

**SMART BUYING**

# **PROCUREMENT GUIDE**



## **DOING BUSINESS WITH THE COMMONWEALTH**



**The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of General Services  
Bureau of Procurement**

[www.dgs.state.pa.us/procurement](http://www.dgs.state.pa.us/procurement)

Get Started at...



The **Pennsylvania E-Marketplace Portal** is your one-stop shop for Bidding, Awards and Contract Information. Even before your company has registered with us, you can browse the site to see if your company is ready to do business with the Commonwealth. **Key features include:**

- **Solicitations** – Search and view current opportunities.
- **Solicitation Tabulations** – An overview of the suppliers and pricing for previous solicitations. These do not constitute an official award.
- **Awards** – A list of all recent awards in response to Solicitations.
- **Search Contracts** – Search the Commonwealth database for state contracts awarded by DGS and other agency-selected contracts.
- **Sole Source Procurements** – Includes all agency requests for sole source purchases of supplies and services which require DGS approval.
- **ITQ** – Descriptions of open ITQ (Invitation To Qualify) contracts and instructions on how to pre-qualify.
- **Upcoming Procurements** – A list of procurements before the formal advertisement is posted.

To access Pennsylvania E-Marketplace, visit:

[www.emarketplace.state.pa.us](http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us)

**Registering with the PA Department of State** – Under Pennsylvania law, every proceeding for the organization of corporations, both for-profit and nonprofit, and every ancillary transaction relating to such corporations is required to be filed with the Department of State Corporation Bureau. Other businesses registering with the Bureau include: professional corporations, municipal authorities, and limited partnerships, foreign corporations qualifying to do business in the Commonwealth and individuals and corporations conducting business under an assumed or fictitious name.

**Online forms for registering with the DOS can be found at:**

[www.dos.state.pa.us/corps](http://www.dos.state.pa.us/corps) (Click on “Forms” sidebar link)

Register and  
Bid at...



If your company has never done business with us, we encourage you to register your business at the **PA Supplier Portal**. This allows you to search and respond to Commonwealth bidding opportunities, and to manage your account information. If your company already has a 6-digit supplier number issued by the Commonwealth, you may already be registered with us.

To register, visit the **PA Supplier Portal website at:**  
**[www.pasupplierportal.state.pa.us](http://www.pasupplierportal.state.pa.us)**

For assistance, call the **Help Desk** at (717) 346-2676 or (877) 435-7363.

## Bidding Opportunities

Go to [www.emarketplace.state.pa.us](http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us) to find all current and archived bidding opportunities. Other solicitations can be found by contacting the agency's procurement office. **Common types of solicitations include:**

- **IFB** (Invitation for Bids): Competitive sealed bidding for a product or service, awarded to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.
- **RFP** (Request for Proposals): Competitive sealed proposals are used when an agency is seeking a solution. Award is based on points established for cost, technical and disadvantaged business.
- **ITQ** (Invitation to Qualify): A prequalification process for multiple-award contracts. Award to individual contractors can be done on a low cost or best value basis.
- **RFQ** (Request for Quote): Used when an agency is seeking a price from suppliers on a contract established through the ITQ process (exception: IT ITQ).
- **RFQ IT ITQ** (Information Technology Invitation to Qualify): Used for a price quote from suppliers on the IT ITQ contract when the procurement is less than \$5 million.

# Summary of Commonwealth Contracting Process



## Procurement Regulations

**Procurement Handbook:**

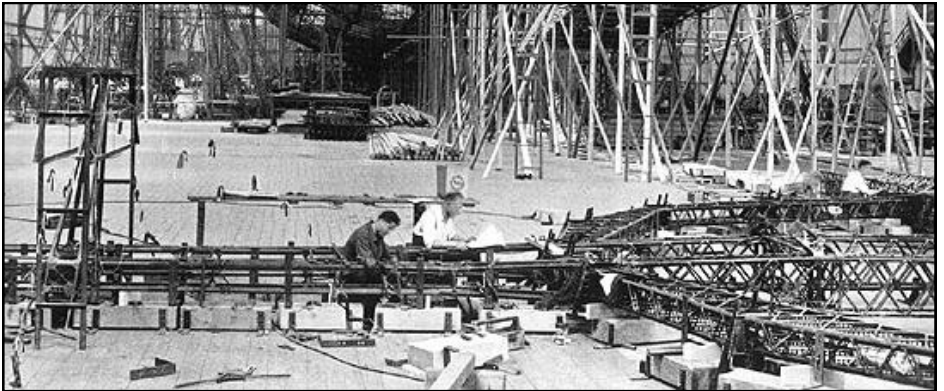
[www.dgs.state.pa.us/procurement](http://www.dgs.state.pa.us/procurement)

(Click on "Procurement Handbook" sidebar link)

**Procurement Code:**

[www.dgs.state.pa.us/procurement](http://www.dgs.state.pa.us/procurement)

(Click on "Procurement Handbook" sidebar link, then "Procurement Code" link)



**Construction** – The Bureau of Professional Selections and Administrative Services administers the selection of architects and engineers, advertises projects for bid, obtains construction bids, executes construction contracts, and manages budgets for construction projects. For more information about Department of General Services, Public Works, Bureau of Engineering & Architecture, e-mail [gs-construction@pa.gov](mailto:gs-construction@pa.gov) or call (717) 787-3923.



For invoice related questions, please contact:

## **Payable Services Center (PSC) Division**

The PSC Division serves as the primary point of contact for Commonwealth external vendors. The division's responsibilities include: handling vendor activities (W 9's, 1099's, Replication, master vendor file support corrections), issuing resolutions through the call center, maintaining vendor data across the enterprise and scanning documents that are not scanned centrally by the Department of Revenue.

In order to provide excellent customer service to commonwealth suppliers, customers and agencies, Comptroller Operations has established a new Payable Service Call Center. This Call Center responds to questions related to payment status, registration, invoice processing and much more!

### **How to Contact PSC**

Please call the Payable Services Call Center toll-free at 877-435-7363 [Option #1] or use one of the e-mail addresses provided below:

**Payment related inquiries:** [RA-PSCPaymentInquire@pa.gov](mailto:RA-PSCPaymentInquire@pa.gov)

**General supplier requests:** [RA-PSC\\_Supplier\\_Requests@pa.gov](mailto:RA-PSC_Supplier_Requests@pa.gov)

**General customer requests:** [RA-PSC\\_Customer\\_Requests@pa.gov](mailto:RA-PSC_Customer_Requests@pa.gov)

### **Thresholds, Delegations and Procurement Organization**

Next on pages 6 and 7 is information relative to the methods of procurement to be utilized, by dollar value. Also detailed are the procurement responsibilities for the various agency types within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

# About PennDOT

The **Pennsylvania Department of Transportation** (PennDOT) is the custodian of over 40,000 miles of highways, 25,000 bridges, 1,500 buildings, and over 25,000 pieces of equipment. PennDOT is organized into a central office and eleven engineering districts which encompass 54 separate maintenance units. To obtain a booklet on information necessary to pursue contracting and purchasing with PennDOT, please contact the following office and request "Pub 4".

**Bureau of Office Services  
400 North Street, 5th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0041  
(717) 783-8915**



COSTARS is the Commonwealth of PA's cooperative purchasing program managed by the Bureau of Procurement. It encourages a partnership between local public procurement units and state-affiliated entities (together "members") and the Commonwealth.

Thousands of eligible entities are currently taking advantage of existing Commonwealth contracts. Examples of COSTARS contracts include Furniture, LED Traffic Signals, Office Supplies, Sodium Chloride (road salt), Vehicles, and Voting Systems.

It is estimated that COSTARS members spend more than \$580 million per year using Commonwealth contracts and save more than \$100 million per year in transactional and spend cost reductions.

Our goal is to provide contracts with competitive pricing, while providing increased opportunities for suppliers and eligible participants.

**Department of General Services  
Bureau of Procurement  
6th Floor, Forum Place  
555 Walnut Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17101**

**Toll-Free Telephone  
1 (866) 768-7827  
Local Telephone  
(717) 346-9009**

[www.dgs.state.pa.us/costars](http://www.dgs.state.pa.us/costars)

**E-mail:**  
[GS-PACostars@pa.gov](mailto:GS-PACostars@pa.gov)

# Green Procurement

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is a significant purchaser of materials and services and is uniquely positioned to leverage our purchasing power to influence both price and availability in the marketplace.

“Green” or **Environmentally Preferable Procurement** (EPP) is the selection of products and services that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose.

Our policy is to analyze each item during the bid process to determine what EPP options are available. The “green” option is utilized whenever the product or service in question is comparable in quality, availability and price.

To learn more, visit us online at:

[www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/green\\_procurement/](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/green_procurement/)

# About the Bureau of Small Business Opportunities

The **Bureau of Small Business Opportunities** provides the necessary information and inspiration for their customers, the small, women, minority and veteran business owners, to compete for and participate in the state contracting process. The office certifies businesses based on ownership criteria and teaches these business owners how to pursue the opportunities available through state contracting. The office also administers a statewide contract compliance program which ensures that suppliers and contractors are not discriminated in any way.

**Harrisburg Phone:** (717) 783-3119 | **Fax:** (717) 787-7052

**Pittsburgh Office:** (412) 442-5872 | **Web:** [www.smallbusiness.pa.gov](http://www.smallbusiness.pa.gov)

# Glossary

- **Advertising:** The placement of a public notice of a contracting opportunity by electronic publication available to the general public.
- **Agency:** An executive or independent agency of the Commonwealth.
  - Executive Agency:** The Governor and departments, boards, commissions, authorities and other officers and agencies of the Commonwealth.
  - Independent Agency:** Boards, commissions and other agencies and officers of the Commonwealth not subject to the policy supervision of the Governor.
- **Best Value:** The process of selecting the offeror which provides the greatest value to the Agency based on evaluating and comparing all pertinent factors, including price, so that the overall combination that best meets the Agency's needs is selected.
- **Construction:** The process of building, altering, repairing, improving or demolishing any public structure or building, or other notable public improvements of any kind to any public real property. The term does not include the routine operation or maintenance of existing structures, buildings or real property. The term does not include bridge, highway, dam, airport (except vertical construction) or railroad construction.
- **Contract Compliance:** A program designed to ensure that Commonwealth contracting is non-discriminating in intent and effect.
- **Pre-Proposal Conference:** On complex, critical or high value procurements, a solicitation may contain a requirement to attend a pre-proposal conference. Attendance at a conference may or may not be mandatory in order to submit a bid. When such a requirement exists, it will be stated in the solicitation.
- **Row Offices:** The Office of Attorney General, the Department of the Auditor General and the Department of Treasury.



- **State-Affiliated Agency:** An active Commonwealth authority or a Commonwealth entity. The term includes the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System, the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority, the State Public School Building Authority, the Pennsylvania Higher Educational Facilities Authority and the State Systems of Higher Education.
- **SRM:** Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) is a procurement tool currently used by the Commonwealth that integrates with the current budget and financial system. SRM is a specialized product that is used to enhance and manage the ongoing relationships that we have with our procurement suppliers.

## Misc. Information

- **Electronic Bidding** – All the registered suppliers with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have the opportunity to bid on designated solicitations issued electronically. Electronic bidding is the transfer of proposal bid data between the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and suppliers electronically via the Internet using digital ID and encryption technology and it will supplement or replace traditional paper bid documents.

With Electronic Bidding, when the supplier digitally signs and submits a bid via the Internet, no paper is required. With electronic submission of bids, the amount of data entry and paper waste on both sides is greatly reduced.

- **Facsimile Bids** – Facsimile Bids are not accepted for any reason.
- **Security** – If Bid and/or Contract Security is required, the bid solicitation document will indicate the exact type and amount of the security needed.

For more information regarding **Doing Business  
With The Commonwealth**, please contact:

Department of General Services  
Bureau of Procurement  
555 Walnut Street, 6th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

**Fax:** (717) 783-6241

[www.dgs.state.pa.us/procurement](http://www.dgs.state.pa.us/procurement)

Elizabeth Lenhart, Program Manager  
**Phone:** (717) 346-4298

Mike Richart  
*Deputy Secretary, Procurement*

Sheri Phillips  
*Secretary, Department of General Services*

Tom Corbett  
*Governor*

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