



## County of Mercer Workforce Development Board

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## PROCUREMENT POLICIES & PROCEDURES Adopted: 2/5/2026

### 1. Purpose

This policy establishes the procurement standards and procedures used by the Mercer County Workforce Development Board (WDB) to acquire goods and services funded under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ). The policy ensures:

- Full and open competition
- Transparency and accountability
- Compliance with federal, state, and local law
- Separation of governance and service delivery roles
- Fair, equitable, and documented procurement practices

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all procurements conducted by or on behalf of the Mercer County WDB, including:

- One-Stop Operator
- One-Stop Career Services Provider
- WIOA Youth Service Providers
- WFNJ Employment & Training Providers (if procured)
- Training contracts, consultants, and other contracted services
- Any subrecipient or contractor using WIOA or WFNJ funds

### 3. Governing Regulations

Procurement activities must comply with:

- WIOA (Secs. 107, 121, 123, 129)
- 20 CFR 678-683
- 2 CFR 200.317-200.327 (Uniform Guidance procurement standards)
- 2 CFR 2900 (DOL exceptions)
- NJ Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq.)
- NJDOL Policies:
  - WD-PY24-9 (Competitive Procurement of Title I Services)
  - WD-PY24-2 (Budget Requirements)
  - WD-PY19-3 (Monitoring Policy)
  - WD-PY21-6 (Local Governance)
  - NJWIN 20-16 (Youth Procurement)

## 4. Procurement Principles

### 4.1 Full and Open Competition

All procurement transactions must be conducted to ensure:

- No unreasonable requirements
- No unnecessary experience or bonding
- No conflicts of interest
- No organizational advantage
- No geographic restrictions
- Clear and non-restrictive RFP language
- Public posting and broad outreach

### 4.2 Transparency

The WDB must publicly post:

- RFPs
- Notices of funding availability
- Bidder questions and answers
- Award recommendations
- Final awards

### 4.3 Documentation

The WDB must maintain a complete procurement file including:

- RFP/IFB
- Public notices
- All proposals received
- Evaluation tools and scoring sheets
- Conflict-of-interest disclosures
- Award justification
- Cost/price analysis
- Contract and scope of work

## 5. Procurement Methods

### 5.1 Micro-Purchases (< \$7,950)

- No competitive quotes required if price is reasonable.
- Must distribute equitably among qualified vendors.

### 5.2 Small Purchases (\$7,950-\$53,000)

- Requires price or rate quotes from **at least two** qualified sources.

### 5.3 Sealed Bids (Formal Advertising)

Used when:

- Procurement exceeds the Mercer County Bid Threshold (\$53,000)
- A complete specification is available
- Two or more bidders are expected

### 5.4 Competitive Proposals (RFP)

Required for:

- One-Stop Operator
- One-Stop Career Services Provider
- WIOA Youth Services Providers
- Any professional services contract
- Any procurement exceeding the simplified acquisition threshold

## 5.5 Sole Source Procurement

Permitted only when:

- The service is available from a single source
- Public emergency does not permit delay
- NJDOL authorizes in writing
- Competition is inadequate after proper solicitation

**Sole source requires written justification and public disclosure.**

## 6. Required Competitive Procurements

### 6.1 One-Stop Operator

- Must be procured at least once every four years.
- WDB may compete only with firewalls and CEO approval.
- Must follow TEGE 15-16 and WD-PY24-9.

### 6.2 One-Stop Career Services Provider

- Must be competitively procured at least every four years.
- Operator and Career Services roles cannot be held by the same individual.

### 6.3 WIOA Youth Services

- All program elements must be available, but not all must be procured.
- Design framework services (intake, ISS, case management, follow-up) do not require procurement.
- Youth work experience may be provided directly by the WDB.
- Procured youth services must align with SETC's 10 youth criteria.

### 6.4 WFNJ Employment & Training Services

- May be procured jointly with WIOA Career Services.
- Procurement is optional; WDB may provide services directly.

## 7. Procurement Process

### 7.1 Planning Phase

- Conduct environmental scan
- Identify service gaps
- Determine procurement method
- Develop RFP, scoring tools, and timeline
- Establish evaluation committee
- Ensure conflict-of-interest disclosures

### 7.2 Release & Evaluation

- Public posting for minimum 30 days
- Optional bidders' conference
- Receipt and logging of proposals
- Independent scoring by evaluators
- Cost/price analysis
- Past performance review
- Documentation of any disqualifications

### 7.3 Selection & Negotiation

- Evaluation committee recommendation
- WDB approval
- CEO approval (and Governor approval if WDB is selected)
- Negotiation of budget, deliverables, and performance metrics
- Execution of contract

## **7.4 Contract Management**

- Monthly or quarterly reporting
- Monitoring per WD-PY19-3
- Corrective action when needed
- Annual performance review
- Renewal decisions (up to 2 one-year renewals)

## **8. Conflicts of Interest & Firewalls**

### **8.1 Individual Conflicts**

Board members, staff, evaluators, or agents must recuse themselves if they:

- Have a financial interest
- Have a family relationship
- Are employed by or seeking employment with a bidder
- Participated in drafting the RFP

### **8.2 Organizational Conflicts**

If Mercer County (or any entity) performs multiple roles (e.g., WDB staff, fiscal agent, operator, provider):

- Written agreement with CEO is required
- Firewalls must separate governance from operations
- Independent monitoring must be used when WDB is the provider or operator

## **9. Monitoring & Oversight**

Per WD-PY19-3, the WDB must ensure:

- Fiscal and program monitoring of all contracts
- Compliance with WIOA, Uniform Guidance, and NJDOL policy
- Corrective action within 30 days
- Documentation in NJDOL's Resolution Tracking System
- Annual review of procurement practices

## **10. Record Retention**

Procurement records must be retained for three years from the date of final expenditure report, or longer if:

- Litigation is pending
- Audit findings are unresolved
- NJDOL or USDOL requires extended retention

## **11. Public Disclosure Requirements**

The WDB must publicly post:

- RFPs
- Notices of award
- Evaluation summaries
- Conflict-of-interest statements
- Procurement policy

## **12. Amendments**

This policy may be amended by vote of the Mercer County Workforce Development Board.