



CONTRACTS AND PROCUREMENT NEWSLETTER

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CONTACT US

Accounts Payable

AccountsPayable@cwu.edu

Contracts

CWU.ContractsOffice@cwu.edu

Purchasing

Purchasing_Office@cwu.edu

Surplus & Asset Management

(509) 963-2157

Travel

TravelDesk@cwu.edu

Welcome to the Fall 2024 issue of the Contracts and Procurement newsletter! Read on for some helpful info about each of the five areas that fall under our department: Accounts Payable, Contracts, Purchasing, Surplus & Asset Management, and Travel.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Wondering what you can do to assist Accounts Payable in getting your department's invoices paid in a timely manner? The most important thing would be to plan ahead, as much as possible.

We know that sometimes it is just not possible to plan certain purchases and/or payments very far ahead – sometimes unexpected things come up and you don't have the luxury of time in dealing with them! But to the extent possible, planning ahead for purchases and their resulting necessary payments will make the entire process run more smoothly and efficiently.

Once you know that you are going to be needing a service or ordering some items, and the purchases will not be made via credit card (Pcard), submit the requisition as soon as possible. This will help to prevent those last-minute situations where a vendor's invoice is about to become overdue and you are scrambling to rush a requisition through the system in order to avoid late fees, damage to CWU's reputation, or other negative effects of CWU issuing a payment after its due date. Remember, after you submit a requisition, it will still need to work its way through all the required approvals in the system, and Purchasing will then still need to

issue a purchase order before Accounts Payable can process your invoice for payment. So, the more time you allow for that, the better.

As always, work as necessary with [Purchasing](#) before incurring any charges to get everything lined up and ready to go for those invoices that will be showing up in our [Accounts Payable](#) inbox. If you have any questions about our process or why we do things the way we do, please feel free to reach out to any of us in Accounts Payable – we are always happy to help!

CONTRACTS

Have you received an agreement, contract, MOU, or order form that contains legal terms and conditions or requires an authorized CWU signature? Before you sign, please keep in mind following the top three things when working with university contracts:

1. Don't sign unless you're authorized. Only designated individuals authorized by [CWUP 2-10-170](#) may sign University contracts (think Deans, AVPs, Provost, and VPs), and only within their authorized dollar limits.
2. The CWU Contracts Office must approve first. Unless an exception applies (see [CWUR 3-10-612](#)), the CWU Contracts Office must review and approve all university contracts before they are signed. To initiate the process, please [submit a contract intake form in MyCWU by following the steps in this link](#). Even if you're somebody who has the authority to sign contracts on behalf of CWU, those contracts still need to go through our office for approval before you actually do sign them. We appreciate you adhering to the rule of giving the Contracts Office a minimum of 30-60 days to review your contracts, more if complex. If procuring software or new technology, then an additional 90-120 days may be necessary, so the more lead time the better!
3. If you have any questions, just ask! Contracting can be a complicated process and you may have many questions along the way. If ever in doubt about what you should or shouldn't be doing when it comes to your department's contracts, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us! We would be happy to answer any questions you may have. We also offer in-person learning sessions to better understand the contracting process. Please reach out to us at CWU.ContractsOffice@cwu.edu.

PURCHASING

Are you new to CWU or are even a long-term employee and need to procure goods or services, but not sure where to start?

You aren't sure if a guest speaker can be paid a simple honorarium or if a contract is needed?

You'd like to purchase new furniture, computers, or other electronics?

Perhaps you are interested in purchasing food or having a local food truck at your event?

Do you have questions about bid thresholds, how to initiate a vendor payment, or how to give business to small and diverse vendors?

Simply contact our helpful [Purchasing staff](#) – they'd be happy to assist you navigate what can sometimes seem like a pretty daunting process! Our experienced buyers can break the purchasing process down for you step-by-step, and help you understand the rules and regulations which may apply to your specific purchases.

CONTRACT AND PURCHASING FAQS:

Q: The contract has been signed, do I still need to submit a requisition in order for the vendor to be paid?

A: Yes. Even though the contract has been signed, you must still enter a requisition to pay for the goods and services under the contract (unless you are paying with a Pcard, with prior permission from CWU Purchasing). The contract intake system does not transfer information to the requisition system. The contract

intake system is specifically for getting your contract approved for signature, whereas the requisition system is for initiating a vendor payment.

Q: Should I use a Pcard or submit a requisition to pay a vendor?

A: The Pcard program is designed to accommodate the purchase of common items such as office supplies, memberships, subscriptions, and much more. A list of allowable Pcard purchases can be found, along with additional Pcard program details, in the Pcard Handbook, accessible [here](#). The Pcard program may also accommodate the purchase of additional items via the Special Purchase Approval option using the “Modify Pcard Information form”. Instructions for the form can be found [here](#). If you have any questions about the CWU Pcard program, feel free to contact Charity Thornton at Charity.Thornton@cwu.edu.

SURPLUS AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

Does your department have furniture, equipment or supplies that you’re no longer using and are ready to get rid of? Or are you purchasing equipment or other items that may need to be tagged? Generally speaking, CWU is not allowed to just give away property once it’s done with it; instead, there are certain sale/disposal rules that must be followed. Similarly, there are rules and regulations in place relating to tagging and other asset management issues. Jason Bakeman, CWU’s Surplus and Inventory Control Specialist, can walk you through these and other related processes. Feel free to give Jason a call (ext. 2157) and let him know what surplus property and/or asset management issues you may be facing – he’d be happy to help!

TRAVEL

Have you ever wondered what the status labels on your Travel Authorization or Expense Report mean? Wonder no more! Here’s a breakdown of what each status descriptor actually indicates:

“Pending”: The Travel Authorization (“TA”) or Expense Report (“ER”) has either not been fully submitted or has been sent back for revisions. The traveler must decide whether this needs to be submitted for approvals, or else deleted. If the traveler attempts to submit the report and it still says “Pending”, there may be red flags or accounting errors. Double check all accounting information.

“Submitted for Approval”: The traveler has submitted the TA or ER, and it is in the approval queue.

“In Process”/“Approvals in Process”: The TA or ER is routing through approvals, but it has not yet been approved by the Travel Desk.

“Approved”: The TA has been fully approved. It will be waiting to be pulled in to populate the ER after your return.

“Paid”: The ER has been fully approved, reconciled, and paid by either direct deposit or check.

“Closed”: The TA, ER or Cash Advance has been closed. The TA will naturally close after the ER has been paid; or can be closed manually by the Travel Desk. ERs and Cash Advances can also be manually closed by the Travel Desk. Look at the Notes for more information.

Please be sure to email the Travel Desk at TravelDesk@cwu.edu if you have any questions about this or any other Travel topics.