

# Delegated Purchasing Authority and Contractual Policy Update

## I. Delegated Purchasing Authority

In accordance with University Policy and Procedures, **all negotiations with suppliers and contractors must be conducted by the Purchasing Section**, unless otherwise arranged.

Departments are not precluded from **contacting vendors for preliminary information** regarding pricing, product quality, or usage of equipment and supplies. Upon request, the Purchasing Section will provide vendor names and contact information. However, these preliminary interactions **must not result in firm commitments**, as this remains the sole responsibility of the Purchasing Section.

When a **Budget Unit Head or Designee** initiates procurement processes, they:

- Accept delegated purchasing authority;
- Agree to follow University Purchasing Policies and Procedures;
- Acknowledge responsibility for compliance with all applicable rules and regulations under the **Louisiana Procurement Code and Executive Orders**.

**Note:** Any violation of these policies is the responsibility of the Budget Unit Head/Designee, regardless of errors or omissions made by approvers or Purchasing staff.

## II. Contractual Authority

What is a Contract?

A contract is any legally binding agreement that may:

- Involve the exchange of goods or services for compensation;
- Relate to procurement or disposal of supplies, services, or construction;
- Require performance of work or leasing of property for consideration.

Who Can Sign Contracts?

The authority to sign University contracts resides with the **President of Northwestern State University**. However, this authority is **delegated to the Vice Presidents** for certain contracts:

- Personal, professional, consulting, or social services contracts **up to \$49,999**;
- **Excludes** legal, architectural, and auditing/accounting services.

**No other employee** is authorized to sign contracts involving:

- The expenditure of any funds, regardless of source;
- Agreements requiring University resources;
- Contracts not specifically delegated.

Such contracts must be:

1. **Forwarded to the Director of Purchasing** for review; and

2. **Recommended** to the President or appropriate Vice President for final signature.

The University operates under the principle of **express authority only**. This means:

Employees **must not** enter into any contractual agreement on behalf of the University unless they have been specifically granted delegated authority.

### III. Prohibited Actions (Without Delegated Authority)

Employees are **not authorized** to:

1. Offer employment to anyone;
2. Enter professional, personal, or consulting contracts;
3. Procure goods or services;
4. Engage in cooperative agreements, joint ventures, or similar arrangements.

Only employees with **specific delegated authority** may:

- Negotiate contracts;
- Extend offers;
- Finalize agreements, subject to required approvals (e.g., Board of Supervisors, President, Vice President).

It is the **responsibility of the employee** to verify that they hold proper authority before negotiating or entering into any binding agreement on behalf of the University.

### IV. Use of Electronic Signatures

Electronic signatures are **permitted** for purchasing-related documents **where traditional ink signatures would otherwise be required**, unless restricted by another governing body.

#### Exceptions

Electronic signatures are **not accepted** in transactions involving:

- Clerk of Court filings;
- Construction desk recordation;
- Office of State Travel (T-Card and P-Card-related documents).

#### Acceptable Forms of Electronic Signature

1. Scanned handwritten (ink) signature;
2. Signature captured via digital pen or pad;
3. Image-based signature inserted via software (e.g., Adobe);
4. Encrypted certificates containing digital signatures;
5. Third-party web platforms (e.g., VeriSign);
6. Other forms deemed acceptable by the **Chief Procurement Officer** on a case-by-case basis.

Both **vendors and NSU departments** may use electronic signatures and are treated as legally binding.

# NORTHWESTERN STATE

## *Office of the President*

Thursday, August 8, 2024

Ms. Pamela Bartfay Rice, Esq.  
Assistant Director-Professional Contracts  
Division of Administration  
P. O. Box 94095  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9095

**APPROVED**  
Division of Administration  
Office of State Procurement

**AUG 12 2024**

*Pamela Bartfay Rice*  
ASST. DIRECTOR *PC*

RE: Contract Signature Authority

Dear Ms. Rice:

In accordance with LA R.S. 39:1595 1 (B), the name (s) listed below have delegated signature authority for contract from Northwestern State University:

Mr. Rodney Wilson, Chief Financial Officer

Dr. William Drake Owens, Executive Vice President / Chief of Staff

Dr. Greg Handel, Executive Vice President and Provost

Ms. Jennifer A. Kelly, Executive Director of University Affairs

Ms. Laurie Morrow, Executive Director for Economic Development and Advancement

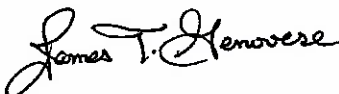
Ms. Reatha Cox, Vice President for The Student Experience and Dean of Students

Your approval of the request is effective August 8, 2024.

If you need further information, please contact Ashlee Grayson, Director of Purchasing, Northwestern State University, at 318-357-4496.

Thank you for your consideration of the above request.

Sincerely,



James T. Genovese  
President, Northwestern State University

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