

## Sound and Ethical Business Practices

### I. Sound Business Practices

The Purchasing Division of Snohomish County conducts business in an ethical manner and complies with all County, State, and Federal rules and regulations as applicable. Sound, transparent, and consistent business practices are valued and practiced in our office. We strive to maximize taxpayer value and ensure fair and equitable business dealings with all our customers and suppliers.

### II. Ethics

Business and personal ethics are an important part of our business and mission.

#### a. Conflict of Interest

To avoid perceived or actual conflicts of interest in County business, Purchasing shall

- i. Disclose any relationships, financial interests, or business investments that may conflict with County business.
- ii. Recuse oneself from any County business where there is a potential conflict
- iii. Require disclosure statements from any and all purchasing decision makers or influencers, specifically on evaluation committees for Request for Proposals (RFPs) and Request for Qualifications (RFQs).
- iv. Require disclosure statements from potential service providers on all Request for Proposals (RFPs) and Request for Qualifications (RFQs).

#### b. Equal and Fair Treatment of All Suppliers

The Purchasing Division will:

- Conduct business with potential and current suppliers in a positive and welcoming atmosphere of good faith, integrity, and helpfulness;
- Grant all suppliers the same information and opportunities to compete;
- Foster fair, ethical, and legal business practices;
- Communicate honestly with suppliers and the purchasing community.

#### c. Strive for the County's best interests

Purchasing will:

- Comply with all State, County, and Federal rules and regulations.
- Obtain maximum value for each dollar spent.
- Protect the County's interests by working with departments to ensure suppliers honor all terms of their contracts.

#### d. Gifts, Grants, and Gratuities

Snohomish County Purchasing Division employees will decline personal favors, gifts, and gratuities. In accordance with state law (RCW 42.52.150), an employee of an agency that seeks to acquire goods or service who participates in those regulatory or contractual matters may receive, accept, take, or seek, directly or indirectly, only the following items from a person regulated by the agency or from a person who seeks to provide goods or services to the agency:

- i. Unsolicited advertising or promotional items of nominal value, such as pens and note pads;
- ii. Unsolicited tokens or awards of appreciation in the form of a plaque, trophy, desk items, wall memento, or similar item;
- iii. Unsolicited items received for the purpose of evaluation or review, if the employee has no personal beneficial interest in the eventual use or acquisition of the item by the employee's agency;
- iv. Informational material, publications, or subscriptions related to the recipient's performance of official duties;
- v. Food and beverages consumed at hosted receptions where attendance is related to the employee's official duties;
- vi. Admission to, and the cost of food and beverages consumed at events sponsored by or in conjunction with a civic, charitable, governmental, or community and
- vii. Those items excluded from the definition of gift in RCW 42.52.010 except:
  - a. Payments by a governmental or nongovernmental entity of reasonable expenses incurred in connection with a speech, presentation, appearance, or trade mission made in an official capacity;
  - b. Payments for seminar and educational programs sponsored by a bona fide governmental or nonprofit professional, educational, trade, or charitable association or instruction; and
  - c. Flowers, plants, and floral arrangements.

Definition of gift means anything of economic value for which no consideration is given (RCW 42.52.010). Additional details on gift exceptions are available in RCW 42.52.010.

### **III. Values and Guiding Principles**

From Purchasing Strategic Plan

- Collaboration and Cooperation
- Consistency and Fairness
- Continuous Improvement
- County and Community Focus
- Diversity and Equality
- Honesty and Integrity
- Positive Business Culture
- Safety and Sustainability
- Standardization
- Supplier Optimization
- Value