



**HIGHLANDS COUNTY FLORIDA
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HOW TO DO BUSINESS WITH THE HIGHLANDS COUNTY B.C.C.**



A GUIDE TO THE COUNTY'S PURCHASING POLICIES & PROCEDURES

HIGHLANDS COUNTY

Highlands County, established in 1921, is located, in Central Florida. With a geographic area of 1,029 square miles the County has a permanent population in excess of 86,000 which increases by about 50% during the winter months. The County seat is in the City of Sebring.

THE GENERAL SERVICES/ PURCHASING DEPARTMENT (GSPD)

GSPD, in addition to its other duties, is responsible for all purchasing either through oversight or by directly doing the purchase, central receiving, and warehousing for the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners (B.C.C.). GSPD operates under the direction of the County Administrator, for the Board of County Commissioners. The annual purchases constitute an expenditure of approximately \$20,000,000 for a wide variety of products and services.

THE ROLE OF VENDORS AND SUPPLIERS

We understand the important role that good suppliers play in the County's ability to fulfill its mission. It is therefore, GSPD's intention to develop good and mutually beneficial business relationships with our suppliers. It is our policy to deal fairly and objectively with all suppliers. It is also the County's policy to only buy from suppliers who have adequate financial strength, high ethical standards, and a record of adhering to specifications and shipping commitments.

HOW TO BECOME AN APPROVED VENDOR

Any vendor may apply to become a vendor by written application. A Vendor Application form, which will expedite the application request, may be obtained from GSPD or our Web site. Once the application is received, the vendor will be added to the appropriate database of vendors classified by products and/or services using the commodity/service codes used by the State of Florida. As requirements for products and services arise, vendors will be contacted for quotations, bids, or proposals.

EXAMPLES OF PRODUCTS AND SERVICES ROUTINELY PURCHASED

PRODUCTS

Ambulances	Concrete	Fire Equip.	Janitorial Supp.	Office Supplies
Asphalt	Construction Mat'ls	Fuel	Light Equip.	Radios
Baserock	Culverts	Heavy Equip.	Office Furniture	Uniforms
Computers		Herbicides		Vehicles

SERVICES

Architectural	Drug Testing	Financial Auditing	Mowing and Spraying
Building Construction	Engineering	Health Benefits Admin.	Road Constrctn & Paving

THE PURCHASING PROCESS

GSPD procures all products and services in full compliance with Florida Statutes and B.C.C. adopted Purchasing Policies and Procedures. These policies include purchasing products and services through competitive quotations and bids while striving for a high standard of quality of products and services.

Various methods are used for procurement. The specific method used in each case will be selected based on purchasing thresholds, types of products and services to be procured, applicable Florida Statutes, B.C.C. Policies, and GSPD's discretion, as appropriate. As a practical matter, the most typical methods and processes are generally described below.

GOOD PURCHASING PRACTICES for purchases up to \$749.99 with a County Visa credit card.

VERBAL and WRITTEN QUOTATIONS are the primary methods used for routine purchases of products and services with verbal quotes used from \$750.00 to \$5,000.00, and written quotes from \$5,000.00 to \$25,000.00. Once quotations are received, a decision is normally made very quickly based on the lowest quote meeting specifications and a Purchase Order is issued.

INVITATION TO BID and REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL . These two methods are used for projects and purchases in excess of \$25,000 and are considered to be formal processes. When either of these methods are used, they are advertised in a local newspaper and on our Web site. Interested vendors must submit a written response, in a sealed envelope, by a specified date and time.

In addition, the announcement may also be distributed by US mail, E-Mail, or Faxed directly to all relevant vendors on the County's Vendor Database. On the prescribed deadline, all sealed bids and RFP's are publicly opened and read aloud. No bids or proposals are accepted after the deadline. An award is then made in accordance with the criteria specified in the Bid or RFP.

OTHER METHODS. From time to time GSPD exercises other methods of procurement via options such as: a Request for Qualifications; or the use of State or other Counties' contracts; emergency purchases; sole source; etc. When these methods are used they are exercised within the provisions of Florida Statutes and B.C.C. adopted Purchasing Policies.

PAYMENT

Invoices for payment should accompany the shipment. If not they shall be sent to the Department that received the order.

Payment is generally issued within thirty days after approval of the invoice.

GIFTS AND GRATUITIES

B.C.C. policy prohibits any County employee or members of their family from receiving any gift, benefit, and/or profit resulting from any contract or purchase. B.C.C. policy also prohibits acceptance of gifts of any kind other than advertising novelties valued less than \$10.00.

This brochure is designed to provide an introduction to doing business with the County. It describes in general the policies, procedures, and methods used when purchasing products and services. It is important to note, however, that it is not intended to comprehensively describe all the statutes, policies, and other factors governing the County's purchasing practices and it is subject to change without notice.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information or to request an application form, contact the General Services/Purchasing Department at:

General Services/Purchasing Department
Highlands County B.C.C.
4320 George Blvd.
Sebring , FL 33875-5803
863-402-6524 Fax 863-402-6735

E-mail: purchase@bcc.co.highlands.fl.us

Web site: www.hbcc.net/generalservices/GeneralSvcs.htm

Purchasing Hours

Mon-Fri 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Receiving Hours

Mon - Fri 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.