

# THE BUYERS NETWORK

FEBRUARY 2020

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**THE BUYERS NETWORK** is Published Monthly by the Purchasing Division of the West Virginia Department of Administration to Promote Better Value in Public Purchasing.

## Vendor Outreach Efforts Announced for 2020

The Purchasing Division is planning several initiatives to reach out to the vendor community this year and encourage vendors to do business with the state.

The Purchasing Division will present two vendor webinars, one this spring and one in the fall, titled *Doing Business with West Virginia*. Registration is now open for the spring webinar, which is scheduled for Thursday, March 5, 2020, from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

The webinar provides guidelines and information to current and potential vendors wishing to conduct business with the state of West Virginia. Vendors will learn how to capitalize on their opportunities to bid and perform work for state government. Purchasing Division personnel will discuss how vendors may register their company with the Purchasing Division and how to submit bids on solicitations. Other topics will include how bids are evaluated, how changes to contracts are made, bidding limits and their requirements, and guidelines for marketing goods

Please see **VENDOR OUTREACH**, page 5

### DOING BUSINESS IN WEST VIRGINIA AN INFORMATIVE WEBINAR FOR BUSINESSES OFFERED BY THE WEST VIRGINIA PURCHASING DIVISION

West Virginia Purchasing Division staff will offer current and potential vendors valuable information on how to maximize their opportunity to bid and perform work for West Virginia state government.

**THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 2020**

**10:00 A.M. - 11:30 A.M.**

**REGISTER TODAY FOR THIS FREE WEBINAR**  
SPACE IS LIMITED

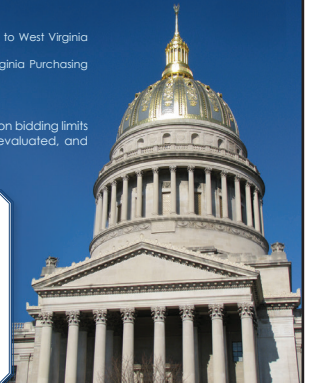
#### Do you want to learn how to:

- Market your commodities and services to West Virginia State agencies?
- Register as a vendor with the West Virginia Purchasing Division?
- Submit bids for solicitation?
- Expand your customer base?

This webinar also includes information on bidding limits and their requirements, how bids are evaluated, and how changes to contracts are made.

For more information, visit [www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/VendorReg.html](http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/VendorReg.html) or see below for the registration form.

For additional information, please contact us at [Purchasing.Training@wv.gov](mailto:Purchasing.Training@wv.gov).



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## Tell Me More: The Purchasing Process and the Roles Within

Each fiscal year, all agencies under the Purchasing Division's authority must designate a person responsible for the procurement function for that agency, in accordance with W. Va. 148 C.S.R. 1. Those individuals noted as the primary, and in some cases, backup designated procurement officers, serve as the liaison(s) between the agency and the Purchasing Division, and while every agency varies in size and number and types of procurements, their role is the same.

Every procurement begins with the agency, and it is the responsibility of the agency procurement officer to conduct proper research before entering the competitive bidding process. When it has been determined that competitive bidding is required, the agency must draft specifications for the good or service needed. For larger agencies, this may be done by field office personnel or by others within the agency. For smaller agencies, the designated procurement officer may be the responsible party for this task. In any event, procurement officers perform a very important role: drafter, editor, and approver of specifications prior

Please see **PURCHASING ROLES**, page 4

# Pursuing Education, Purchasing Growth, and Procurement Improvements in 2020

In last month's issue, we kicked off a new 12-month series to share important information pertinent to the state purchasing process, starting with the importance of developing clear and concise specifications and how they can help a procurement succeed. This month, we focused on the importance of your role as a procurement officer. For many of you, being designated as your agency's procurement officer comes with high expectations. Your peers look to you for answers. Your management depends on you to resolve issues and move procurements through quickly. Through it all, you must be the example that your agency expects, from knowing and understanding the laws and rules governing the process to knowing and being able to speak to all parts of your agency's procurements. Read more about this month's topic on page 1.

Twice each year, the Legislature requires the Purchasing Division to submit a report on stringing. The most recent report, submitted in January for the period of July 1, 2019, to December 31, 2019, saw 30 cases of stringing for a total of nine spending units. Stringing is making a series of procurements that circumvent the \$25,000 threshold or otherwise avoid the use of sealed bids. Fortunately, stringing is not always intentional. If you find that your agency has unintentionally committed stringing, please self-report it to your Purchasing Division buyer so that any correctable action can be taken to fix the issue, such as issuing an open-end contract. More on this report can be found within the article on page 5. To view the report, visit [www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/LegisReports.html](http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/LegisReports.html).

In this issue, we've also provided clarification and guidance on other important topics, including issuing multiple award

contracts and understanding how those work (page 4) and the new way in which to view the recording of the high-level officials training on purchasing procedures and P-Card rules (employees can now access this training via CourseMill – page 2).

In the coming months, we will also be sharing more information on our vendor webinar, Fixed Assets Coordinator Training, and Legal Seminar on State Procurement Practices, all scheduled for this spring.

While we have already done great things in the first month of 2020, we have so much more planned! We have welcomed new staff members to the Purchasing Division; our Procurement Certification Program continues to grow, welcoming new candidates each month to the certification process; and our conference and training coordinators are busy planning ahead for our vendor outreach initiatives and our 2020 Agency Purchasing Conference.

Furthermore, we always enjoy hearing what your agencies are doing to improve your agency-level procedures. If you would like to share your plans for the upcoming year, send them to [Purchasing.Division@wv.gov](mailto:Purchasing.Division@wv.gov) for a chance to be highlighted in an upcoming issue of *The Buyers Network*.



## Mandatory Training on Purchasing Procedures and Purchasing Card Program Now in CourseMill

High-level officials who were unable to watch the latest webinar of the State Officials' Purchasing Procedures and Purchasing Card Training may now view this training via CourseMill. The training is co-presented by the Purchasing Division and the State Auditor's Office.

The most recent live training was offered as a webinar on November 7, 2019. To view the recording of this webinar, visit [www.onlinelearning.wv.gov](http://www.onlinelearning.wv.gov) and log in using your unique ID number (e.g. A or B number) and password.

If you have not logged in before, the password should be "password." If you have logged in to CourseMill previously but cannot remember the password, simply click on the "Forgotten your User ID or Password?" link. If your email is in the system correctly, you should receive a message within five minutes of submitting your email address. Be sure to check your junk or clutter folder to see if the message went there. If you do not receive an email, call the Office of Technology's Service Desk at 304.558.9966 for

assistance.

Once logged into the site, click on the Course Catalog tab, type "PUR400E" into the Catalog ID field, and click on the Search button. The Purchasing Procedures and P-Card Rules (PUR400E) recording will populate. Simply click on the "Enroll" button for that session. Then click on the MyCourses tab to view the recording. You will need to view the entire recording to gain credit for viewing this training.

A confirmation email will be sent upon enrolling in this session, and a certificate will be emailed upon completion of viewing this training.

The training is mandatory for high-level officials and must be completed each fiscal year as indicated in W. Va. Code § 5A-3-60. For questions related to this training, email [Purchasing.Training@wv.gov](mailto:Purchasing.Training@wv.gov) or contact Samantha Knapp at 304.558.7022.

# Purchasing Publishes Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2019

The Purchasing Division is pleased to share its Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2019 (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019), which has been posted online for viewing and may be accessed by visiting [www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/Annualreport/Annual19.pdf](http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/Annualreport/Annual19.pdf).

Although not statutorily required to prepare an annual report, the Purchasing Division has provided this document since 1999 to showcase the accomplishments of the programs and services offered to its customers. This report also provides valuable statistical data on various functions administered by the division, which creates a comprehensive historical record for reference.

“The annual report shows that it was another productive year for the hardworking staff and management team at the Purchasing Division,” said Purchasing Director Mike Sheets. “Compiling the report provides an opportunity to reflect on our major achievements and start thinking about upcoming initiatives to make the procurement process more efficient and strengthen our relationships with our agency partners.”

In addition to featuring the Purchasing Division’s accomplishments, the annual report also highlights unique purchases made by the Purchasing Division, as well as provides information about various training activities and procedural changes which directly affected the state purchasing process.

Some of the accomplishments noted in this year’s annual report include:

- The Purchasing Division traveled throughout West Virginia offering seminars for local government entities on programs available to their organizations, as well as seminars for vendors interested in doing business with the state;

- The Purchasing Division received the National Procurement Institute’s *Achievement of Excellence in Procurement* award for the sixth consecutive year during fiscal year 2019;
  - A contract was awarded to allow county school transportation departments across the state to purchase school bus tires at competitive pricing;
  - More than 700 state employees were trained through the Purchasing Division’s training program;
  - The Purchasing Division published a revised vendor procurement guide titled *Doing Business with the State of West Virginia: A Vendor Procurement Guide*. It provides information to vendors wishing to conduct business with the state, specifically through the competitive bid process;
  - Strategic sourcing meetings with agencies continued to prepare for purchases for the upcoming fiscal year;
  - A total of 31,279 new awards were issued and delivery orders processed totaled \$361,878,004.57;
  - The Purchasing Division’s website received more than 14 million hits;
  - The Purchasing Division maintained a 1.41% rate of protests, which reflects the percentage of purchase orders and contracts for which a protest of any type is filed for the fiscal year; and
  - Surplus Property’s Facebook page exceeded 4,400 “likes.”
- Agency procurement officers are encouraged to read the Fiscal Year 2019 Annual Report. All annual reports are archived and available on the Purchasing Division’s website at [www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/Annualreport](http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/Annualreport).

## Legislative Rule Sets Food Purchase Requirement from West Virginia Producers for State-Funded Institutions

When purchasing food for the office or events, agency procurement officers are reminded of the Fresh Food Act. Passed during the 2019 Legislative Session, W. Va. Code § 19-37-2, known as the Fresh Food Act, requires that “all state-funded institutions, such as schools, colleges, correctional facilities, governmental agencies and state parks... purchase a minimum of five percent of its fresh produce, meat and poultry products from in-state producers: Provided, that such produce, meat and poultry products can be grown or is available from in-state producers.”

The Purchasing Division is currently working on a new statewide contract for food. As part of that contract, language will be incorporated that will require vendors to report with each order any fresh

produce, meat, and poultry products that originated from producers in the state of West Virginia. It will not be considered a breach of contract for an agency to procure fresh produce, meat, or poultry from other sources outside of this contract in order to comply with the statutory mandate, as long as the file is properly documented and appropriate procedures are followed. This contract is expected to be awarded in the following months.

If your agency or organization purchases fresh produce, meat, or poultry and you have additional questions about the Fresh Food Act, contact [freshfood@wvda.us](mailto:freshfood@wvda.us) or the Department of Agriculture’s Business Development Division at 304.558.2210. The Business Development Division also hosted an informational webinar that can be viewed online at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=UxDHbZcfwLk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UxDHbZcfwLk).



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## When Multi-Contract Award Exists, Lower Priced Contract Prevails When Possible

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On occasion, the Purchasing Division will issue multiple award contracts. These types of awards only occur when a single vendor cannot meet the needs in all areas of the state, such as with cell phone coverage. Since West Virginia primarily awards single contracts, there may be confusion as to which contract should be used when multiple award contracts are issued. When in doubt, always check the contract ordering instructions and pricing page(s). In most cases, agencies are required to select the least expensive option.

"It is important that procurement officers compare contracts to ensure they are using the appropriate contract when selecting from a statewide contract that has been awarded to multiple vendors," explained Assistant Purchasing Director Frank Whittaker.

The new vehicle rental contracts for Hertz and Enterprise serve as a good example of this situation. When Hertz and Enterprise both have a presence in the area where a vehicle will be rented, the agency must utilize the least expensive rental contract. Please note that while Enterprise offers the lowest in-state travel rates, Hertz offers the lowest out-of-state rates. When there are not multiple vendors in an area, the agency must use the contract which serves that particular area.

Agencies are reminded to document their file to show proper contract compliance and prevent a possible finding when Purchasing Division inspectors review the agency's use of statewide contracts.

"Multi-award statewide contracts are uncommon but critical to ensuring access to goods and services across the state," added Whittaker. "As with all statewide contracts, the goal is to aggregate the state's buying power and take advantage of the economies of scale to provide the best possible value to our agencies."

If unsure of which statewide contract to use in the case of a multi-contract award, please contact Senior Buyer Mark Atkins at [Mark.A.Atkins@wv.gov](mailto:Mark.A.Atkins@wv.gov).

## Purchasing Recognizes Latest Basic Certification Recipient

The Purchasing Division is pleased to announce Kim Jobe as the latest recipient in its West Virginia Procurement: Basic Certification program.

Jobe, an Administrative Services Assistant III for the Department of Health and Human Resources, has worked for the state for more than 10 years.

"Passing the test gave me a boost of confidence that I needed desperately," she said.

State agency procurement officers interested in obtaining the basic and/or advanced certification may review the requirements at [www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/training/Certification](http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/training/Certification). Questions regarding the certification program may be directed to Courtney Johnson at [Courtney.S.Johnson@wv.gov](mailto:Courtney.S.Johnson@wv.gov) or 304.558.4213.

The Purchasing Division would like to congratulate Jobe on this noteworthy accomplishment!

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## PURCHASING ROLES

Continued from Page 1

to their submission to the Purchasing Division.

Depending on the expected procurement, the designated procurement officer may also be required to obtain third-party approval(s), which can add time to the process, and in cases where the solicitation is expected to be complex, this and other factors should be considered. When planning for replacement contracts, adequate lead time is required to ensure both that the agency contract does not expire and that there is adequate transition time before the new one is put into place.

"Being aware of the current contract expiration date is critical. However, the procurement officer must also remember that the agency's response time throughout the procurement process is also very important," noted Assistant Purchasing Director Frank Whittaker. "Timely response to technical questions, as well as timely bid review and award recommendations, must be considered to ensure the agency's needs are met in a timely manner."

Once a request is submitted, the Purchasing Division buyer then walks that procurement through the process, ensuring all steps are met in accordance with purchasing laws, rules, and procedures. The designated procurement officer will continue,

however, to be a part of the process, from answering questions (for submission to the Purchasing Division) as part of the Question and Answer period, reviewing bids and concurring with agency recommendations for award, and more.

Other notable responsibilities of the procurement officer including keeping apprised of and training other procurement staff on the current statutory and regulatory requirements, maintaining proper documentation and files for public record, tracking procurements for commodities or services that are the same or similar in nature and with a given vendor, and ensuring procurements are made within the proper spending thresholds and following the bidding requirements.

Meanwhile, Purchasing Division buyers serve as the state purchasing process experts. In doing so, they maintain the impartiality needed to ensure a fair purchasing process, make professional judgments within the established legal framework, and create competition while also being good stewards of the public's money. They serve as the primary Purchasing Division contact for the agencies to which they have been assigned and are available to answer process-related questions.

## Procurement Officer Profile: Perry's Long Career Provides Unique Experiences

From chainsaws and leaf blowers to seedlings and bloodhounds, Rachel Perry has processed a wide variety of procurements for the Division of Forestry.

While Perry began her career with the state in 1999 with the Division of Motor Vehicles, she did not get her first experience in purchasing until she transferred to the Department of Health and Human Resources' finance section in 2000. Six years later, Perry transferred to the Consolidated Public Retirement Board, and finally, to her current position with Forestry in 2011.

"I love working in the Accounting Section at Forestry because I complete a wide variety of tasks," shared Perry. "I work with amazing people. Everyone at Forestry is warm, welcoming and so helpful, and they all have become family to me."

In addition to her procurement duties, Perry also pays invoices through *wvOASIS* and by P-Card, serves as the P-Card sub-coordinator, and trains others on invoice payments and P-Card reconciliation.

"My job duties have grown more complex since coming to work for Forestry in 2011," added Perry. "I handle invoices that require more research than regular monthly invoices such as rent or utilities."

Perry resides with her boyfriend in Charleston, where they care for two indoor cats, three outdoor cats, and a dog.



**Rachel Perry**  
Division of Forestry

### VENDOR OUTREACH

Continued from Page 1

and services to state agencies.

Registration for the spring webinar and additional information on vendor training can be found on the Vendor Resource Center of the Purchasing Division's website, located at [www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/vrc](http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/vrc).

A vendor open house will be held on Thursday, October 1, 2020, in Building 7 on the Capitol complex, followed by a second vendor webinar on Thursday, October 15, 2020. The open house, offered for the second year in a row, will allow vendors the opportunity to meet with representatives from several state agencies in one location. More information on both of these fall events will be shared at a later date.

Questions about any of the vendor outreach initiatives may be directed to [Purchasing.Training@wv.gov](mailto:Purchasing.Training@wv.gov).

## Purchasing Division's Stringing Report Submitted to Legislature

The Purchasing Division recently submitted its semi-annual Stringing Report to the West Virginia Legislature, in accordance with W. Va. Code § 5A-3-10(b). The report is submitted electronically through the Legislature's database to the Joint Committee on Government and Finance in January and July each year.

According to the *Purchasing Division Procedures Handbook*, stringing is defined as "issuing a series of requisitions or dividing or planning procurements to circumvent the twenty-five thousand dollar threshold or otherwise avoid the use of sealed bids."

During the year, Purchasing Division inspection staff review agency purchasing records, primarily for those transactions processed at the agency-delegated level, to ensure those transactions are completed in accordance with the Purchasing Division's procedures. Inspectors discovered a total of 30 cases of stringing among nine different spending units for the period of July 1, 2019, to December 31, 2019.

In many cases, stringing may be avoided by properly and continuously monitoring expenditures with vendors to ensure that the total amount spent with a given vendor, in any 12-month period, of same or similar commodity or service does not exceed a bid threshold without the proper level of documentation and bidding. For those commodities and services procured frequently, agencies are encouraged to process open-ended contracts to eliminate the potential for stringing.

Questions from agency personnel relating to purchasing issues should be directed first to the respective agency procurement officer. If the agency procurement officer needs assistance, he or she is encouraged to contact the appropriate Purchasing Division buyer.

To view the latest stringing report, visit [www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/LegisReports.html](http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/LegisReports.html).

Buyers Network

### THE BUYERS NETWORK

Purchasing Division  
State Capitol Complex  
2019 Washington Street, East  
Charleston, WV 25305-0130

Telephone: 304.558.2306  
8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (M-F)

**Jim Justice**  
Governor

**Mike Sheets**  
Director  
Purchasing Division

Editor  
**Samantha Knapp**

Contributing Reporters  
**Jessica Chambers**  
**Courtney Johnson**

# Current Statewide Contract Update

(As of January 17, 2020)

This page includes a listing of current changes made to statewide contracts issued by the Purchasing Division. Information and dates listed in this **Current Statewide Contract Update** are subject to change. All statewide contracts are available online at [www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/swc](http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/swc). For more information, please contact the buyer assigned to statewide contracts.

## New Contracts

<b>Contract</b>	<b>Vendor</b>	<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
COMTRKRN20	Enterprise	Vehicle Leasing Services	01/15/20 -12/31/21

## Contract Renewals

<b>Contract</b>	<b>Vendor</b>	<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
LDPHONE19	Method One Comm LLC	Long distance Telephone Svcs	02/01/20 -01/31/21
PAINT17	Sherwin-Williams	Paints, primers and finishes	04/01/20 -03/31/21

## Miscellaneous Actions

<b>Contract</b>	<b>Vendor</b>	<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Description of Change</b>
CRENTAL20A	Enterprise	Vehicle Leasing Services	To update vendor pricing
CRENTAL20B	Hertz	Vehicle Leasing Services	To update vendor pricing
ELECMON14	Attenti Us Inc	Electronic, Comm measuring/testing	To mirror the NASPO agreement
PKGSVS17	FedEx	Delivery services	To publish the Single Carrier Rates
SWC*2	Verizon	Telecommu	To provide 5% reduction in MRC

## New Buyer on Staff at Purchasing Division

The Purchasing Division is pleased to welcome John Estep to its staff. Estep will serve as a buyer for the Acquisitions and Contract Administration Section.

A resident of Big Chimney, Estep previously worked as a procurement officer for more than four years at WorkForce WV and at Peabody Coal for 32 years.

"I am grateful for this opportunity at the Purchasing Division," said Estep, as he transitions into this new role within state government.

In his free time, Estep enjoys fishing, playing volleyball, and enjoying the outdoors with his wife Amy.

Welcome to the Purchasing Division!



**John Estep**  
Purchasing Buyer

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Below is a list of Purchasing Division buyers assigned to specific state agencies.

<b>BUYER</b>	<b>E-MAIL</b>	<b>PHONE</b>
<u>Supervisors</u>		
Tara Lyle	Tara.L.Lyle@wv.gov	558-2544
Guy Nisbet	Guy.L.Nisbet@wv.gov	558-2596
Linda Harper	Linda.B.Harper@wv.gov	558-0468
<u>Senior Buyers</u>		
Mark Atkins	Mark.A.Atkins@wv.gov	558-2307
Jessica Chambers	Jessica.S.Chambers@wv.gov	558-0246
Josh Hager	Joseph.E.Hageriii@wv.gov	558-8801
Crystal Hustead	Crystal.G.Hustead@wv.gov	558-2402
Brittany Ingraham	Brittany.E.Ingraham@wv.gov	558-2157
Melissa Pettrey	Melissa.K.Pettrey@wv.gov	558-0094
<u>Buyers</u>		
Dusty Smith	Dusty.J.Smith@wv.gov	558-2063
John Estep	John.W.Estep@wv.gov	558-2566