



PROCUREMENT INFORMATION SHEET

1. What is procurement and why is it required?

Procurement in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is the process of sourcing, purchasing, and receiving goods, and overseeing services that are paid for by federal funds. It promotes full and open competition to ensure the best cost and quality of goods and services. Proper procurement avoids conflicts of interest, creates transparency, and results in cost effectiveness. It is a regulatory requirement of the NSLP.

2. Where can the procurement regulations be found?

The [Code of Federal Regulations](#) is an online portal where you will find NSLP procurement information and regulations. Specific procurement links are listed below.

- [2 CFR Part 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements](#)
- [7 CFR Part 210 – NSLP](#)
- [7 CFR 225 – Summer Food Service Program](#)

3. What are the methods of procurement?

- **Informal** (estimated value of a procurement for goods or services is below the simplified acquisition threshold) – less than \$150,000 annually per vendor.
- **Formal** (*must* be used when the estimated value of the contract or purchase exceeds the simplified purchase threshold) – more than \$150,000 annually per vendor.
- **Noncompetitive** (specific circumstances must apply per regulations) – to conduct a Noncompetitive Procurement, please reach out to scnprocurement@doe.in.gov.

4. Under the procurement methods, what are the thresholds and procurement procedures?

- **Micro Purchase** (Under **\$15,000**) – No quotes needed if the annual spend does not exceed **\$15,000**. A School Food Authority (SFA) may increase their micro-purchasing threshold to **\$50,000**, if self-certification requirements are met on an annual basis in their procurement plan.
- **Small Purchase** (Between **\$15,000** and **\$150,000**) – Must obtain 3 quotes and select the most cost-effective quote. Price should be the highest determining factor.
- **Large Purchase** (Over **\$150,000**) – Must be either an Invitation for Bid (IFB) or Request for Proposal (RFP). Clear specifications and evaluation criteria should be developed for both and should not be unduly restrictive. Solicitation must be publicized, and a public opening for bids and proposals must be held.

5. What is the NSLP procurement plan?

The NSLP Procurement Plan is a document that outlines the responsible party for each procurement task, the different methods of procurement, and defines the Code of Conduct for the SFA.

6. How do I procure/purchase equipment?

Equipment is defined as being a tangible item that has a value of over \$10,000 on an individual basis and a useful life of more than one year. Information on equipment procurement can be found on the Indiana Department of Education's (IDOE's) website by clicking [here](#). For questions, please reach out to scnprocurement@doe.in.gov.



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

7. How do I procure a Third-Party Food Service Management Company or Vendor to manage my school lunch program?

Information on procuring a third party vendor to manage the NSLP can be found on the IDOE website here, [Procurement - FSMC and Vendors](#). Please, reach out to scnprocurement@doe.in.gov.

8. What is an SFA Cooperative purchasing group (Co-op) and why are they formed?

A group of only SFAs that join for better pricing and contracts. They are formed to increase purchasing power when procuring goods and services. SFA Co-ops do not need to be procured by the individual SFA. Procurement is conducted by the Co-op on behalf of its members. Information on SFA Co-ops can be found on the IDOE website here, [Cooperative Purchasing](#).

9. What is a Third-Party Purchasing Organization or Group Purchasing Organization (GPO)?

Third Party Purchasing organizations and GPOs include schools and other entities that join for better pricing and contracts. They are formed to increase purchasing power when procuring goods and services. They must be procured by the SFA according to the proper procurement method.

10. What are the deadlines for procurement documents?

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| • SFA Co-op registration | January 31 |
| • Beginning of FSMC and Vended Meals Contract Season | January 15 |
| • FSMC Renewals (Signed) | June 30 |
| • FSMC New Contract (Signed) | June 30 |

11. Who do I reach out to with questions and what resources are available?

For any general procurement questions, please reach out to, scnprocurement@doe.in.gov.

For general guidance and available resources, please refer to the procurement section of the IDOE website, [Indiana Department of Education - Procurement](#).

The U.S Department of Agriculture provides information on procurement regulations here, [USDA Child Nutrition Programs Procurement Regulations](#).