



STANDARDS & PROCEDURES

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Purchasing & Procurement

PREAMBLE/PURPOSE

The purpose of this standard is to ensure that all goods and services achieve value for money and are procured by BGCFS in an open, fair and transparent manner.

The objective in purchasing and procurement is to acquire and supply, at the right time and in the most economical manner, the goods, services, and consulting services needed to meet BGCFS requirements. Goods, services and consulting services are acquired through a competitive process that seeks to achieve the best value for money and that promotes fair dealings and equitable relationships with vendors.

DEFINITIONS

Supply chain activities- all activities directly or indirectly related to BGCFS planning, sourcing, procurement, moving and payment processes.

Approval authority - the authority delegated by BGCFS to a person designated to occupy a position to approve on its behalf one (1) or more procurement functions within the plan-to-pay cycle up to specified dollar limits subject to the applicable legislation, regulations, and procedures in effect at such time.

Blanket purchase contract - any contract for the purchase of goods and services which is required frequently or repetitively but where the exact quantity of goods and services required may not be precisely known or the time period during which the goods and services are to be delivered may not be precisely determined.

Conflict of interest - a situation in which financial or other personal considerations have the potential to compromise or bias professional judgement and objectivity. An apparent conflict of interest is one in which a reasonable person would think that the professional's judgment is likely to be compromised.

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Consultant - a person or entity that under an agreement, other than an employment agreement, provides expert or strategic advice and related services for consideration and decision making. A consultant provides expert or strategic advice related to operational consideration and decision making and not to clinical or case management decision making. A consultant does not include services associated with implementing projects once a strategic decision has been made by management.

Consulting services - the provision of expertise or strategic advice that is presented for consideration and decision making. Consulting services provide advice for operational consideration and decision making and not in relation to clinical or case management services.

Professional service supplier - a supplier of services requiring professional skills for a defined service requirement including: lawyers, psychologists, management and financial consultants; and firms or individuals having specialized competence in planning or other disciplines.

Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) - a document used to gather information on supplier interest in an opportunity or information on supplier capabilities/qualifications. This mechanism may be used when a BPS organization wishes to gain a better understanding of the capacity of the supplier community to provide the services or solutions needed. A response to a RFEI must not pre-qualify a potential supplier and must not influence their chances of being the successful proponent on any subsequent opportunity.

Request for Information (RFI) - a document issued to potential suppliers to gather general suppliers, service or product information. It is a procurement procedure whereby suppliers are provided with a general or preliminary description of a problem or need and requested to provide information or advice about how to better define the problem or need, or alternative solutions. A response to an RFI must not pre-qualify a potential supplier and must not influence their chances of being the successful proponent on any subsequent opportunity.

Request for Proposal (RFP) means a document used to request suppliers to supply solutions for the delivery of complex products or services or to provide alternative options or solutions. It is a process that uses predefined evaluation criteria in which prices is not the only factors.

Request for Supplier Qualifications (RFSQ) - a document used to gather information on supplier capabilities and qualifications, with the intention of creating a list of pre-qualified suppliers. This mechanism may be used either to identify qualified candidates in advance of expected future competitions or to narrow the field for an immediate need. Organizations must ensure that the terms and conditions built into the RFSQ contain specific language that disclaims any obligation on the part of the BGCFS to call on any supplier to provide goods or services as a result of the pre-qualification.

Segregation of duties - a method of process control to manage conflict of interest, the appearance of conflict of interest, and errors or fraud. It restricts the amount of power held by any one individual. It puts a barrier in place to prevent errors or fraud that may be perpetrated by one individual.

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Vendor of record (VOR)- is procurement arrangement resulting from a fair, open, transparent and competitive process that authorizes one or more qualified vendors to offer specific goods or services for a defined period of time on terms and conditions, including pricing and/or discounting, as set out in particular VOR agreement.

STANDARD

Standards are basic rules of practice to support Board Policy and provide context for Procedures. They are also informed by intent of legislation, Ministry Directives, accreditation requirements, best practice research and quality improvement activities. Departures require written approval from the Executive Director or member of the Senior Team and may be considered if reasons are beyond the control of the staff member, e.g. service user is not available for interview. Workload is not a valid reason for not meeting standards.

1. This standard is based on the following key principles:
 - Accountability – BGCFS must be accountable for the results of its procurement decisions and the appropriateness of the processes;
 - Transparency – BGCFS must be transparent to all stakeholders. Wherever possible, stakeholders must have equal access to information on procurement opportunities, processes and results;
 - Value for Money – BGCFS must maximize the value it receives from the use of public funds. A value for money approach aims to deliver goods and services at the optimum total lifecycle cost;
 - Quality Service Delivery – front line services provided by BGCFS must receive the right product, at the right time, in the right place;
 - Process Standardization – standardized processes remove inefficiencies and create a level playing field.
2. This standard applies to Board members and all employees (or their equivalent) of BGCFS.
3. This standard applies to all goods, construction and services, including but not limited to IT and consulting services acquired by BGCFS:
4. BGCFS conducts procurement activities according to the law in Ontario, including contract law, the law of competitive processes, privacy legislation, accessibility legislation and any other legislation as may be applicable.
5. BGCFS does not artificially subdivide projects, procurements or contracts to avoid any policy, standard, or procedure requirements.
6. For ongoing and recurring procurement activities, existing contracts are re-procured at a minimum of every five (5) years.

PROCEDURES

Procedures are a practical guide regarding what to do, when to do it and who is responsible. They detail the implementation of Standards and ensure that professional practice is delivered within a consistent framework. They are also informed by requirements of legislation, Ministry Directives, accreditation requirements, best practice research and quality improvement activities. Procedural departures may be approved in writing by a supervisor if circumstances are beyond the control of a staff member, e.g. service user is not available.

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1. Purchasing and Procurement Activities

- 1.1. Planning – goods, services, and consulting services are acquired only after consideration of needs, alternatives, timing, and the overall BGCFS supply strategy
- 1.2. Acquiring – goods, services, and consulting services are acquired from qualified vendors to meet specified needs and to achieve the best value for money. Quality, quantity, delivery, servicing, experience, environmental sustainability, and the financial capability of the vendor are taken into consideration when acquiring goods, services, and consulting services.
- 1.3. Managing – once procured, goods, services and consulting services are managed efficiently, effectively, and economically.

2. Authorized Approval Schedule

Position	Amount authorized to encumber or expend
Board President	Any encumbrance/expenditure within the Board-approved annual forecast. Any encumbrance/expenditure not provided for within the Board-approved annual forecast; details of such encumbrance/expenditure will be approved by the Board by board motion
Executive Director	Any encumbrance/expenditure within the Board-approved annual forecast. Up to \$50,000 for any encumbrance/expenditure not provided for within the Board-approved annual forecast; details of such encumbrance/expenditure will be provided the Board at the next regular meeting
Director	Up to \$25,000 any encumbrance/expenditure within the Board-approved annual forecast within the Director's service area
Supervisor/Executive Assistant	Up to \$2,500 any encumbrance/expenditure within the Board-approved annual forecast within the supervisor's service area

3. Ontario Broader Public Sector (BPS) Supply Chain Code of Ethics

- 3.1. The Ontario Broader Public Sector Supply Chain Code of Ethics (the Code) does not supersede codes of ethics that BGCFS has in place, but supplements such codes with supply chain-specific standards of practice.
- 3.2. BGCFS adopts the Code in accordance with their governance processes.
- 3.3. The Code is made available and visible to all members and employees of BGCFS, as well as suppliers and other stakeholders involved with Supply Chain Activities.

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4. **Goal**

4.1. To ensure an ethical, professional and accountable BPS supply chain.

Personal Integrity and Professionalism

4.2. Individuals involved with Supply Chain Activities act, and are seen to act, with integrity and professionalism. Honesty, care and due diligence are integral to all Supply Chain Activities within and between BPS organizations, suppliers and other stakeholders. Respect must be demonstrated for each other and for the environment. Confidential information must be safeguarded. Participants must not engage in any activity that may create, or appear to create, a conflict of interest, such as accepting gifts or favours, providing preferential treatment, or publicly endorsing suppliers or products.

Accountability and Transparency

4.3. Supply Chain Activities must be open and accountable. In particular, contracting and purchasing activities must be fair, transparent and conducted with a view to obtaining the best value for public money. All participants must ensure that public sector resources are used in a responsible, efficient and effective manner.

Compliance and Continuous Improvement

4.4. Individuals involved with purchasing or other Supply Chain Activities must comply with this Code of Ethics and the laws of Canada and Ontario. Individuals should continuously work to improve supply chain policies and procedures, to improve their supply chain knowledge and skill levels, and to share leading practices.

5. **Exceptions and Exemptions to Competitive Procurement Requirements**

5.1. Where BGCFS has relied on an exception or exemption to these requirements, the rationale for the exception or exemption must be formally documented. Exemptions and exceptions relate to the procurement of goods and services only. All other requirements of the standard apply, including administration, documentation, contract management, supplier management, etc.

5.2 BGCFS employs a competitive procurement process to achieve optimum value for money. It is recognized, however, that certain circumstances and activities may require BGCFS to use non-competitive procurement. The circumstances and activities that will be excluded from the competitive procurement requirements are noted below. These exceptions are generally consistent with the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) or other trade agreement.

5.2.1 Licensed Professional and Specific Services for Children & Youth in Care

The procurement of services from licensed professionals including medical doctors and dentists, pharmacists, nurses, psychologists, and lawyers, accountants, architects, as well as boarding rate expenditures including

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reimbursable expenses paid to resource parents and outside paid resources and support services for the case of children and youth that have been placed by BGCFS.

5.2.2. Single Source Supply

Where only one supplier is available to meet the requirements of BGCFS procurement including the following circumstances:

- To ensure compatibility with existing products, to recognize exclusive rights, such as exclusive licenses, copyright and patent rights, or to maintain specialized products that must be maintained by the manufacturer or its representative;
- Where there is an absence of competition where the goods or services can be supplied only by a particular supplier and no alternative or substitute exists;
- For work to be performed on the behalf of BGCFS through a building lease agreement where the lessor will invoice costs back to BGCFS;
- For work to be performed according to provisions of a warranty or guarantee held in respect of the original work;
- For the procurement of a prototype or a first good or services to be developed that may be needed for research purposes, a particular study or other original purposes;
- For the purchase of goods under duress such as a bankruptcy or receivership, where the BGCFS has clearly documented the advantageous value that would be received; and,
- For the procurement of real property.

5.2.3. Limiting Circumstances

Limiting circumstances may exist where inherent factors limit the procurement process that can be undertaken. Under limiting circumstances, BGCFS can deviate from competitive procurement requirements providing it does not do so for the purpose of avoiding competition between suppliers or in order to discriminate against suppliers. Limiting circumstances may include:

- Where goods or consulting services regarding matters of a confidential or privileged nature are to be purchased and the disclosure of those matters through an open tendering process could reasonably be expected to compromise government confidentiality, cause economic disruption or otherwise be contrary to the public interest;
- Where compliance with open tendering provisions would interfere with the BGCFS ability to maintain security and order; and,
- In the absence of a receipt of any bids in response to a call for tenders made in accordance with the directive.

5.2.4. Emergency Situations

For the purpose of this procedure, an “emergency” means a situation where the immediate purchase of goods and services is essential to prevent serious delays in service delivery or to prevent or remedy damage to BGCFS property or to restore an essential service.

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An “emergency” includes an imminent or actual danger to the life, health, or safety of an official or an employee while acting on BGCFS behalf (e.g. emergency boiler repairs or replacement), an imminent or actual danger of injury to or destruction of real or personal property belonging to the BGCFS.

Under emergency circumstances, the Executive Director has the authority to take the necessary steps to address the emergency and will subsequently inform the Board of Directors of the actions taken setting out the details of any purchases made pursuant to this authority and the circumstances justifying the action taken.

If the cost to remedy the emergency exceeds twenty five thousand dollars (\$25,000) or results in an increase to the approved annual budget, the President of the Board authorizes the purchase based on the Executive Director’s recommendation.

6. **Mandatory Requirement #1: Segregation of Duties:**

6.1. BGCFS must segregate at least three (3) of the five (5) functional procurement roles:

- Requisition;
- Budgeting;
- Commitment;
- Receipt; and,
- Payment.

6.2. Responsibilities for these roles must lie with different departments or, at a minimum, with different individuals;

6.3. If it is not feasible to segregate these roles, adequate compensating controls approved by an external auditor must be put in place.

7. **Mandatory Requirement #2: Approval Authority**

Competitive procurement of goods and non-consulting services

7.1. BGCFS must establish and maintain an approval authority schedule (AAS) for competitive procurement of goods and non-consulting services. The schedule will reflect financial levels of authority for each of the five procurement roles identified in Segregation of Duties. The AAS must be approved by the Board of Directors of BGCFS or its equivalent.

7.2. Prior to commencement, any procurement of goods and non-consulting services must be approved by an appropriate authority in accordance with the AAS of BGCFS.

7.3. Prior to commencement, any non-competitive procurement of goods or non-consulting services must be approved by an authority one level higher than the AAS requirements for competitive procurement.

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Consulting services

7.4. Prior to commencement, any procurement of consulting services must be approved in accordance with the Procurement Approval Authority Schedule (AAS) for Consulting Services.

Procurement Method	Procurement Value	Approval Authority
Invitational Competitive	\$0 up to but not including \$100,000	BGCFS AAS for goods and non-consulting services
Open Competitive	Any value	BGCFS AAS for goods and non-consulting services
Non-competitive*	\$0 up to but not including \$1,000,000	President, ED or equivalent
	\$1,000,000 or more	Board of Directors or equivalent

*Exemption-based only

7.5. BGCFS must not reduce the overall value of procurement (e.g., dividing a single procurement into multiple procurements) in order to circumvent the approval requirements of the BGCFS AAS or the Procurement AAS for Consulting Services.

8. Mandatory Requirement #3: Competitive Procurement Thresholds

8.1. BGCFS must conduct an open competitive procurement process where the estimated value of procurement of goods or services is one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) or more. The exemptions must be in accordance with the applicable trade agreements.

8.2. BGCFS must competitively procure consulting services irrespective of value. The exemptions must be in accordance with the applicable trade agreements.

8.3. Goods, Non-Consulting Services and Construction

Total Procurement Value	Means of Procurement	Recommended/ Required
\$0 up to but not including \$100	Petty cash or invoice	Recommended
\$100 up to but not including \$3,000	Procurement card (P-card) or invoice	Recommended
\$3,000 up to but not including \$10,000	Purchase order or invoice	Recommended
\$10,000 up to but not including \$100,000	Invitational competitive procurement (minimum of three suppliers are invited to submit a bid)	Recommended
\$100,000 or more	Open competitive process	Required

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8.4. Consulting Services

Total Procurement Value	Means of Procurement	Recommended/ Required
\$0 up to but not including \$100,000	Invitational or open competitive process	Required
\$100,000 or more	Open competitive process	Required

8.5. BGCFS must not reduce the overall value of procurement (e.g., dividing a single procurement into multiple procurements) in order to circumvent competitive procurement thresholds.

8.6. The total value of procurement includes cost of freight, installation but not taxes. For multiyear procurements, calculate the total value for the entire period of the anticipated agreement including optional renewals; multiple purchases may not be used to circumvent competitive procurements.

9. **Mandatory Requirement #4: Information Gathering**

9.1. Where results of informal supplier or product research are insufficient, formal processes such as a Request for Information (RFI) or Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) may be used if warranted, taking into consideration the time and effort required to conduct them.

9.2. A response to RFI or RFEI must not be used to pre-qualify a potential supplier and must not influence the chances of the participating suppliers from becoming the successful proponent in any subsequent opportunity.

10. **Mandatory Requirement #5: Supplier Pre-Qualification**

10.1. The Request for Supplier Qualification (RFSQ) enables BGCFS to gather information about supplier capabilities and qualifications in order to pre-qualify suppliers for an immediate product or service need or to identify qualified candidates in advance of expected future competitions.

10.2. Terms and conditions of the RFSQ document must contain language that disclaims any obligation of BGCFS to call on any supplier to provide goods or services as a result of pre-qualification.

11. **Mandatory Requirement #6: Posting Competitive Procurement Documents**

11.1 Calls for open competitive procurements must be made through an electronic tendering system that is readily accessible by all Canadian suppliers. BGCFS will use its external website and the Ontario Public Buyer's Association website to electronically post procurement documents. For local purchases (e.g. snow removal) advertisements in the local paper will be utilized.

12. **Mandatory Requirement #7: Timelines for Posting Competitive Procurements**

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- 12.1. BGCFS must provide suppliers a minimum response time of fifteen (15) calendar days for procurement of goods and services valued at one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) or more
- 12.3. BGCFS must consider providing suppliers a minimum response time of thirty (30) calendar days for procurements of high complexity, risk, and/or dollar value.

13. Mandatory Requirement #8: Bid Receipt

- 13.1. Bid submission date and closing time must be clearly stated in competitive procurement documents. BGCFS must set the closing date of a competitive procurement process on a normal working day (Monday to Friday, excluding provincial and national holidays).
- 13.2. Submissions that are delivered after the closing time must be returned unopened.

14. Mandatory Requirement #9: Evaluation Criteria

- 14.1. Evaluation criteria must be developed, reviewed and approved by an appropriate authority prior to commencement of the competitive procurement process.
- 14.2. Competitive procurement documents must clearly outline mandatory, rated, and other criteria that are used to evaluate submissions, including weight of each criterion.
- 14.3. Mandatory criteria (e.g., technical standards) should be kept to a minimum to ensure that no bid is unnecessarily disqualified.
- 14.4. Maximum justifiable weighting must be allocated to the price/cost component of the evaluation criteria.
- 14.5. All criteria must be non-discriminatory.
- 14.6. The evaluation criteria are to be altered only by means of addendum to the competitive procurement documents.
- 14.7. BGCFS may request suppliers to provide alternative strategies or solutions as a part of their submission. BGCFS must establish criteria to evaluate alternative strategies or solutions prior to commencement of the competitive procurement process. Alternative strategies or solutions must not be considered unless they are explicitly requested in the competitive procurement documents.

15. Mandatory Requirement #10: Evaluation Process Disclosure

- 15.1. Competitive procurement documents must fully disclose the evaluation methodology and process to be used in assessing submissions, including the method of resolving tie score.

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15.2.Competitive procurement documents must state that submissions that do not meet the mandatory criteria will be disqualified.

16. Mandatory Requirement #11: Evaluation Team

16.1.Competitive procurement processes require an evaluation team responsible for reviewing and rating the compliant bids.

16.2.Evaluation team members must be made aware of the restrictions related to utilization and distribution of confidential and commercially sensitive information collected through the competitive procurement process and refrain from engaging in activities that may create or appear to create a conflict of interest.

16.3.Evaluation team members must sign a conflict-of-interest declaration and non-disclosure of confidential information agreement.

17. Mandatory Requirement #12: Evaluation Matrix

17.1.Each evaluation team member must complete an evaluation matrix, rating each of the submissions. Records of evaluation scores must be retained for audit purposes.

17.2.Evaluators must ensure that everything they say or write about submissions is fair, factual, and fully defensible.

18. Mandatory Requirement #5: Winning Bid

18.1.The submission that receives the highest evaluation score and meets all mandatory requirements set out in the competitive procurement document must be declared the winning bid.

19. Mandatory Requirement #5: Non-Discrimination

19.1.BGCFS must not discriminate or exercise preferential treatment in awarding a contract to a supplier as a result of a competitive procurement process.

20. Mandatory Requirement #5: Executing the Contract

20.1.The agreement between BGCFS and the successful supplier must be formally defined in a signed written contract before the provision of supplying goods or services commences.

20.2.Where an immediate need exists for goods or services, and BGCFS and the supplier are unable to finalize the contract as described above, an interim purchase order may be used. The justification of such decision must be documented and approved by the appropriate authority.

21. Mandatory Requirement #5: Establishing the Contract

21.1.The contract must be finalized using the form of agreement that was released with the procurement documents.

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21.2. In circumstances where an alternative procurement strategy has been used (i.e., a form of agreement was not released with the procurement document), the agreement between BGCFS and the successful supplier must be defined formally in a signed written contract before the provision of supplying goods or services commences.

22. Mandatory Requirement #5: Termination Clauses

22.1. All contracts must include appropriate cancellation or termination clauses. BGCFS should seek legal advice on the development of such clauses.

22.2. When conducting complex procurements, BGCFS should consider, as appropriate, the use of contract clauses that permit cancellation or termination at critical project life-cycle stages.

23. Mandatory Requirement #5: Term of Agreement Modifications

23.1. The term of the agreement and any options to extend the agreement must be set out in the competitive procurement documents. An approval by an appropriate authority must be obtained before executing any modifications to the term of agreement.

23.2. Extending the term of agreement beyond that set out in the competitive procurement document amounts to non-competitive procurement where the extension affects the value and/or stated deliverables of procurement.

24. Mandatory Requirement #5: Contract Award Notification

24.1. For procurements valued at one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) or more, BGCFS must post, in the same manner as the procurement documents were posted, contract award notification. The notification must be posted after the agreement between the successful supplier and BGCFS was executed. Contract award notification must list the name of the successful supplier, agreement start and end dates, and any extension options.

25. Mandatory Requirement #5: Supplier Debriefing

25.1. For procurements valued at one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) or more, BGCFS must inform all unsuccessful suppliers about their entitlement to a debriefing.

25.2. BGCFS must allow unsuccessful suppliers sixty (60) calendar days following the date of the contract award notification to request a debriefing.

26. Mandatory Requirement #5: Non-Competitive Procurement

26.1. BGCFS should employ a competitive procurement process to achieve optimum value for money. It is recognized, however, that special circumstances may require BGCFS to use non-competitive procurement.

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26.2. BGCFS may utilize non-competitive procurement only in situations outlined in the exemption, exception, or non-application clauses of the AIT or other trade agreements.

26.3. Prior to commencement of non-competitive procurement, supporting documentation must be completed and approved by an appropriate authority within BGCFS.

27. Mandatory Requirement #5: Contract Management

27.1. Procurements and the resulting contracts must be managed responsibly and effectively.

27.2. Payments must be made in accordance with provisions of the contract. All invoices must contain detailed information sufficient to warrant payment. Any overpayments must be recovered in a timely manner.

27.3. Assignments must be properly documented. Supplier performance must be managed and documented, and any performance issues must be addressed.

27.4. To manage disputes with suppliers throughout the life of the contract, BGCFS should include a dispute resolution process in their contracts.

27.5. For services, BGCFS must:

- Establish clear terms of reference for the assignment. The terms should include objectives, background, scope, constraints, staff responsibilities, tangible deliverables, timing, progress reporting, approval requirements, and knowledge transfer requirements.
- Establish expense claim and reimbursement rules compliant with the Broader Public Expense Directive and ensure all expenses are claimed and reimbursed in accordance with these rules.
- Ensure that expenses are claimed and reimbursed only where the contract explicitly provides for reimbursement of expenses.

28. Mandatory Requirement #5: Procurement Records Retention

28.1. For reporting and auditing purposes, all procurement documentation, as well as any other pertinent information must be retained in a recoverable form for a period of seven years.

28.2. BGCFS must have a written policy for handling, storing and maintaining the suppliers' confidential and commercially sensitive information.

29. Mandatory Requirement #5: Conflict of Interest

29.1. BGCFS must monitor any conflict of interest that may arise as a result of the members of BGCFS, advisors, external consultants, or suppliers' involvement with the Supply Chain Activities. Individuals involved with the Supply Chain Activities must declare actual or potential conflicts of interest. Where a conflict of interest arises, it must be evaluated and an appropriate mitigating action must be taken.

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30. Mandatory Requirement #5: Bid Dispute Resolution

30.1. Competitive procurement documents must outline bid dispute resolution procedures to ensure that any dispute is handled in an ethical, fair, reasonable, and timely fashion. Bid dispute resolution procedures must comply with bid protest or dispute resolution procedures set out in the applicable trade agreements.

PRACTICE NOTES

Practice Notes are guidelines developed to provide users with recommendations for best practice.

Forms:

Approval History:

New

Source References:

Management Board of Cabinet, Broader Public Service Procurement Directive, July 1, 2011