

**Greater Kitchener Waterloo Chamber of Commerce
Procurement Policy
FINAL DRAFT
October 17, 2025**

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this Procurement Policy is to ensure that the Greater Kitchener Waterloo Chamber acquires goods and services in a manner that:

- Achieves best value for money
- Supports fair and transparent processes
- Complies with legal and ethical standards
- Reflects the Chamber's values, including support for member businesses and diverse suppliers

This policy also aims to mitigate financial and reputational risks by applying consistent procurement procedures across the organization.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All purchases of goods and services, including professional services and consulting
- All staff, board members, volunteers, and contractors with purchasing authority
- All funding sources (operating, grant, sponsorship, or flow-through)

It covers all stages of procurement: planning, approval, vendor selection, contracting, and payment.

3. Guiding Principles

The Chamber will conduct procurement in a manner that is:

- **Fair** – All qualified suppliers have a reasonable opportunity to compete. Where feasible, purchases will be made through Chamber member organizations.
- **Transparent** – Processes and decisions are documented and reviewable
- **Accountable** – Approvals and responsibilities are clearly defined
- **Inclusive** – Where feasible, quotes will be requested from diverse and member-owned businesses and all suppliers listed in the Chamber's directory in appropriate, and similar, categories.
- **Environmentally Responsible** – Environmental impacts are considered where applicable

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Requesting Department	Initiates the purchase, confirms budget availability
Department Head / VP	Approves planned purchases within limits, reviews supplier selection
Chief Operating Officer	Reviews compliance with thresholds and controls
President & CEO	Approves high-value or non-budgeted expenditures
Finance and Audit Committee or Board of Directors	May approve extraordinary purchases or contracts as per bylaws

5. Procurement Thresholds and Approval Requirements

Purchase Value (before tax)	Requirements	Approvals
Up to \$500	May be made directly by staff (e.g., office supplies)	Included in monthly expense report
\$501 – \$5000	Request minimum three quotes; documented justification	Department Head (DH) or designate
\$5,001 – \$10,000	Formal RFP required (unless sole-source exemption approved)	Both Department Head (DH) and COO
\$10,001 – \$25,000	Formal RFP required (unless sole-source exemption approved)	Both COO and CEO
Over \$25,000	Formal RFP required (unless sole-source exemption approved)	Both COO and CEO

In extenuating circumstances, purchase recommendations made without a minimum of three quotes require COO approval. All contracts exceeding \$10,000 must be reviewed in accordance with the Chamber's Contract Review & Authorization Procedures (see appendix). Unbudgeted items require prior approval by COO, CEO and the Finance and Audit Committee.

6. Procurement Methods

A. Informal Quotation

- A minimum of three verbal or email quotes accepted, but must be documented for purchases \$501 to \$5,000

B. Formal Request for Proposal (RFP)

- Minimum three quote responses to RFP and two authorizers (DH and COO) for purchases \$5,000 to \$10,000
- Minimum three quote responses to RFP and two authorizers (COO and CEO) for purchases \$10,001 to \$25,000
- Minimum three responses to RFP and two authorizers (COO and CEO) for purchases over \$25,000. Must include evaluation criteria, timelines, and scoring process

C. Sole-Source Procurement

Permitted for procurement under \$10,000 or under specific conditions, such as:

- Emergency circumstances
- Only one qualified supplier
- Continuity with an existing supplier whose replacement would cause material disruption

All sole-source procurement over \$10,000, or RFP responses with fewer than three responses, must be justified in writing and approved by the COO and CEO. Likewise, procurement over \$25,000 for items that are unbudgeted must be approved by the COO, CEO and Finance and Audit Committee.

7. Vendor Evaluation and Selection

Supplier selection will consider:

- Price and overall value
- Quality, reliability, and track record
- Alignment with the Chamber's mission and values
- Preference for local or member-owned businesses, when competitive
- Diverse or equity-seeking supplier status, when known
- Environmental responsibility considered where applicable

Vendors may be asked to disclose any real or perceived conflict of interest. The Chamber reserves the right to withhold awarding the contract or to cancel and re-tender the procurement process for any reason.

8. Conflicts of Interest

No employee, director, or volunteer involved in procurement may:

- Derive personal benefit from a contract awarded
- Influence procurement decisions involving family, friends, or business associates without full disclosure

All conflicts, real or perceived, must be disclosed in writing to the COO and addressed according to the Chamber's Code of Conduct - Conflict of Interest Policy.

9. Documentation and Record Retention

The following documentation must be retained for a minimum of seven (7) years:

- Requisitions, quotes (emails), and bid evaluations
- Approvals and correspondence
- Contracts and purchase orders
- Payment records

Records must be stored securely by the COO and accessible for audit, review, or funding compliance.

10. Payment Authorization and Processing

- All payments must be supported by proper documentation (invoice, contract, approvals)
- Two authorized signatories are required for all payments in addition to the COO or CEO.
- Payments are preferred to be issued via EFT or corporate credit card. Cheque is acceptable in accordance with the Chamber's Financial Controls Policies and Procedures.

11. Grant and Flow-Through Funding Exemptions

Certain program-related disbursements (e.g., grant awards, flow-through funds) may be exempt from the competitive procurement process, provided:

- The disbursement criteria are approved by the funding partner and Chamber
- Supporting documentation (approval letters, disbursement logs) is maintained
- The COO authorizes release of funds

12. Non-Compliance and Consequences

Any individual who knowingly violates this policy may be subject to:

- Disciplinary action (in the case of staff or volunteers)
- Revocation of signing authority
- Termination of vendor relationship
- Reporting to appropriate legal or regulatory bodies if warranted

13. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every three (3) years by the Finance & Audit Committee and updated as necessary to reflect best practices, legal obligations, and organizational priorities.

Approved by the Greater Kitchener Waterloo Board of Directors on [October xx, 2025]

Next Review Date: [October xx, 2028]

Appendix: Contract Review and Authorization Procedures

1. Purpose

To ensure contracts entered into by the Chamber are properly reviewed, authorized, and executed in a manner that protects the organization's legal, financial, and reputational interests.

2. Scope

These procedures apply to all contracts, agreements, memoranda of understanding (MOUs), or service arrangements that commit the Chamber to financial obligations, service provisions, or partnership responsibilities, regardless of dollar value.

3. Definitions

- **Contract:** A written or electronic agreement outlining obligations and commitments between the Chamber and a third party.
- **Authorized Signatory:** A person empowered by the Chamber's Board to enter into contractual obligations on behalf of the Chamber.

4. Contract Review Steps

a) Initiation

- The initiating staff member or board officer identifies the need for a contract and prepares a draft or receives a draft from the vendor/service provider.

b) Review Checklist

Before authorization, the following must be confirmed:

- Business terms (scope, deliverables, cost, timelines)
- Term and renewal conditions
- Termination clauses and notice period
- Payment terms and late payment penalties
- Confidentiality, indemnity, and liability clauses
- Insurance or licensing requirements (if applicable)
- Intellectual property (if applicable)
- Dispute resolution mechanisms (if applicable)

c) Legal or Third-Party Review

- Contracts involving complex liabilities must be reviewed by legal counsel or a qualified third-party reviewer.
- Exceptions must be documented and approved by the CEO or Board Chair.

5. Contract Authorization and Signing Authority

Threshold	Approval Required From	Authorized Signatory
Under \$5,000	DH	Two of DH/Staff/CEO and COO
\$5,000 to \$10,000	DH/COO	Two of DH/CEO and COO
\$10,001 to \$25,000	Both COO and CEO	Both CEO and COO
Over \$25,000	Both COO and CEO	Both CEO and COO

6. Filing and Recordkeeping

- All fully executed contracts shall be stored securely in the Chamber’s central contract repository (digital and/or physical).
- A Contract Summary Sheet must accompany each signed agreement and include key dates, value, renewal, and performance monitoring notes.

7. Renewal and Monitoring

- Contract owners are responsible for tracking contract performance and expiry.
- The Chamber should maintain a contract calendar with renewal/termination trigger dates for action at least 60 days in advance.

8. Conflicts of Interest

- All parties involved in contract review or authorization must disclose any real or perceived conflict of interest prior to involvement.
- Refer to the Chamber’s Code of Conduct/Conflict of Interest Policy for further detail