



Purchasing Cooperatives



The Law

The Interlocal Cooperation Act, Chapter 791 of the Texas Government Code, authorizes local governments to contract directly with other governments to increase their efficiency and effectiveness. Texas Government Code, Section 791.025(c) states that a local government that purchases goods and any services reasonably required for the installation, operation, or maintenance of those goods under the Interlocal Cooperation Act satisfies the requirement of the local government to seek competitive bids for the purchase of goods and their services. The County has a variety of interlocal agreements.

The Policy

The County participates in the purchasing programs of various local, state, and national cooperatives such as Houston Area Council of Governments (H-GAC), Texas Association of School Boards (BuyBoard®), The Cooperative Purchasing Network (TCPN), U.S. Communities™, and Federal Supply Schedules. Before using any cooperative, the Purchasing Agent researches and recommends cooperatives to the Commissioners Court. The Commissioners Court approves an interlocal agreement acknowledging the terms and conditions for using each cooperative, including any fee schedules, and authorizes the Purchasing Agent to make purchases under the terms of the interlocal agreement. (from the Travis County Purchasing Policy and Procedures Manual, Revised November 2009)

The Cooperatives

Depending on the solicitation language, the rules and procedures will follow that specific organization's policies concerning minority and woman-owned businesses policy. You must **READ each solicitation thoroughly**. Additionally, there may be language that the vendor will offer their goods/services to entities outside of the offering entity's origin. That is, if you solicit and win a contract with a member organization (say, City of Fort Worth), there may be language that you are obligated to offer the same delivery/pricing to other members in Texas and outside of Texas.

The remaining cooperatives; Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC), BuyBoard®, Department of Information Resources (DIR) and State of Texas (includes the six contracts listed in blue) follow State of Texas Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) rules and procedures. The Texas Multiple Award Schedule (TxMAS) follows General Services Administration (GSA) federal guidelines. There are links to learn more.

Some cooperatives may have a fee, either percentage or a flat rate to participate and are zone or location specific - again **READ the solicitation thoroughly!** Vendors are encouraged to visit each of these cooperatives' web sites to learn their policies and procedures to submit bids.

... and finally

The chart on the opposite side is a summary of the purchasing cooperatives that Travis County uses to purchase goods and services for its day-to-day operations. This chart is not exclusive, merely, the cooperatives that Travis County uses.

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<https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/purchasing>

Purchasing Cooperative Comparison

Purchasing Cooperatives Travis County uses

Cooperative/Contracting Entity Name	Web site	How to submit bids/proposals	HUB/Minority Participation
The Cooperative Purchasing Network (TCPN)	http://www.tcpn.org/	Respond and submit to bids listed on their web site; subscribe to their notification system	Dependent on Government entity origin of contract
Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC)	http://www.hgacbuy.org/	Respond and submit to bids listed on their web site; subscribe to their notification system	Follows State of Texas HUB rules
BuyBoard®	http://www.buyboard.com/default.html	Register on their site to receive notifications of solicitations	Follows State of Texas HUB rules
Department of Information Resources (DIR)	http://www2.dir.state.tx.us/Pages/Home.aspx	http://www2.dir.state.tx.us/ict/vendorresources/Pages/howtobecomeadivendor.aspx	Follows State of Texas HUB rules
State of Texas Contracts (including)	http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/contracts/	Respond and submit to bids listed on their web site; register on CMBL	Follows State of Texas HUB rules
<i>Council on Competitive Government (CCG)</i>	http://www.ccg.state.tx.us/contracts/	Contracts awarded through State of Texas/submit to respective agency	Follows State of Texas HUB rules
<i>TxSmartBuy Term Contract</i>	http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/contracts/txsmartbuy/	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;"> State of Texas rules and procedures </div>	
<i>Managed Term Contract</i>	http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/contracts/managed/		
<i>State Travel Management Program Contracts</i>	http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/contracts/travel/		
<i>State Emergency Management Contracts</i>	http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/contracts/emergency/		
<i>Texas Multiple Award Schedules</i>	http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/contracts/txmas.php		

This is not a complete list of purchasing cooperatives, but a list of cooperatives that Travis County commonly uses. All information is subject to change without notice - contact the Travis County Purchasing Office for the latest information at 512-854-9700.
<https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/purchasing>