
FISCAL TOPICS

Fiscal Services Division

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Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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State Procurement Policy Overview

All procurements for goods and services are the responsibility of the Department of Administrative Services — Central Procurement Bureau (CPB) unless an agency has been granted independent purchasing authority under the Iowa Code or by executive order or if the agency has a Purchasing Agent (PA) or Agency Authorized Purchaser (AAP) with the required training certification.

Methods of Procurement

Methods of procurement can be informal or formal. Informal procurements are for transactions up to \$50,000 and require sealed quotes from no fewer than three vendors. Informal procurements are not required to be publicly advertised but must be documented using the DAS-CPB [Informal Quote Documentation Form](#). Formal procurements are competitive, sealed, and typically involve transactions of \$50,000 or more, received by either bid or proposal. Formal procurements must be posted publicly, and once the bidding period has closed, the bids may be opened publicly as well.

It is the policy of the State to obtain goods and services through competitive procurements, although there are circumstances in which competitive procurement is not in the best interest of the State. In noncompetitive procurement, the PA or AAP obtains a single quote or uses predetermined fixed prices.

The three main methods of competitive procurement are Request for Quote (RFQ), Request for Bid (RFB), and Request for Proposal (RFP). Each method has different purposes and requirements.

- **Request for Quote** — An informal solicitation method for purchases under \$50,000. Quotes must be requested from no fewer than three vendors, and are most often used to procure specific or easily defined goods or services.
- **Request for Bid** — A formal solicitation method which is always publicly advertised. The request must include well-defined specifications and/or scope of work. The PA or AAP must solicit bids from prospective vendors, and bids must be received at a specific time, date, and place. The bids may be opened publicly and the procurement is awarded to the lowest responsible bidder.
- **Request for Proposal** — A solicitation method used when price is not the sole consideration. The request specifies the date, time, and location where the sealed proposals must be received. The contents of the proposals do not become publicly available until the Notice of Intent to Award is issued. In determining which proposal is to be issued the award, the cost of the proposal and the technical scoring of the proposal are scored separately and then combined to create a final proposal score. The scoring committee then recommends the vendor with the highest score. Once the Notice of Intent to Award has been issued, a five-day appeal shall run, and the official contract can be negotiated. DAS-CPB may cancel the award if the parties fail to reach an agreement within a reasonable time frame.

After the award of the contract, all material in the contract record, except that material which a vendor has requested remain confidential, shall be open to interested persons under the Iowa Public Records Act. Additional information can be found in the [Department of Administrative Services Procurement Manual](#).

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More Information

DAS Procurement: das.iowa.gov/procurement

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