

HIDALGO COUNTY PURCHASING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

I. INTRODUCTION

1.01 The Purchasing Department of Hidalgo County, Texas (the “Purchasing Department” or “Purchasing”) was created by the Hidalgo County Commissioners Court (the “Commissioners Court”) on May, 03, 1988, pursuant to the provisions of Texas Local Government Code § 262.0115. As a result, the Commissioners Court has appointed a Purchasing Agent to coordinate the purchases made by Hidalgo County, Texas (the “County”). The Purchasing Agent serves at the pleasure of the Commissioners Court, and is authorized by statute to make all purchases not subject to competitive bidding requirements, supervise the competitive bidding process, and receive and deliver materials purchased in accordance with contracts awarded by bids. In addition, the Purchasing Agent is required by statute (Tex.Loc.Govt.Code § 262.023) to adopt, to the extent practicable procedures calling for competitive bidding of all purchases of items not required to be competitively bid under the County Purchasing Act, Tex. Loc. Govt. Code, Ch. 262 Subch. C and other applicable statutes. Pursuant to the requirements established by the Commissioners Court and the Local Government Code, these Hidalgo County Purchasing Policies and Procedures are adopted by the Commissioners Court on this the 8th day of August, 2005, to be effective for all purchases by the County, or any department or agency thereof, requested on or after August 08, 1995.

II. OBJECTIVE OF THE CENTRALIZED PURCHASING PROGRAM

- 2.01 A centralized purchasing program has been established in the County to achieve The objectives listed as follows:
 - 2.01.01 To obtain goods and services at the best price possible.
 - 2.01.02 To obtain goods and services best suited to the particular needs of the County.
 - 2.01.03 To ensure the timely delivery and adequate availability of goods and services.
 - 2.01.04 To ensure that purchases conform to state law, County policies, the County budget any payment ability.
 - 2.01.05 To ensure that all responsible prospective providers of goods and services to the County are afforded an equal opportunity to compete for County contracts.
 - 2.01.06 To ensure that public spending is not used to enrich elected officials, department heads or government employees, or to confer favors on favored constituents, or to give the appearance of impropriety.

III. PURCHASING CODE OF ETHICS

3.01 **Statement of Purchasing Policy.** Public employment is a public trust. It is the policy of the County to promote and balance the objective of protecting government integrity and the objective of facilitating the recruitment and retention of personnel needed by the County. Such policy is implemented by prescribing essential standards of ethical conduct without creating unnecessary obstacles to entering public service.

Public employees must discharge their duties impartially so as to assure fair competitive access to governmental procurement by responsible contractors. Moreover, they should conduct themselves in such a manner as to foster public confidence in the integrity of the Purchasing Department.

6.02.03 Form HCPD-01 *must* be completed in its entirety. Incomplete Requisition Forms will be returned to the requesting department and will delay the order and delivery of the requested goods and services.

6.03 **Requisition Priority Designations.** Each form HCPD-01 must contain a priority designation and state a definite date by which the items are needed (i.e....not “Rush” or “ASAP”). The priority categories set forth below will be strictly adhered to, and the Purchasing Agent is authorized to investigate priority designation to determine abuse or potential abuse of expedited purchasing procedures. Requisitions are divided according to the type of action required on the purchase.

6.03.01 **Routine-** (for all normal purchasing transactions requiring a Requisition Form). The Purchasing Department will process these requisitions using routine procedures set out in Procedures Number 6.04.01. Routine Purchases are designated **Priority Four**.

6.03.02 **Expedited-** (for items that are needed sooner than the normal purchasing process would be able to get them). The only legitimate loss of the County’s money. Expedited purchases are not emergency purchases. They are for items needed quickly to prevent costly delays, and therefore warrant the additional cost and effort caused by the interruption of the normal purchasing routine. However, They are not to be used unless absolutely required. The two types of Expedited Purchases are:

a. **Walk Through-** (for items needed within ten working days to avoid work interruption, loss of service or significant added cost of operations). The Purchasing Department processes these requisitions using routine procedures set out in Procedure Number 6.04.02. The requisition and other documents are hand carried through the purchasing process by the requesting department. These purchases are designated **Priority Three**.

b. **Work Stoppage-** (for items needed immediately to prevent work stoppage due to unanticipated requirements). The Purchasing Department processes these requisitions using routine procedures set out in the Procedure Number 6.04.03, but the process may be started by telephone request to the Purchasing Department, followed by delivery of a completed Requisition Form HCPD-01. These purchases are designated **Priority Two**.

6.03.03 **Emergency-** (for all requirements because of an emergency condition as defined In Procedure Number 9.01.01). The Purchasing Department processes these requisitions using routine procedures set out in Procedure 6.04.04 These purchases are designated **Priority One**.

6.04 Processing of Requisitions

6.04.01 Priority Four Requisition. When a requisition is received in the Purchasing Department, it must be verified for accuracy, authorization and budget authority. Purchasing will do the following: a) check the requisition for completeness; b) Check computations for accuracy; c) verify contract provision (if purchases under existing contract); d) verify authorizations against authorization lists; e) verify budget authority (budget line-item authority and unencumbered budget