

Standards: Ethical Purchasing

University Standards: STN-U5348.01A

Authority

POL-U5348.01	Purchasing Goods and Services
RCW 42.52	Ethics in Public Service

See Also

STN-U5348.01B	Standards for Controlled and Prohibited Purchases
POL-U5410.01	Employing Family Members and Significant Others Policy
POL-U4520.06	Reporting Financial Conflict of Interest by Public Health Services Funded Investigations Policy

Purpose

University faculty and staff who purchase goods and services or are involved with deciding or recommending a vendor from whom to make a purchase or contractual agreement must be knowledgeable about and adhere to these ethical purchasing standards.

Definitions

Family members – Individuals related to a WWU employee by biological heritage, marriage (including in-law and step relatives), registered domestic partnerships and adoption, which include spouse (including different sex or same sex spouse/partner), domestic partner, parent, sibling, child, grandparent, grandchild or other close relative.

Significant Others – Individuals romantically or financially involved with a WWU employee or those with a relationship closely ties to an immediate family member.

Standards

It is the expectation that each employee will act in accordance with the following standards when acquiring goods or services with University funds. Employees must:

1. Never use University mechanisms or funds to purchase goods or services for personal use even if the employee or student intends on reimbursing the University.
2. Disclose any potential personal or financial conflict of interest with current or potential vendors to the Chief Procurement Officer (and to the federal awarding agency in the case of grant funds). See *Standards for Disclosing of Conflict of Interest* (STN-U5438.01A).
3. Give first consideration to the objectives and policies of WWU.

4. Strive to obtain the maximum value for each dollar expenditure while avoiding conflicts of interest.
5. Exercise professionalism and good business practices when involved in transactions on behalf of WWU.
6. Not accept, personally or on behalf of others, gifts, kickbacks, commissions, services or other benefits. See [RCW 42.52.150](#) Limitations on Gifts.
7. Not use their positions for personal gain for themselves, family members or significant others or any individual which would make their integrity questionable. See RCW 42.52 for specific conflict of interests.
 - a) Employees are not to take part in a procurement process, small or large, when their involvement may be perceived by others as or cause a conflict of interests.
 - b) Employees must not take part in or influence procurements for WWU that involve their own business or that of a family member, significant other, or any individual which would make their integrity questionable. If there are plans to make a purchase from a business in which an employee has personal or financial interests, that employee shall withdraw from the procurement process and inform their immediate superior of the situation.
 - c) If personal interests may influence a decision in a matter for which an employee has professional responsibility, or where others may reasonably regard such influence as a probability, the matter must be submitted to the Chief Procurement Officer and the employee's department head.
8. Grant all competitive suppliers equal consideration insofar as state or federal statute and institutional policy permit.
9. Conduct business with potential and current suppliers in an atmosphere of good faith, devoid of intentional misrepresentation.
10. Demand honesty in sales representation whether offered through the medium of a verbal or written statement, an advertisement, or a sample of the product.
11. Not use agreements with suppliers for delivery of goods and services to WWU in a personal capacity. This also applies to employees' related persons if the advantage is deemed to stem from the employee's employment at WWU.
12. Make every reasonable effort to negotiate an equitable and mutually agreeable settlement of any controversy with a supplier, and/or be willing to submit any major controversies to arbitration or other third-party review insofar as the established policies and/or practices of Western permit.
13. Ensure that when suppliers and other business partners offer visits to private companies, travel to exhibitions etc., the University covers the expenses of travel and accommodation. Ensure that all business related travel is pre-approved.
14. Foster fair, ethical, and legal trade practices.
15. Report suspected misconduct. See [Reporting Improper Governmental Actions](#).