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Municipal Modernization: Are You Ready?



On Tuesday, August 9, Governor Charlie Baker praised the hard work by the Massachusetts legislature, commenting on the “bipartisan support not commonly seen in government today,” when he signed into law the unanimously passed Act to Modernize Municipal Finance and Government. Though described as “weed whacking” a fair number of times in the Governor’s remarks, the importance of this legislation cannot be understated—it is the first major overhaul of municipal laws in more than 50 years, bearing widespread support from cities and towns across the Commonwealth.

What does it mean for me/my city or town/my agency?

The Act, among many other accomplishments, updates thresholds for small scale construction projects and materials. The Act facilitates streamlined procurement of small construction-related materials and services by increasing the current \$10,000-\$25,000 threshold up to a new threshold of \$50,000. Additionally, it allows municipalities to save time and money by using the Statewide Contracts (SWCs) managed by the Operational Services Division (OSD). The Act, as it relates to these construction projects and procurement changes, goes into effect on November 7, 2016. Further, although the title of the Act refers to the many municipal statutes that were updated collectively, state agencies also are affected directly by the specific changes to the construction statutes.

I conduct my own procurements; why should I use Statewide Contracts?

Municipalities still may conduct their own procurements; however, using SWCs can help save you time and money. (State agencies are required to use SWCs.) By using SWCs, you do not need to invest valuable time developing solicitations, posting notices, issuing bids, evaluating responses, and executing contracts. OSD has negotiated the pricing or required competitive quotes, selected the appropriate vendors that meet qualifying criteria, and outlined the services the vendors perform relative to the contract. We’ve done the work to bring the best value/best price to the contracts, so you can forgo this step in the process.

Now that the threshold has been raised to \$50,000, OSD will create new Statewide Contracts for tradesperson services, i.e. plumbers, electricians, and carpenters (among many others). In the past, cities and towns and state agencies found these types of SWCs to be valuable tools that streamlined the due diligence work needed to find licensed and skilled tradespersons. We expect these new SWCs to be widely used by municipal and state agencies requiring tradespersons for their construction projects.

OSD Sourcing Leads also will be amending certain existing contracts and updating affected Contract User Guides to add new products and services now allowed under the new Act. For example, existing contracts that may have been subject to the \$10,000 construction services limit, such as low voltage cabling, will have new guidance to expand the limit to \$50,000 and detail the new steps required to meet the Act requirements.

(Continued on the next page)



The Official Newsletter of the
Operational Services Division
August 2016

Upcoming Vendor Training

COMMBUYS Vendor Registration

August 17 (Webinar)

Basic Supplier Diversity Plan Overview

August 17 (Webinar)

Small Business Purchasing Program Overview

August 18 (Webinar)

COMMBUYS Vendors: Organizational Design and Maintenance for the Seller Administrator

August 23

Introduction to the IT Small Business Incubator

August 24 (Webinar)

COMMBUYS Vendors: Essentials for the Seller Role

August 25

Locate and Respond to Bids in COMMBUYS

August 29

IT Small Business Incubator Pilot: COMMBUYS and RFRs 101

August 29 (Webinar)

Demystifying the RFR: Responding to the Commonwealth's Procurement Opportunities

August 30

Introduction to the IT Small Business Incubator

September 07 (Webinar)

IT Small Business Incubator Pilot: COMMBUYS and RFRs 101

September 12 (Webinar)

COMMBUYS Vendors: Essentials for the Seller Role

September 20

*Dates are subject to change.
Click here to see the full calendar.*

How should I be preparing for the November 7 effective date?

An additional requirement of the new law that will affect all municipalities and state agencies is the required posting of certain bid notices on COMMBUYS. There are a number of activities that local government agencies might consider undertaking now to ensure that you will be ready to meet the new requirements when the legislation takes effect. These activities include:

1. Contacting OSD's Local Government Enablement Team to set up a COMMBUYS account for your city or town.
2. Attending COMMBUYS training to learn how to post notifications and bids, and utilize Statewide Contracts for the purchase of goods and services.
3. Recommending that your current vendors register in COMMBUYS, which will allow them to receive notices you post and also to receive notices of other opportunities from Commonwealth entities in their areas of business. Vendor registration in COMMBUYS is free and takes only a few minutes to complete. Simply advise your vendors to visit COMMBUYS.com and click the "Register" link to begin.

For state agencies, further guidance on how to post bid notices will be provided in the coming weeks.

How is OSD preparing?

OSD also has been looking forward to the enactment of this legislation, as it allows us to better serve our customers – the local governments and state agencies that purchase goods and services from our SWCs and use the COMMBUYS Market Center to make those purchases, solicit bids, and post notices. While the changes to the procurement requirements under OSD's purview do not take effect until November 7, 2016, OSD currently is developing a plan to:

1. Amend and/or update all Statewide Contracts impacted by the new legislation to reflect the new \$50,000 threshold for construction materials and construction services and detail any steps required to do this properly;
2. Initiate a procurement to create a tradespersons contract to offer a list of regional, pre-qualified vendors to perform various construction services up to \$50,000; and
3. Investigate opportunities to develop new Statewide Contracts for the procurement of certain construction materials such as pipes, gravel, and asphalt, to name a few.

OSD is excited by the prospects offered by this new legislation and looks forward to working with you to modernize your construction procurement practices.

Monthly Municipal Shoutout

Lexington Public Schools recently completed the largest single purchase ever in COMMBUYS by a municipality! Local Government Enablement Team Account Manager Jackie Abbott worked with Lexington administration to purchase Apple computers from Statewide Contract ITC47 using the RPA function in COMMBUYS. "I was happy and excited to document our purchase in COMMBUYS," says Kristen McGrath, Administrative Assistant for Educational Technology, pictured below. With this purchase on August 3, Lexington Public Schools may be a future contender for the next level of the COMMBUYS Hall of Fame (see more on page 5). To learn about how the Enablement Team may help your city or town, click here.



STATEWIDE CONTRACT UPDATES | AUGUST 2016



Q & A with Katherine Morse, Contract Manager for Statewide Contract FAC92 - Integrated Pest Management

Katherine, what is an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach?
IPM uses a wide range of pest control techniques with a strong focus on preventative measures and non-toxic control solutions. Pesticides are used only as a last resort. Agencies, schools, cities, and towns can choose from 25 experienced IPM vendors on FAC92.

What actions should buyer organizations take to engage a vendor?

When using FAC92, organizations are required to solicit quotes from at least three vendors. Buyers should detail the scope of their request on a Statement of Work or comparable document.



Under the FAC92 contract, what are the vendors' obligations to buyers?

Once vendors receive a comprehensive Statement of Work request from a buyer, they are required to conduct a site visit. Based on the initial inspection of each building or site, the vendor must file a written Initial Assessment Report with the organization's facility manager within the requested time frame. In addition, the vendor must submit an IPM Plan within 30 days of conducting the initial inspection and must include the assigned monthly service fee. OSD recommends that a vendor's experience and understanding of IPM methods be a strong consideration when evaluating quotes.

Are buyers eligible for any additional benefits?

Yes, vendors are responsible for providing annual training sessions to facility staff, contractors, and facility occupants free of charge. All vendors offer a board-certified or associate-certified entomologist for accurate pest identification. Prompt pay discounts, service fee reductions, and night inspection service options also are available. Vendors also offer online pest logging to target problem areas.

The FAC92 Contract User Guide provides these and other contract details. If you have additional questions for Katherine, contact her at katherine.morse@state.ma.us.

Bidding Opportunities in COMMBUYS

Prospective bidders may view all active COMMBUYS bids by clicking the Open Bids link on COMMBUYS.com. Easily narrow the search results by using the drop-down arrow in the *Show Bids for Category* section at the top of the page to find bids relevant to the goods and services your firm provides.



To *respond* to a bidding opportunity with a quote, businesses must be registered and logged into COMMBUYS, a process that requires a few minutes to complete and has no associated cost. Once logged in, vendors follow the steps to Create a Quote in COMMBUYS.

Vendor Resources

- Become a COMMBUYS vendor
- Find OSD Job Aids that review recurring COMMBUYS vendor activities
- Locate free OSD training
- Contact the COMMBUYS Help Desk: 1-800-627-8283 or COMMBUYS@state.ma.us

COMMBUYS
OPERATIONAL SERVICES



Finding Open/Rolling Enrollment Bids When Logged into COMMBUYS

There is a different process to locate *Open/Rolling Enrollment Bids* when logged into COMMBUYS. Open Enrollment Bids occur when buyers reopen a contract for a specified period of time to add additional vendors. Rolling Enrollment Bids allow buyers to add additional vendors over the course of the contract. OSD has prepared a Quick Reference Guide to locate Open/Rolling Enrollment Bids.

It's Your Final Chance to Attend a Statewide Contract FAC94 Kickoff!

OSD recently hosted a series of regional kickoff events for new Statewide Contract FAC94 for Maintenance, Repair, and Operations Products & Supplies and Small Hand & Power Tools. These information sessions around the state focused on the ways buyers may maximize quality and value using the contract. Senior Sourcing Manager Maureen Barends presented the contract's benefits and the five FAC94-awarded contractors answered questions about available products and services.

The kickoff events, held in Holyoke, Boston, Barnstable, Stoughton, Haverhill, and Stockbridge, attracted over 90 attendees, including buyers from every region of the Commonwealth. If you missed these events, don't worry! The final FAC94 event will be held at Leicester Memorial School on August 23. **You may [click here to register](#).**

Click here for the flyer describing the Statewide Contract's highlights, including a broader product selection, deeper discounts, and added services! Refer questions to Maureen Barends at maureen.barends@state.ma.us.

Stoughton on July 28



Barnstable on July 26



Stockbridge on August 10



A New Sales Echelon and Our Newest COMMBUYS Hall of Fame Inductees

Since its launch in March 2014, COMMBUYS activity has steadily increased due in large part to Department support and a growing number of municipal organizations that choose to use COMMBUYS. We are pleased to report that as of July 18, 2016, the COMMBUYS Market Center exceeded a half a billion dollars in purchases! We thank all our COMMBUYS purchasers, as well as our 16,656 registered vendors, for getting us to this landmark number!

COMMBUYS Hall of Fame Inductees at the \$500MM Level

With each \$100MM of sales in COMMBUYS, we pause to thank Departments, municipal organizations, and individual staff who have met certain criteria and contributed to our reaching a new purchasing milestone. We're delighted to induct new and repeat winners.



Induction Category <i>based on orders placed between \$400MM and \$500MM</i>	Awardee
Individual who placed the order in COMMBUYS that pushed us over the \$500MM mark	Maryfrances Harper Department of State Police Order for \$223,547.64 under FAC81
Individual who placed the highest number of orders in COMMBUYS, based on total dollar value of those orders	Howard Byfield Executive Office of Health and Human Services 81 orders for a total of \$11,074,068.
Executive/Non-Executive Department/ Agency that placed the highest dollar value of orders in COMMBUYS	Department of Public Health \$19,509,899.59
Executive/Non-Executive Department/ Agency that placed the highest number of orders in COMMBUYS	Department of Public Health 1,227
Municipality/Local Government that placed the highest dollar value of orders in COMMBUYS	City of Lawrence \$658,433.22
Municipality/Local Government that placed the highest number of orders in COMMBUYS	Town of Nantucket 177

Calculations were tabulated based on orders placed between \$400MM and \$500MM.

Congratulations to all our winners! We look forward to acknowledging their accomplishments at MASSBUYS 2017!

Exciting Changes Afoot at COMMBUYS Operations

Over the last many months, the COMMBUYS Operations Team has been working to implement upgrades to the COMMBUYS Market Center. These changes, coming in fall 2016, will introduce many new features long requested by our users. Here's a quick preview:

- New user interface that will enrich the current look and feel of COMMBUYS;
- Enhanced search capability and catalog item filtering by vendor, brand, manufacturer, SKU, among others;
- Improved responsiveness and speed;
- Shopping cart concept when adding items to a Requisition;
- Enhanced catalog management tool and features, including line item level price breaks;
- When searching in COMMBUYS, option to hit *Enter* on your keyboard or click the *Find It* button.

Check your inbox for upcoming announcements that will provide a comprehensive overview of the enhancements and detailed user instructions.

Upcoming Buyer Training

COMMBUYS - Organization Administrator
August 16

Introduction to Statewide Contracts and COMMBUYS
August 17

COMMBUYS Purchasing for Eligible Non-Profits
August 17 (Webinar)

How to Use Master Blanket Purchase Orders
August 18 (Webinar)

How to Create a Departmental Master Blanket Purchase Order in COMMBUYS
August 22

Conducting Procurements in COMMBUYS
August 24

Introduction to Statewide Contracts and COMMBUYS
August 30

Essentials of State Procurement
September 8

COMMBUYS Purchasing for Eligible Non-Profits
September 12 (Webinar)

Introduction to Statewide Contracts and COMMBUYS
September 13

COMMBUYS - Organization Administrator
September 14

Conducting Procurements in COMMBUYS
September 15

Essentials of State Procurement
September 19

*Dates are subject to change.
Click here to see the full calendar.*



[Click here to sign up for other email communications!](#)

About OSD

The Operational Services Division (OSD) administers the procurement process for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Executive Agencies by establishing Statewide Contracts for commonly purchased goods and services. OSD's mission is to help our government and business customers succeed in meeting their goals by providing outstanding customer service, competent advice and guidance, objectivity in our work, and to make available to our customers high quality products and services that exceed the expectations of those whom we serve.

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Small-Scale IT Projects Wanted

In July's issue of *Buy the Way*, we announced the launch of the IT Small Business Incubator Pilot, which aims to reduce barriers to doing business with the Commonwealth, expedite contracting, and increase access to innovative services.

To be successful, the Incubator requires a steady stream of small IT projects and funding from Executive Agencies and other government entities. We need your IT projects valued at \$150,000 or less! Types of projects and/or services may include:

- Applications/systems design and development;
- Software and systems integration;
- Information Technology planning; and
- Other intellectual work performed by IT professionals.

On July 19, OSD issued RFR #SBP01Pilot (Small Business Incubator Pilot for Small-Scale Information Technology Services) to establish a pre-qualified list of Massachusetts-based small businesses capable of providing small-scale information technology professional services projects. The Statewide Contract features open enrollment, enabling bidders to be added throughout the contract's duration.

Executive Agencies have SBPP benchmark spending goals of 3.3% for FY2017 for small procurements under \$150,000 that do not qualify as incidental purchases. For Executive Agencies, involvement in the Incubator may aid in making inroads to meeting or exceeding the FY2017 SBPP benchmark. Municipalities participating in the Pilot also may benefit by potentially increasing tax revenues for their communities by using local vendors. Additionally, the Incubator offers a way to utilize the recently awarded Community Compact IT Grant funds to satisfy the commitments made in partnership with Lieutenant Governor Polito.

Please contact John Fitzpatrick (john.b.fitzpatrick@state.ma.us), Dmitriy Nikolayev (dmitriy.nikolayev@state.ma.us), or Bill McAvoy (william.mcavoy@state.ma.us) if you believe you may have an upcoming project that fits within the bounds of the Incubator or if you would like to learn more about this Pilot program.

Upcoming Outreach Events

Northeastern University & the Supplier Diversity Office's Supplier Diversity Event August 17 | Boston, MA

This event provides small and diverse businesses the opportunity to meet and present their companies to procurement professionals who may have diversity requirements for the procurement of goods and services. As in past years, procurement representatives from public and private institutions of higher education, cultural organizations, hospitals and medical facilities, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are expected to be in attendance. [Click here to register!](#)

GNEMSDC's 2016 Business Opportunity Conference & Expo

September 7 and 8 | Uncasville, CT

Highlights of this Expo include development sessions, business matchmaking, MBE pitch sessions, and access to more than 500 MBEs and major corporations. [Click here to register and learn more!](#)

Digital Government Summit September 12 and 13 | Boston, MA

This year's Digital Government Summit will cover topics such as phishing, big data, design thinking, pathways to the cloud, and the next generation workforce. [Click here to register and learn more!](#)

Information concerning non-OSD events is provided as a courtesy only and should not be construed as an endorsement by OSD.

IT Small Business Incubator Pilot Program Update

85 Vendors verified in Small Business Purchasing Program since July 1



25 Prospective contractor packages submitted for consideration under SBP01

19 Vendors new to Statewide Contracts



14 Apparent successful bidders



6 Contracts awarded as of August 10, 2016

Interested in participating? [Click here to learn more and register for upcoming training webinars.](#)