Delegation of Signature Authority

In order to make purchases on a grant budget, the purchaser must be delegated signature authority by the Principal Investigator. The person to which signature authority has been delegated should have direct knowledge of the needs of the research project. Delegation must be made in writing or email to the Chemistry Purchasing and Accounting Office. The Purchasing and Accounting Office maintains files of these delegations to insure compliance with federal guidelines. Auditors frequently ask for proof of delegation of authority.

Principal Investigators may complete the Delegation of Signature Authority Form (PDF) to delegate signatory authority to research staff and students, as appropriate. Completed forms should be sent to Jayashree Harihara Subramanian in the Purchasing and Accounting Office. While PIs may also send Jayashree Harihara Subramanian this information via email, it is preferable for PIs to use the form.

Purchasing Process and Procedures

The Department of Chemistry has a central purchasing staff to place orders to outside vendors and help you resolve any problems that may occur. Purchase requests are submitted to the Purchasing staff via PurchasePath, a web-based ordering system that manages all aspects of purchasing including order submission, approval, receiving, and history. Chemistry purchasing staff also use PurchasePath to communicate with you about your order, and you are able to attach any necessary supporting documentation to your order (e.g., quotes, sole source justifications). Please direct any questions to Jayashree Harihara Subramanian in the Purchasing and Accounting Office (BAG 109P, jayhari@uw.edu, 206.543.1651).

Paper Requests for Purchase - You may still submit requests for purchase using the paper forms. However, we strongly urge you to submit orders via PurchasePath. We've discontinued ordering the multi-copy paper forms.

If you do submit a paper form, the Purchasing staff will use it to create a PurchasePath order and will give you access to it. This assures that all orders are handled in the same manner, improves our internal tracking, and facilitates documentation.

Please be sure to be as specific as possible about when you need your material. This will help the purchasing staff prioritize work and assure that you get what you need, when you need it. Our goal is to place orders within one business day of receipt. For urgent orders, it would be advisable to contact either Anna Randall (email, 206.543.2873) or Mike Zimmerman (email, 206.543.4632) directly after you've submitted the order in PurchasePath.

PurchasePath Login

Purchase Path FAQs: Common questions and answers that may be helpful.
Other Purchasing Information

Gas Orders
Praxair delivers on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
Cutoff for Tuesday orders is Monday at 12:00 pm (or Friday at 12:00 pm for cryogenic orders).
Cutoff for Thursday orders is Wednesday at 12:00 pm (or Tuesday at 12:00 pm for cryogenic orders).
Liquid helium – 4-day lead time.
Liquid nitrogen – 2-day lead time.
Complex blends and specialty orders may take longer.
If you have questions please contact Anna or Mike.

Orders over $10,000
The “direct buy limit” is $10,000. Orders over this amount are subject to state law requiring competitive pricing. The UW has established competitive contracts with many suppliers. The direct buy limit does not apply to suppliers with which there is a competitive contract. If there is no competitive contract in place, you may be asked to complete a Sole Source justification. The Chemistry Purchasing and Accounting staff will help you with this requirement. Additional information is available here: https://f2.washington.edu/fm/ps/how-to-buy/sole-source

M & E Tax Sales Exemption (Machinery & Equipment)
If an equipment purchase meets certain criteria, the purchase may qualify for an M & E tax exemption, which would exempt the purchase from sales tax. These qualifications are:

- Have a useful life of more than one year.
- Be used more than 50% annually on qualifying research (equipment used primarily for instruction generally does not qualify) and
- Have an acquisition cost of $200 or more

Non-equipment costs (such as replacement parts) may also qualify for this exemption; more information is available on the UW Equipment Inventory Office website. You will be asked to submit and M&E tax exemption form (PDF) with your order.

Receiving
The Chemistry Research Stockroom (36 Bagley Hall) is the central receiving location for the Department. All material must be shipped to 36 Bagley Hall. You will be notified via email when your shipment arrives. To check the status of your shipment, please contact the Purchasing and Accounting Office.

For further information, please see the Shipping and Receiving policy.

Equipment Insurance
Equipment is not automatically insured by the University. The UW Office of Risk Management administers an optional, low cost insurance plan for University-owned equipment. If you're interested in obtaining this coverage for your equipment, please contact Jayashree Harihara Subramanian.

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