



TOWN OF BARRINGTON

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Office of the Select Board

Purchasing Policy

I. PURPOSE

This policy outlines the responsibility of all Town Departments for the conduct of purchasing activities for the Town of Barrington. This policy is designed to encourage maximum competition through fair and equal opportunity, ensure that the taxpayers are getting “the best overall value” for their dollar, and provide a uniform procedure for the procurement of equipment, supplies and services. These policies are adopted by the Select Board in accordance with RSA 31:39 as it relates to their management of the Town's prudential affairs and their authority over expenditures.

II. POLICY

1. Spending Approval guidelines are as follows for all but exempted items:

Dollar Range & Item Type	Expense Approval Level	PO Required
\$0 - \$7,500 (goods & services)	Department Head	No
\$7,501 - \$15,000	Town Administrator with a documented attempt to have at least 3 quotes	No \$7,501-\$10,000 Yes \$10,000+
Above \$15,000	Select Board – sealed bid	Yes
Repeating Services, utilities, bulk items over \$15,000	RFQ if requested by Select Board	No
Non-repeating services over \$15,000	Select Board – sealed RFQ/RFP	Yes
Emergency Items under \$15,000	Department Head with Town Administrator Approval	Yes

*Examples of “repeating services” include legal, assessing, auditing, subcontractors for winter maintenance and similar services.

2. Exemptions:

- Items acquired using State bid purchase price.
- Emergency repairs and/or acquisitions where a delay would have an immediate adverse impact on public safety.
- Utilities (telephone, propane, heating fuel, cable internet, electricity, etc.)
- Payments to human service agencies that have been specifically appropriated by the voters.
- Welfare payments.
- Bulk goods of recurring nature or items acquired under a centralized purchasing program (e.g. salt, paper)
- Only one known source of purchase, and there is no comparable substitute product or service; Written documentation supporting the sole source may be required.
- Expenditures made in accordance with the terms and conditions of a grant or contractual agreement that has been approved by the Select Board, such as the RFQ solicitation process, change orders, fee increases, etc.



TOWN OF BARRINGTON

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Office of the Select Board

- i. Parts and/or supplies that are purchased in order to maintain or repair equipment and vehicles. This includes specific type or brand of supply or part necessary for acceptable operation of a machine or device, or as required by warranty or contract on the machine or device; Written documentation supporting the purchase of a specific brand or part necessary for acceptable operation of a machine or device may be required.
- j. An item previously awarded within the past twelve (12) months (may be extended to 24 by Town Administrator for items under \$15,000 and Select Board for items over \$15,000).

3. Competitive Bidding

All purchases of items in excess of fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) shall be made by competitive sealed bidding. Competitive sealed bidding procedures shall at a minimum incorporate the following features:

- a. Formal bid specifications which shall, at a minimum, include the general terms and conditions of the proposed purchase, requirements of the bidder, form of contract and the forms for submission of bids.
- b. Product or service specifications.
- c. Adequate public notice, of a minimum of seven (7) calendar days prior to the date set for the opening of the bids; notice shall include the town website and any other location that can be reasonably expected to improve response including electronic and/or print media.
- d. Sealed bids shall be opened publicly at the time and place designated in the invitation for bids which does not need to be a Select Board meeting.
- e. The award of bids shall be by the Select Board at a properly convened meeting.

An invitation to bid, request for proposal, or other solicitation may be canceled, or any or all bids or proposals may be rejected, in whole or part, as may be specified in the solicitation when it is in the best interest of the Town. The Town reserves the right to waive informalities and what it determines to be minor errors in the bidding process. The reasons shall be made part of the formal bid file.

4. Emergency Purchasing Process

Emergency procurements may be made when a threat to public health, welfare or safety exists, provided that such emergency procurement shall be made with such competition as is practical under the circumstances. In case of an emergency requiring immediate purchase of materials, supplies, equipment or services, the Town Administrator hereby authorizes the Department Heads to approve such emergency purchase if the situation permits. The Town Administrator shall be notified as soon as possible as to the emergency and the associated purchases. A written determination for the basis of the emergency and for the selection of the particular contractor or vendor shall accompany the purchase order and voucher.



TOWN OF BARRINGTON

NEW HAMPSHIRE

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As soon as is practicable, standard purchasing procedures will be reinstated.

5. Major Construction Projects

In the case of contracts for the construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair or refurbishing of real property a determination of responsibility of interested contractors may precede the issuance of invitations to bid. Invitations to bid may be issued only to firms which have, in the Town's sole determination, been pre-qualified. Prequalification of firms shall be based on:

- a. The ability, capacity and skill of the bidder to perform the contract or service.
- b. How promptly can the service be provided – can it be done within the specified timeframe.
- c. The character, integrity, reputation, judgment, experience and efficiency of the bidder.
- d. The quality of performance of previous contracts or services.
- e. The sufficiency of financial resources of the bidder.
- f. The ability of the bidder to perform warranty or future maintenance.
- g. Others as required.

6. Conflict of Interest/Ethics in Purchasing

It shall be unethical for any Town employee involved in making procurement decisions to have personal investments in any business entity that will create a substantial conflict between their private interests and their public duties. It shall be unethical for any person to offer, give, or agree to give any Town of Barrington employee, or for any Town of Barrington employee to solicit, demand, accept, or agree to accept from any vendor or business, a gift or gratuity in any amount in connection with any decision, approval, disapproval, or recommendation concerning a solicitation. Inexpensive advertising items, bearing the name of a vendor, such as pens, pencils, paper weights, cups, candy, calendars, etc., are not considered articles of value or gifts in relation to this policy. Failure to comply with the provisions of this policy will result in disciplinary action. The Town will grant all competitive suppliers equal consideration insofar as state or federal statute and institutional policy permit. There will be no "local advantage," as the Town has a responsibility to the taxpayers of the Town to ensure that bids are awarded to vendors offering their products or services at the "best overall value" to the Town.

7. Purchase Orders:

- a. It is the Town's policy to have issuance of purchase orders for all items above \$10,000.
- b. It is the responsibility of the department head to fill out the purchase order form and submit it to the Finance Administrator or his/her designee for approval, along with a description of, and reason for, the purchase. Documentation to accompany a purchase order form should include a quote and copy of Select Board meeting minutes with approval if applicable (over \$15,000 in most cases). Purchase orders are required as



TOWN OF BARRINGTON

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Office of the Select Board

noted below in the chart in Section b. This applies to all items whether being purchased by grant, operating budget, warrant article, capital reserve or other funds. Items and services purchased in an emergency are not exempt from the purchase order system; however, the purchase order can be done at the earliest reasonable convenience of the department head. Any item for which a contractual obligation exists at the end of the year, and which has not yet been received shall have a purchase order for encumbrance purposes regardless of the amount.

- c. All purchases are subject to approval of the accounts payable check manifest being signed by the Select Board.
- d. Purchases shall not be artificially divided to create lower purchase amounts and therefore avoid some requirements of this policy. Whether or not a proposed purchase constitutes artificial division shall be determined by the Town Administrator.

8. Invoices

Invoices are to be handled by the appropriate department head. The department head should promptly review the invoice for accuracy and fill out the appropriate information; requesting the proper budget code, date, signature and sent promptly to accounts payable for payment. Invoices for which a purchase order has been done, shall prominently note the purchase order number and additional details such as: If more invoices are expected to be submitted under the purchase order, then the invoice submitted should say "IN PROGRESS" in addition to the purchase order number and authorized signature. If the invoice is the final one anticipated for the completion of the purchase order, then the invoice submitted should say "FINAL INVOICE" in addition to the purchase order number and authorized signature. Submission of an invoice with the initial purchase order request to the Finance Department is not authorization to pay the invoice. A separate copy of the invoice must be provided to accounts payable to request payment of the invoice.