



Government Procurement Services October 2026

Stay informed about the issues that matter in public procurement. This newsletter provides government procurement and contracting professionals with timely updates, emerging trends, best practices, and practical insights.



2027 Training Schedule is Now Available!

It's time to start planning your professional development for 2027!

The Government Procurement Services (GPS) 2027 Training

Schedule is now available on the [website](#).

The new schedule includes a variety of in-person and virtual training opportunities covering public procurement, contracting, specifications, statements of work, negotiations, ethics, procurement management, and more.

Whether you are new to public procurement, looking to strengthen your skills, or working toward continuing education hours for your professional certification, I hope you'll find a class that meets your needs.

Take a look at the 2027 schedule and register early to reserve your spot. I look forward to seeing you in class in 2027!

90th Texas Legislative Session

It's hard to believe it has been almost two years, but another Texas Legislative Session is just around the corner!



The 90th Texas Legislature will convene on January 12, 2027, and bill pre-filing begins next month on November 9, 2026.

Once bills start coming in, check the [Legislative Watch](#) section of the Government Procurement Services website. Throughout the session, I'll track proposed legislation related to public procurement and contracting and highlight bills that may impact Texas governmental entities and procurement professionals.

Check back regularly for updates as bills are filed, amended, and move through the legislative process.



Why Vendor Selection Is So Important

When soliciting bids or quotes, whom you invite to compete can significantly affect the procurement results.

The vendor selection process often depends on your organization's size and how automated your purchasing system is. You may use an electronic procurement platform that automatically notifies registered vendors, or, in a smaller organization with limited automation, purchasing staff may identify vendors and send out the solicitation.

For a formal solicitation, the opportunity is generally advertised broadly and may also be distributed to vendors on the entity's bid list. With informal purchases, however, the process can be much more targeted. Depending on the law or policy that applies to your entity, you may be required to solicit quotes from only a minimum number of vendors. There may also be requirements to include certain categories of vendors, such as VetHUB-certified businesses.

This is where vendor selection becomes especially important. Meeting the minimum requirement does not necessarily mean you are getting adequate competition. If you must solicit three vendors, why stop at three?

Years ago, there was a practical reason to limit the number of vendors solicited. We had to print specifications, make copies, stuff envelopes, and pay postage. Every additional vendor added time and expense to the process.

Those days are gone.

Today, you can distribute most informal solicitations electronically. Adding two or three additional qualified vendors to an email or electronic solicitation generally requires very little additional effort and virtually no additional cost.

So, instead of soliciting only three vendors, consider soliciting five or six qualified vendors.

Remember, soliciting three vendors does not guarantee that you will receive three quotes. One vendor may be too busy, another may not carry the product you need, and another may choose not to respond. If you start with only three vendors, you could end up with very little competition.

A broader vendor pool can:

- Increase the likelihood of receiving multiple responsive quotes
- Create stronger price competition
- Introduce new vendors and solutions
- Reduce reliance on the same vendors for every purchase
- Provide better information about current market pricing
- Help demonstrate that the entity made a reasonable effort to obtain competition

But don't simply add names to meet a number. Vendor selection should be thoughtful. Look for vendors that actually provide the goods or services you need, serve your geographic area, and have a reasonable opportunity to compete for the purchase.

View the minimum number of vendors required by law or policy as the floor—not necessarily the goal. When you can include additional qualified vendors at little or no extra cost, expanding your solicitation list is a simple way to promote competition and potentially obtain better pricing and value for your entity.

Good competition starts with good vendor selection.

Question of the Month

Question: "Our Purchasing Team has been invited to a sporting event by a vendor. The invitation includes access to the vendor's suite. Are we allowed to attend?"

Answer:

This is a good example of where "Is it legal?" and "Is it a good idea?" may have different answers.



Texas Penal Code §36.08 generally "prohibits a public servant who exercises discretion over contracts, purchases, payments, claims, or other governmental financial transactions from accepting a benefit from someone the employee knows is interested—or is likely to become interested—in such a transaction".

An invitation to a vendor's suite at a sporting event could certainly be considered a benefit.

However, Texas law contains an exception for certain food, lodging, transportation, or entertainment accepted as a guest. For the "guest" exception to apply, the donor generally must be present at the event. This creates an important distinction:

"Here are two Cowboys tickets—enjoy the game."

The vendor is not attending or hosting the employee, making this much more problematic.

"Our company is hosting clients in our suite, and we invite you to attend as our guest."

This may potentially fall within the guest exception if the vendor representative is present, subject to applicable ethics, disclosure, reporting, and local policy requirements.

But here is the bigger issue for procurement professionals: Something being potentially permissible under the law does not necessarily make it good public procurement practice.

A vendor suite may include premium seating, food, beverages, hospitality, and several hours of personal interaction with vendor representatives. Even if attendance is legally permissible, it can create the appearance that the vendor is receiving special access or influence with government employees responsible for purchasing and contracting decisions.

That concern becomes even greater when the vendor:

- Has a current contract with the entity;
- Is competing for an upcoming solicitation;
- Has a pending renewal, amendment, or change order;
- Has an unresolved performance or payment issue; or
- Otherwise has business before the entity.

Procurement professionals should consider not only whether accepting an invitation is technically permissible, but also how the situation would look to competing vendors, elected officials, taxpayers, the media, or the public.

My recommendation: I would decline the invitation, and I would not allow members of my purchasing staff to attend. In public procurement, maintaining impartiality and the public's confidence in that impartiality is more important than attending a sporting event.



Ethics and Fraud in Contracting
October 21, 2026

Understanding Small Purchases
October 29, 2026

Contract Administration
November 5, 2026

**Procurement Management
Academy**
November 18, 2026

Purchasing 101 for Everyone
January 12, 2027



Purchasing 101 for Everyone
November 9, 2026

**Fundamentals of
Public Purchasing**
December 9-10, 2026

Specification Writing
December 11, 2026

Writing Statements of Work
February 3, 2027

Contract Administration
February 4, 2027

Specification Writing
March 23, 2027

Using Request for Proposals
March 30, 2027

Writing Statements of Work
May 6, 2027

Negotiation Skills
October 26, 2027

Class Descriptions

Schedule/Registration

**Essentials of
Contract Management**
June 23-24, 2027

**Procurement Management
Academy**
October 5, 2027

Class Descriptions

Schedule/Registration

Government Procurement Services

www.gpstraining.biz