

To: Chief Fiscal Officers, Agency Procurement Officers, and Chief Legal Counsels – State Agencies, Boards, and Commissions

From: Kimberly A. Murnieks, Director, Office of Budget and Management *Kimberly A. Murnieks*
Matthew M. Damschroder, Director, Department of Administrative Services *Matthew M. Damschroder*

Date: March 13, 2020

Re: Processing Agency Purchases Under the Emergency Suspension of Purchasing and Contracting Requirements in Response to COVID-19

As you are aware, Governor DeWine declared a state of emergency on March 9, 2020, regarding the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). In response to that declaration, the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) suspended purchasing and contracting requirements in accordance with Ohio Revised Code §125.061 for the procurement of resources and supplies necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of Ohioans and resolve the COVID-19 emergency (“COVID-19 Purchasing Suspension”). In an effort to streamline communications, the Office of Budget and Management (OBM) and DAS provide the following guidance to assist agencies in processing agency requisitions in OAKS under this suspension.

Agency Purchases:

While purchasing decisions are reserved for the executive discretion of each agency, agencies should continue to practice sound fiscal judgment and only purchase what is absolutely necessary under the COVID-19 Purchasing Suspension. Agencies are specifically directed to consider availability of purchasing supplies and services from Requisite Procurement Programs and existing DAS contracts. In addition, agencies should seek to make purchases in a competitive manner, using normal procurement methods to the extent possible. For additional guidance, agencies should refer to [Emergency Purchasing Procedures in PM-02](#).

Controlling Board Threshold:

Based on the COVID-19 Purchasing Suspension, agencies will be allowed to make purchases that are necessary and prudent in excess of the Controlling Board threshold. If an agency will exceed this threshold, it should provide the following information to the OBM State Accounting via email:

1. Name of the Supplier
2. OAKS Supplier Identification Number
3. Total Purchase Amount

Please send the email to **all** of the following OBM State Accounting contacts:

Melvin Striblin melvin.striblin@obm.ohio.gov

Amber Pugh amber.pugh@obm.ohio.gov

Mouhamadou Toure mouhamadou.toure@obm.ohio.gov

Ida Sydnor ida.sydnor@obm.ohio.gov

OBM State Accounting will provide the agency with an OBM-assigned Controlling Board number to enter with the requisition.

Release and Permit:

For non-IT purchases, an agency should submit a Request to Purchase to the DAS Office of Procurement Services (OPS) and include the OBM-assigned Controlling Board number. The Emergency Purchase functionality is part of Ohio|Buys Release 3; therefore, all early adopter agencies should create requisitions under the COVID-19 Purchasing Suspension in OAKS FIN.

For IT purchases, the DAS Office of Information Technology is waiving the requirement to submit an individual IT release and permit request for the purchase of desktops, laptops and tablets less than \$25,000 under the COVID-19 Purchasing Suspension; therefore, agencies may use their blanket IT release and permit. For purchases of \$25,000 or greater, an agency must submit an individual release and permit in the IT Release and Permit system and use COVID-19 in the title of the request. As noted previously, early adopter agencies should create requisitions under the COVID-19 Purchasing Suspension in OAKS FIN.

Reporting to Controlling Board:

Under R.C. 125.061, agencies are required to report to Controlling Board all purchases made when DAS suspends purchasing requirements. Additional guidance on the form of this report will be provided at a later date. However, agencies should track all information identified in Attachment 1 to PM-02 Emergency Purchasing Procedures for all purchases made under the COVID-19 Purchasing Suspension.

Note: Purchases made under the COVID-19 Purchasing Suspension, should also be reported to OBM in accordance with the March 4, 2020 memorandum from Director Murnieks titled “Costs Associated with Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)”.

Payment Card:

Agencies desiring to use the payment card for purchases under the COVID-19 Purchasing Suspension should refer to the “Emergency Payment Cards” section within the “Payment Card Program” guidance in the SAFE Policy Manual, found at the following location: [Home](#) > SAFE Manual > [Payments](#) > Payment Card Program. Exceptions to payment card limits and authorization of additional cards will be done on a case-by-case basis.

Agency Appropriations:

The COVID-19 Purchasing Suspension allows agencies to make purchases within currently existing budgetary authority. Appropriation adjustments require Controlling Board or legislative approval. Agencies should contact OBM Controlling Board staff via telephone to discuss potential appropriation changes due to emergency response activities of the agency.

Agencies should contact the following individuals for any questions regarding this guidance:

OBM:

Melvin Striblin	melvin.striblin@obm.ohio.gov	614-644-8210
Fletch Zimpher	fletch.zimpher@obm.ohio.gov	614-728-8778
Jason Bartholow	jason.bartholow@obm.ohio.gov	614-644-8811
Meghan Wadsworth	meghan.wadsworth@obm.ohio.gov	614-466-2181

DAS:

Katherine Nickey	katherine.nickey@das.ohio.gov	614-728-3660
Kelly Sanders	kelly.sanders@das.ohio.gov	614-752-5259
Sandy Herrel	sandy.herrel@das.ohio.gov	614-4664768