

Purchasing FAQ

What is the Purchasing Policy?

Eastern Michigan University operates within a centralized purchasing system. Only the Purchasing department has the authority to obligate the University for the procurement of services, supplies, material and equipment, in accordance with the University policies and practices.

What is a Purchase Order and why do I need one?

A Purchase Order (PO) is a document issued by EMU to a vendor, indicating the type, quantities and agreed prices for products or services the vendor will provide to EMU. Sending a PO to a supplier constitutes a legal offer to buy products or services. Without a PO, a vendor could demand personal payment from the individual making the request.

PCard vs. PO; why one or the other?

The [PCard](#) provides instant payment to vendors for small dollar purchases and should be used whenever possible. A PO should be requested when a PCard is not accepted by a vendor; the purchase is over the pre-set spending limit, or the purchase is restricted by the [PCard guidelines](#).

How do I get a PO?

The Purchasing department needs to receive a written requisition or a Banner requisition for a PO that provides the information the vendor will need along with the signature or approval of the fund/org manager.

What is a Banner requisition?

A Banner requisition, also known as an on-line requisition is an electronic request that is entered into Banner and electronically routed to the proper individuals for approval. Once received by the Purchasing Department, a PO will be issued and sent to the vendor.

Will paper requisitions go away?

Eventually, yes. By submitting your requisitions "online" you or your staff will be able to avoid walking around campus getting signatures on requisitions from the account signatory, accounting, or grants offices. You can also eliminate the need to purchase paper requisitions, and the maintenance cost of your typewriter. Most important, it can reduce the time it takes to turn a requisition into a purchase order.

How can I start using "on-line requisitions"?

Look for information in Fall 2008 from the Purchasing department about upcoming training sessions.

When creating a requisition to send to Purchasing, how do I know which buyer to direct my requisition?

Buyers are assigned commodities. When using Banner, your request is automatically routed by the commodity code you select. If you are using a paper requisition, the clerical staff will enter your requisition into Banner and it will be routed the same way. To contact the buyer most closely aligned with your requirements, click on the [Staff](#) link.

I have a purchase that requires a down payment or a prepayment, what is the procedure?

A PCard can be used to pre-pay any purchase that falls within University PCard guidelines. If you cannot use a P-Card, a requisition may be submitted along with pro-forma invoice, completed registration, or subscription form requesting a specific amount to be paid.

What is the EMU's tax-exempt number?

The Eastern Michigan University has not been issued a tax-exempt number by the State of Michigan; it is exempt by statute (Michigan Public Act No. 167 of 1933, Section 4, as amended). If a vendor is requesting a printed document, ask them to contact the Purchasing Department at 734.487.1200

Why must requests for orders over \$2,500 go out for bids?

Goods and services valued over \$2500 must go out for bid to assure a fair and reasonable price in an open and competitive environment. The [Preferred Vendor Program](#) offers products that already have been through the competitive bid process.

What is a "Sole Source" request?

A [sole source](#) is a request to purchase an item which can only be purchased from one vendor (thus a competitive environment does not exist). Adequate justification is required substantiating that no other vendor can supply the item. Also provide reasons for the request for this item (e.g. compatibility, spare parts, labor, training, design/performance specifications and/or uniformity). Sole source requests must be approved by the Director of Purchasing prior to order placement.

Why must I get approval to order radioactive materials?

Radioactive material is subject to Federal Regulation. Radiation Safety Committee is responsible for the amount of radioactive material on campus and its handling.

Why must I go through a committee for approval to order animals?

University policy states that vertebrate animals may be procured only for projects that have been approved by the University Committee on Use and Care of Animals.

What are the guidelines on what furniture we can order?

There are different standards for furniture, depending on the building and department. Contact the Physical Plant Facilities Manager for the standards in your area.

The [Preferred Vendor Program](#) has links to customized catalogs of furniture specially selected for EMU.

It's my money (department) - why all the approvals?

The money is actually awarded to Eastern Michigan University even though the funds have been allocated to the department. Since these are University funds, rules and regulations must be followed and the approval process ensures this happens.

How do I return an item purchased on a purchase order?

Contact the appropriate buyer and provide the following information: Vendor name, PO number, and the reason for the return. Some vendors may charge a restocking fee for returned items.

What does “encumbered” mean?

It means that funds are reserved until the item is actually paid for. PO's are always encumbered while credit card transactions are not.

What if there is an encumbrance on my statement that I'd like removed?

Send an email to the Purchasing department emu.purchasing@emich.edu. Provide the PO number, the vendor name and the amount to be liquidated; your request will be handled by the appropriate staff.