bid/pre-proposal conferences, when applicable.
3. Review and evaluate received offers and proposals.
4. Prepare the contract documents.
5. Receive and accept goods, services, or construction as written in the delivery requirements.
6. Monitor the vendor/contractor's performance.
7. Identify non-performance issues and coordinate resolution with the Office of Procurement.
8. Prepare periodic vendor/contractor performance reports.
9. Review and approve vendor/contractor invoices for payment.
10. Initiate vendor/contractor payments.

2.1.2 The Office of Procurement is responsible for the following contract administration actions:

1. Assist with resolving non-performance issues.
2. Prepare notice to cure deficient issues.
3. Issue terminations when necessary.
4. Debar vendors/contractors.

The lack of effective contract administration can result in the payment of more for goods or services than called for, allowing contractors to deliver non-conforming goods or services and deliver goods and services in less than a timely manner. All of these adversely affect the MCFRS operations.

2.1.3 Contract Administration is comprised of **three main activities** that ensure the Satisfaction of Requirements, the Timely Delivery of the good or service, and the Protection of Financial Interests.

Satisfaction of Requirements: Achieved through the continuous oversight of the contractor for compliance with all contract requirements. *[The more complex the contract, the more oversight is required.]*

Timely Delivery: Adherence to contracted delivery dates and conditions requires the contractor to avoid a possible breach of contract and to maintain the stated delivery requirements. *[Delivery does not always mean acceptance. A contract may call for the performance of acceptance tests or a specified acceptance period after delivery of the good or service.]*

Protecting Financial Interests: The proper delivery and acceptance of goods or services must be completed before payment. Invoices must be submitted by the contractor for goods or services in a format that is acceptable to the County before the MCFRS can initiate the payment **process**. ***[It is easier to withhold payment than to go to court to obtain a judgment.]***

2.2 **KEY COMPONENTS OF CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION**

A contract is a working document that must be referred to often to make certain that all obligations of both the County and the contractor are being met. The following is a listing of the **Key Components of Contract Administration** that should be used by an MCFRS Contract Administrator or designee.

2.2.1 **Documentation** is an essential component of Contract Administration. Good record keeping provides for effective contract monitoring and is essential to dispute resolution, should contractual issues occur. ***[The contractor is keeping detailed records, so you should do the same.]*** Contract files need to be well-organized and complete. At a minimum, contract files should contain:

- All correspondence with the contractor;
- Summaries of meetings and telephone conversations with the contractor.
- Internal correspondence.
- All reports submitted to the contractor.
- All issued contract amendments, change orders, etc.

2.2.2 **Performance Monitoring**: The level of contract monitoring required for a specific contract is dependent upon a number of factors that can include: type (complexity) of the contract; dollar value of the contract; good or service being procured; and the contractor's past performance. At a minimum, the MCFRS Contract Administrator should:

- Enforce the requirements of the contract.
- Stay abreast of any potential contractual problems.
- Resolve contractual problems before they get out of control.
- Ensure that an appropriate level of quality control measures is part of the contract.
- Provide any technical direction required by the contractor.
- Coordinate activities between the contractor and the MCFRS unit receiving the goods or services.

[Every contract requires some level of performance monitoring by the contract administrator.]

2.2.3 **Status Meetings**: An efficient method of monitoring contract performance is to hold periodic staff meetings between the MCFRS and the contractor. The meetings can be conducted at the MCFRS, on-site at the contractor's facility, at the construction site, via telephone conferencing, or through internet conferencing.

The type of good, service, or construction being procured will dictate how often status meetings should occur. Certain contracts, such as the manufacture of fire

and rescue apparatus and emergency medical services vehicles, call for the performance of factory inspections at some point during the manufacturing process. *[While the inspection of the item at the **factory is a separate action and not to be considered a status meeting, a status meeting most often occurs during the factory visit.]***

Other contracts, such as a requirements contract for station supplies or personal protective ensemble items, require less frequent status meetings. Status meetings for these types of contracts are often conducted via telephone or internet conferencing. Construction contracts typically require weekly status meetings that are held at the construction site.

A good starting point for status meetings is reviewing the performance schedule. By using the performance schedule as the primary basis, any changes in manufacturing and delivery dates can be addressed before they become problems. This is also true for any county-requested changes to design or component features.

Status meetings are an excellent method of maintaining open communications between the MCFRS and the contractor. These meetings allow for problems - real and imagined - to be identified as early as possible and prevent major problems from arising later. Status meetings need to be inclusive of all project stakeholders and should be conducted with the appropriate MCFRS and contractor staff in attendance, whenever possible. *[It is always better to ask the question than to assume the answer.]*

- 2.2.4 **Contract Changes** Contracts can experience changes in conditions. Such changes can be addressed by either a contract modification or a change order. While these terms are often thought to be interchangeable, they are in fact distinct actions.

A **Contract Modification** is any written change in the terms of a contract, which is usually used in a limited fashion. It can be either unilateral (only signed by the contracting officer to make administrative changes, issue change orders, make contract-authorized changes, or issue terminations) or bilateral (signed by both the County and the contractor that serves as a supplemental agreement to the contract).

A **Change Order** is a written order by the contracting officer directing the contractor to make a change. The need for a Change Order can originate from either the County or the contractor. The contract language will specify the process by which change orders can occur and become part of the contract.

A third type of contract change is an option. An **Option** is a contract clause that gives the County the unilateral right to renew the contract term a specified number of times for a specified duration (i.e., three 1-year renewals), add or decrease quantities, and approve pricing or fee schedule increases. (In most contracts, advance notice is required by the County from the contractor for certain options to be considered. It is important that the Contract Administrator be aware of all options contained in a contract.)

- 2.2.5 **Inspections** Montgomery County contracts contain an inspection clause that allows for the right to monitor, inspect and evaluate or test all supplies, goods, or services called for by the contract.

The purpose of including an inspection clause in a contract is to:

- Establish the right to make inspections and tests while work is being performed.
- Establish the right to receive work of a quality consistent with the specifications.
- Establish procedures for quality assurance.
- Require the contractor to maintain and make available inspection records.
- Designate the location(s) where inspections will occur.
- Address the rights and obligations of the County and contractor if defects are discovered before, during, or after inspections.

There are generally three types of inspections available to the contract Administrator or designee: (1) at the time of receipt of the goods or completion of work, (2) while the manufacture or work is in progress, and (3) by the contractor through the use of a quality assurance program.

2.2.6 **Acceptance/Rejection of Goods or Services**

Acceptance is the formal acknowledgement that the goods or services provided conform to the contract requirements. For MCFRS contracts, acceptance occurs after the delivery and receipt of the goods or the completion of the service.

Acceptance of a good or service by the MCFRS can have legal ramifications. Once acceptance has occurred, MCFRS's rights, as the receiving party, are severely limited. Because of the potential consequences, it is important that the acceptance process be properly documented and conducted by the appropriate MCFRS staff.

Goods may be delivered and received by the MCFRS but not accepted for a variety of reasons. It is never acceptable to use a good or service that has not been accepted. Use of an unaccepted item can limit the Department's ability to reject the goods at a later time.

Rejection of a good or service occurs when the delivered good or furnished service does not meet contractual requirements. Montgomery County allows for the Contract Administrator to have the authority to accept or reject a contract's performance.

Since the rejection of a good or service can lead to a contract dispute, any rejection action should be formally handled by the Contract Administrator and be clearly authorized in the contract provisions.

- 2.2.7 **Disputes/Appeals** Throughout the life of a contract, issues can arise that can lead to the submission of a claim by the contractor. By Mutual Agreement is the best way to settle a contractor's claim; however, this is not always possible. As a safeguard to the MCFRS, all contracts should have a dispute clause that clearly identifies the manner in which a contractor may submit a claim and the process

by which a contractor may appeal the Contracting Officer's decision. At a minimum, contract dispute clauses should include:

- Written submission of the Contractor's claim to the Contracting Officer.
- Establishment of a time limit for the issuance of the Contracting Officer's decision.
- Stipulation that a decision by the Contracting Officer is final, unless an appeal is filed.
- Establishment of a time limit for the contractor to file an appeal.
- Requirement for the contractor to continue performing pending a final resolution.

Upon the timely receipt of the contractor's appeal, both the County and the contractor present their respective positions to a hearing officer, who renders a final decision. ***[See the Montgomery County Procurement Regulations, Chapter 14, for the County's Contract Dispute process.]***

2.2.8 Terminations Contract terminations occur when there is a **Contract Breach** ***[a failure of a party to comply with the contractual requirements that allows the other party the legal right to pursue monetary damages or other remedies.]***

When a contract breach occurs, both parties should make every effort to remedy the situation through negotiation. If negotiations fail, the County will need to take more formal (and serious) actions. The more serious actions are: Termination for Convenience, Termination for Default, Termination by Mutual Consent, Suspension, and Debarment. ***[Whether it is through negotiations or a more formal action, any step taken to remedy a contract breach should always be in the form of written notification by the Contract Administrator.]***

Termination for Convenience clause allows the County to terminate a contract whenever it is in the best interest of the County. Upon the receipt of the County's written notice of Termination for Convenience, the contractor must stop work immediately, terminate any subcontractors, and prepare a termination proposal for submission to the County. While a Termination for Convenience clause does not give the contractor a means of recourse to the decision, it is not punitive. There is no penalty to the contractor, and all valid contractor costs up to the date of termination are paid to the contractor. In special circumstances, both the County and the contractor agree to contract termination without fault or further costs to any party. This is known as a **Termination by Mutual Consent**, and MCFRS would perform items 3 and 4 below for this type of contract termination.

Use: When the County determines that the contract for goods, services, or construction, in whole or in part, is no longer required.

- MCFRS Actions**
1. Reviews the contract for goods, services, or construction.
 2. Determines that the contract for goods, services, or construction is no longer required.
 3. Prepares memorandum signed by the Fire Chief, to the Director of Procurement, with justification for termination.

4. Issues payment for outstanding invoices prior to termination.

Termination for Default (Cause) should only be issued after all other attempts to resolve the issues have been exhausted. This type of termination can be extremely damaging to the contractor's ability to secure future business with the County. Before instituting a Termination for Default action, the MCFRS Contract Administrator should consider:

- Would it be more effective to withhold payment until performance has reached an acceptable level?
- Is there an alternative source of supply, if the contract is terminated?
- Is the contractor's financial status sufficient to cover re-procurement costs?
- Would it be better to allow a revised delivery schedule?

[The right of the County to Terminate for Default resides on two prerequisites: reasonable grounds to prove default; and, following established procedures of notification and documentation.]

Reasonable grounds to prove default are usually based on a failure to deliver in a timely manner. The County's procedural requirement calls for the issuance of a **Cure Notice**. A Cure Notice is a written notification by the County to the contractor that the contractor's failure to perform is endangering the contract and that the contractor has a specified period of time (usually 10 days) to remedy the situation or face Termination for Default. The Cure Notice should:

- State that a termination for default may arise unless progress is cured within 10 days.
- State the contractor's liabilities in the event of a default.
- Request an explanation of why the contractor has failed to perform.
- State that failure to explain may be taken as an admission of no excuse.
- Invite the contractor to a conference to discuss issues and possible resolutions.
- Require immediate notification as to how the contract intends to cure the deficiency.

Once it is determined that termination for default is the proper course of action, a formal termination notice is sent to the contractor. The formal notice should:

- Contain the contract number and date, and describe the acts or omissions that constitute the default.
- State the liability for any excess cost of re-procurement of the undelivered goods or services.
- Restate the specific reasons for the termination.
- Provide the rights of the contractor to appeal.

Use: When a contractor has failed to perform/deliver the required goods, services, or construction within the specified time.

When a contractor has failed to comply with the terms and conditions of the

contract.

When a contractor has failed to make timely progress in the completion of the required goods, services, or construction.

- MCFRS Actions**
1. Monitors the contractor's performance.
 2. Prepares a monitoring report of the contractor's deficiencies.
 3. Notifies the Director of Procurement of the contractor's failure to perform/deliver.
 4. Requests assistance from the Office of Procurement in curing.
 5. Requests termination of contract from the Director of Procurement.

2.2.9 **CLOSEOUT/RENEWAL** The **Contract Closeout** process is an administrative procedure whose purpose is to verify that both parties to the contract have fulfilled their contractual obligations and there are no responsibilities remaining. A contract is completed when all goods or services or construction have been delivered and accepted; all administrative actions have been accomplished; and, final payment has been made to the contractor. A contract is considered ready for close when:

- All deliverables have been delivered and accepted by the MCFRS.
- Final payment has been made.
- All monitoring issues have been resolved.
- All property inventory and ownership issues have been resolved, including the disposition of any equipment or licenses purchased under the contract.
- Contractor has been made aware of and is in compliance with records retention requirements.
- A plan has been developed for contract file maintenance.
- Any deficiencies found, as part of the closeout process, have been documented and communicated to all appropriate parties.

Contract Renewal should not occur until the performance of the contractor during the initial contract period has been reviewed. Before renewing the contract for an additional term, make sure that the contractor's performance has been satisfactory and that the goods or services are still required.

2.2.10 **Specifications (Scope Of Work)**

In Montgomery County, **Specifications** are defined as a set of requirements for goods, services, or construction that the County wishes to acquire. The **Scope of Work** is defined as a detailed, written description of the conceptual requirements for the project contained within a Request for Proposal. For the purposes of this manual, the term specification is used to refer to both definitions.

Specification(s) refer to the description of the physical or functional characteristics of a good, service, or construction item. When preparing specifications, it is important to remember that they will be part of the contract and the solicitation.

Effective specifications significantly influence the completeness of the responses received to the issued solicitation, the effort required to make the award recommendation, and the ability to successfully administer the contract. Conversely, poorly written specifications that are vague or unclear can result in the issuance of clarification addenda that delay solicitation openings, increase the likelihood of award protests, and be the root cause of contractual issues and disputes.

Specifications must be clear and concise to avoid the possibility of different interpretations of the "what," "when," "where," "why," and "how" of the good or service to be acquired. More often than not, procurement success is directly dependent upon the development of good specifications.

[As the User Department, the responsibility for specification development resides with the MCFRS. It is critical for the development of good specifications that the MCFRS Procurement Section relies on the knowledge and expertise of the Department's Subject Matter Experts (SMEs).]

For more complex procurements, such as construction projects, a consultant may be engaged to perform the specification development duties. Architectural and Engineering firms are often contracted by the County for this purpose. A good specification should:

- Clearly identify requirements.
- Allow for competitive bidding.
- Allow for flexibility.
- List test methods used to measure compliance.
- Provide the basis for and equitable award.

The more common types of specifications used in solicitations are:

1. **Brand Name or Equal** – Use of a brand name, model number, or other designation that identifies the product or manufacturer, as an example of the salient features or quality level desired. ***[Unless a solicitation states "No Substitute Accepted" or "No Exceptions", equal products may be bid.]***
2. **Combination** – Includes elements of both the design and performance type of specification.
3. **Design**– Establishes the requirements for the product or service by detailing characteristics that the product or service must possess.

[A Design specification is more restrictive than a performance specification, as it gives the MCFRS more control over what is provided. However, it means that the MCFRS takes more responsibility for any error, omission, or deficiency in the specifications.]

4. **Performance** – Describes the capabilities that a product or service must satisfy and includes tests or criteria to measure a product's or service's

ability to perform as required. *[Provides greater vendor flexibility in choosing the item that best meets the Department's performance objective.]*

5. **Qualified Products List** – Used when items can be evaluated and pre-approved prior to accepting bids.
6. **Samples** – Ask for samples at the time of bid submission or request samples after bid opening to evaluate whether the item/s meet specifications.

SECTION 3.0 MCFRS PURCHASING PROCESS

3.1 Purchase Approval Requests (PARs)

All purchases start with the submission of a Purchase Approval Request Form. This form originates from the requestor and is approved by their chain of command.


- PARs are used to request approval for P-Card purchases, purchase orders, direct purchase orders, and requests for goods/services through other offices
- Must be submitted through the online PAR system here:
https://mcgov.sharepoint.com/sites/a_FRS_PAR/
- Must include a purchase description/justification, estimated amount, vendor information, commodity code, ship to address, and contract number, if applicable
- PARs are considered approved when you receive an email from the PAR system with “Fully Approved” in the subject and the approved PAR attached
- It is recommended that PARs for purchase orders be submitted at least two weeks in advance to allow for approval at all levels.
- If you need help with accessing the PAR system, submit a Technology Service Request through Quicklinks
- If you need help with the information to include on the PAR, email the Procurement Manager.

EXHIBIT 1: PAR WEBSITE AND FORM

SharePoint

Search this site

MCFRS Purchase Authorization Requests



Welcome to the updated MCFRS Purchase Authorization Site

[Click here to view the PAR User Guide](#) [opens in a new tab]

[Click here to view searchable list of commodity codes](#) [opens in a new tab]

5 June 2024 Important Updated Information from Fiscal Services

Fiscal Management is now accepting PARs for FY 25 in the new PAR System. POs will be issuing working to have the "FY" selection added to the form. In the meantime, please add FY 25 in

There have been a few changes regarding P-Card PARs which are outlined below:

Sharing of PARs

The new system allows for one name per PAR. While we understand this may cause a challenge caused challenges with P-Card reconciliation and approval of Amazon orders. We recommend make a purchase for each vendor.

Blanket P-Card PARs

Some cardholders submit "blanket PARs" that are intended to cover multiple purchases with year. These are to be avoided because they often do not provide the supervisor sufficient in submitting a PAR for each purchase is impractical. blanket PARs of up to \$5,000 will be allow


Tracking of Spending - Blanket PARs

Due to the increase in audits with P-Cards, we are requesting that each P-Card holder track balance remaining on a quarterly basis (September 30th, December 30th, March 30th and J mcfrs.purchaseapprovalrequests@montgomerycountymd.gov

REMINDER FOR STATION COMMANDERS

Choose "Station Commander" from the "Rank" dropdown menu to route station commande

**User Note: The form is embedded in a frame. Continue to scroll through the frame until you s*



Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Service

Montgomery County, Maryland

Purchase Authorization Request (PAR)

Date of Request *

10-11-2024

Date

Your Information

Name *


3.2 Purchasing Methods

3.2.1 Purchase Order (PO)

- A purchase order is a document that outlines the specific goods and/or services requested from a vendor under a contract. A PO must be requested and issued prior to ordering of any goods and/or services that are under contract from a vendor.
- After a PAR is submitted and approved, a requisition is created in the Oracle system to request the purchase order. POs are approved by the Procurement Office. The PO will have a signature at the bottom, signed by the Procurement Office.

3.2.2 Direct Purchase Order (DPO).

- DPOs are similar to POs but are for goods and/or services with vendors who are not under contract with the County. The vendor must be register in the County's vendor system (<https://azex32.montgomerycountymd.gov/cvrs/>) in order to have a DPO issued. A DPO must be requested and issued prior to the ordering of any goods and/or services from a vendor.
- After a PAR is submitted and approved, a DPO is created in the Oracle system. DPOs are approved at the department level and have a lifetime limit of \$9,999. The DPO does not contain a signature and is issued by the department.

 MONTGOMERY COUNTY
MARYLAND
PURCHASE ORDER (PO)

Marc Erlich
County Executive

Office of Procurement
27 Courthouse Square, Suite 330
Rockville, Maryland 20850-2308

Avanagh G. Shetty
Director

PO

Supplier: **BOUND TREE MEDICAL LLC (18998)**
2807 NETWORK PL
CHICAGO, IL 60678-1238
(1)

Ship To: **FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES
OPERATIONS DIVISION 8P
100 EDISON PARK DRIVE
2ND FLOOR
GAITHERSBURG, MD 20878**

Bill To: **FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES
OPERATIONS DIVISION 8P
100 EDISON PARK DRIVE
2ND FLOOR
GAITHERSBURG, MD 20878**

Purchase Order Information:

MC Buyer	PO Type	PO No.	Revision No.	Revision Date	MC Revision Buyer
ES Fullman	Purchase Order	1176847	0		
MC Dept Contact	MC Dept Contact	Contract No.	POB	Payment Terms	MC Customer Acct. No.
Requested By Lee, Mary E.	Requester Info mary.e@montgomerycountymd.gov	1122762	Destination	Net	

Blanket Purchase Order for Medical and First Aid Supplies.

This Blanket Purchase Order is issued per the Prices, Terms, Conditions, and Scope of Services of Contract #1122762.

Total charges against this Blanket Purchase Order must not exceed the amount listed below.

Questions regarding this Blanket Purchase Order should be directed to Robert Stojanski at 240-832-6471.


PURCHASE ORDER 1176847

Line No.	Description	Quantity	UOM	Unit Price	Extended Price
1	FF-15 ENCUMBRANCE Medical Equipment Replacement and renewal of contract. POC: ROBERT STOJANSKI, CONTRACT 1122762				19.00


Ship To:
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES
100 EDISON PARK DRIVE
2ND FLOOR
GAITHERSBURG, MD 20878

Attachments:

Total: 19.00

MC Contracting Officer:  Date: 24-SEP-2024
PO 1176847

Revised: PIMC-20 Page 1 of 2

 MONTGOMERY COUNTY
MARYLAND
PURCHASE ORDER (PO)

DPO

Supplier: **UNIFORM CORPORATION (2015)**
6201 SHERIFF RD
LANDOVER, MD 20785
(301) 622-9300

Ship To: **FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES
FLEET OPERATIONS
1400 SOUTH LANE
ROCKVILLE, MD 20850**

Bill To: **FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES
FLEET OPERATIONS
1400 SOUTH LANE
ROCKVILLE, MD 20850**

Purchase Order Information:

MC Buyer	PO Type	PO No.	Revision No.	Revision Date	MC Revision Buyer
Mary Lee	DPO	1171208	0		
MC Dept Contact	MC Dept Contact	Contract No.	POB	Payment Terms	MC Customer Acct. No.
Requested By	Requester Info		Destination	Net	

PURCHASE ORDER 1171208

Line No.	Description	Quantity	UOM	Unit Price	Extended Price
1	DISPOSABLE GLOVES Service Contractors NITRILE, 100% NITRILE, 100% NITRILE CLOTHES Ship To: FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES 1400 SOUTH LANE ROCKVILLE, MD 20850				2,500.00

Attachments:

Total: 2,500.00

MC Department Buyer: _____ Date: 15-MAY-2024
PO 1171208

Revised: PIMC-20 Page 1 of 2

3.2.3 Purchasing Cards (P-Cards) Program

The P-Card program provides a cost-efficient alternative payment method for low-dollar purchases. Departments can obtain goods and services directly from suppliers to help improve turnaround time on receipt of orders. An issued P-Card bears the Cardholder's name and can be used to pay for official purchases in compliance with the County's Procurement Regulations and Purchasing Card

Program [Policy](#).

Targeted purchases for the P-Card payment method are those with a total value of \$9,999 or less for items (goods, services, etc.) that are not available under an existing County contract. A PAR must be submitted by the cardholder and approved prior to ordering goods and/or services from a vendor. A TAR is required for all travel transactions and substitutes for a PAR.

Each month, the FRS P-Card Department Liaison sends out an email regarding P-Card reconciliation for the billing cycle.

To avoid delays in getting transactions approved or completed in a timely manner, remember the following:

- Please review receipts before scanning them to make sure they are correct and that there is no MD Sales Tax charged to your purchase(s). Each receipt or invoice must include a detailed description of the item charged and have the same dollar amount as the transaction. The receipt must match the transaction total. If for some reason the receipt has a different total due to maybe a partial delivery, etc., a written explanation should be noted and indicate the total breakdown on both the receipt, and make a note in the comments section in the JP Morgan system.
- Card purchases are Maryland Sales Tax Exempt- please review your receipt(s) to make sure the vendor does not charge Maryland Sales Tax. If Maryland tax is erroneously charged, contact the vendor immediately to get the tax credited back and make a note in the comments section and on the receipt.
- All PARs must be completed and approved prior to making a purchase and dated for the current fiscal year.
- Make sure transactions are allocated to the correct accounting codes.
- When paying a bill for an invoice, if the bill does not include a detailed description, the original invoice should be included.
- An order or email cannot replace a receipt or invoice.
- Disputed charges must be reconciled to include reviewing the reason for the dispute in the comments section.
- Credit transactions must be reconciled, along with submitting the credit receipt(s) when applicable.

The Finance Department will not accept receipts that are not detailed or accurate. Therefore, I will not be able to approve transactions if the receipt is inaccurate or missing.

When disputing a charge, please do not notify both the bank and vendor. It is best to notify the vendor to avoid "disputed rebill" transactions. If a transaction is disputed due to fraud, no paperwork is required. However, if the dispute is due to a duplicate bill or incorrect amount, the original paperwork must be scanned into the transaction. And indicate the reason for the dispute in the comments section.

REMINDER:

- It is prohibited to use the County Purchasing Card for individual meals and

beverages; special occasion items such as funeral expenses, flowers, fruit baskets, candy, balloons, etc.

- Gift Cards or Gift Certificates are only permitted as gifts or awards for an approved program where the recipient is not a county employee.
- Purchase Order (PO) related payments are prohibited on the County Purchasing Card.
- The County prohibits shipping items to a personal or non-county-related address.

For additional information on the P-Card policy, feel free to contact the FRS Department Liaison or refer to the Purchasing Card Procedure Manual Policy.

3.3 INVOICING

3.3.1 Invoice Requirements

When receiving an invoice from a vendor for a product or service, it must meet the Department of Finance, Accounts Payable Invoice Guidelines below:

Invoice Data Requirements

- Invoice should have the Company Name and current address and/or remittance address
- Invoice must be billed to Montgomery County Government (MCG) or MCFRS
- Invoice date
- Invoice number from supplier must be unique
- Description of goods, services, title of project, price, quantity, and/or any information that would describe work or services performed
- Billing period or date of services

Invoice Data Recommended but Not Required

- Valid Purchase Order or DPO number
- Contract number
- Contractor job number

3.3.2 Invoice Processing

If any of this information is missing, the invoice must be updated to comply with the County's invoice requirements prior to submitting to Fiscal Management – Procurement Section for payment. After invoices are received and reviewed by the receiving division/section, they are to be submitted to Procurement's Invoicing inbox (mcfrs.invoicing@montgomerycountymd.gov) for processing.

They must include the following information: 'Received by', signature, date, PO number, and amount to be paid.

Received
2/28/24
\$4039.00
Danielle Black

RECEIVED BY

2/26/2024
\$29,104.94 PO#1164770
No MD Sales Tax Applied

Pamela Montano
Pamela Montano

If there are no issues, invoices are generally processed within two business days of receipt. If there are any issues with invoices received from a vendor that cannot be rectified by the receiving division/section, please contact the Procurement Manager through the Procurement Invoicing inbox for assistance.

SECTION 4.0 MCFRS BUSINESS TRAVEL

MCFRS Business Travel can be considered either Local or Non-Local travel, as outlined below. Montgomery County Government Administrative Procedures 1-2: Non-Local Travel Guidelines and Related Reimbursements and 1-5 Local Travel Guidelines govern all approved department travel. Both AP-1-2 and AP 1-5 can be found at the following County intranet links: [AP 1-2](#) and [AP 1-5](#).

4.1 Local Travel (AP 1-5)

Local Travel is defined as the area within a 75-mile radius of the County Office Building in Rockville, MD. This area includes Baltimore and Annapolis. County vehicles should be used for local travel when feasible.

- Use of a Private Vehicle will be reimbursed at the mileage rate set by GSA. A map showing the mileage being requested must be included.
- Tolls and Parking Fees are reimbursable when receipts showing actual costs and payment are submitted.
- Costs for public transportation and ride sharing are reimbursable when receipts showing actual costs and payment are submitted.
- Costs for meals are normally not reimbursable for local travel, except as outlined in AP 1-5 (Section 4.9 – 4.13).
- Costs for conferences/seminars/training are reimbursable when receipts showing actual costs and payment are submitted.
- Lodging costs are not reimbursable within the local area except for extenuating circumstances, which require the approval of the Fire Chief or designee.

4.2 Non-Local Travel (AP 1-2)

Non-local travel is designated as any area outside of a 75-mile radius of the County Executive Building in Rockville, MD.

- Use of a Private Vehicle will be reimbursed at the mileage rate set by GSA. A map showing the mileage being requested must be included.
- Tolls and Parking Fees are reimbursable when receipts showing actual costs and payment are submitted.
- Costs for public transportation and ride sharing are reimbursable when receipts showing actual costs and payment are submitted.
- Meals and Incidental Expenses will be reimbursed based on GSA rates. Meal expenses include breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, related tips, and taxes. They exclude alcoholic beverages and entertainment expenses. Any meals provided during training and conferences will be deducted from the meal expense reimbursement being requested. Receipts are not required for reimbursements.
- Reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses for lodging is allowed when receipts showing actual costs and payment are submitted. Reasonable judgment should be used in making the choice of accommodations.

- Reimbursement of actual and necessary expenses for air travel and car rentals is allowed when receipts showing actual costs and payment are submitted. Employees should use reasonable judgment when selecting the fare type and vehicle size. Trip insurance purchased for air travel and car rentals is reimbursable.
- Costs for conferences/seminars/training are reimbursable when receipts showing actual costs and payment are submitted.

4.3 TRAVEL REQUESTS

4.3.1 Before Travel

Prior to going on official travel, an employee must submit a [Travel Authorization Request \(TAR\) Form](#) and the appropriate documents through their chain of command and to the Procurement Section for approval. The TAR should be submitted at least two weeks in advance.

Each traveler must submit the following:

- Travel Authorization Request (TAR) Form
- Memo (to include: location and dates of travel, purpose of travel, estimated expenses, and request for advanced per diem [[Sample Memo](#)])
- Brochure/Agenda for conference/meeting
- Request for advance per diem (requested through memo and selected on TAR Form [if applicable])

Once the TAR is approved, the employee can pay for travel-related expenses such as registration fees, airfare, hotel, etc. A P-Card is expected to be used, as these expenses cannot be advanced to the employee prior to traveling.

4.3.2 After Travel

Within ten business days after official travel is complete, the employee must submit a [Travel Expense Voucher \(TEV\) Form](#) and the required receipts/documentation through their chain of command and to the Procurement section for approval and reimbursement. Reimbursements are processed and paid out within a week of receiving a complete TEV package.

Each traveler must submit the following:

- Travel Expense Voucher (TEV) Form
- Receipts (not required for meals)
- Map showing roundtrip mileage (if applicable)

4.3.3 Changes in Travel Plans

If the travel changes after the TAR Form is approved, notification should be submitted to the Fiscal Management section through email at mcfrs.travel@montgomerycountymd.gov. Such changes would include adjustments in the travel dates, different employees traveling than those stated on the approved TAR Form, additional or fewer employees traveling, and changes to the mode of transportation used by the traveling employee (i.e., one-way air travel in lieu of the approved round-trip ground travel). Without this notification, submission of a TEV Form that is not consistent with the approved TAR Form cannot be processed.