



Responsible Office: Procurement Operations

Administering Official: Executive Director, Procurement Operations

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Applicable Policy: Procurement Guideline No.12 Sustainable Procurement

Procurement Guidelines are issued by the Executive Director under Article 1 of the Houston City College Procurement Operations Procedures Manual.

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## Procurement Operations Guidelines for Sustainable Procurement

### PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Procurement Operations Department, which includes Procurement and Contract Administration, is responsible for all procurement activities on behalf of the entire Houston City College System (HCC). This guideline supplements applicable Texas state laws, HCC policies, and resolutions, including those governing sole-source procurements.

### GUIDELINES

#### 1. Prefer Certified Sustainable Products

- Observe best practices and government and industry standards.
- Procure environmentally preferable goods and services with recognized certifications (e.g., ENERGY STAR, EPEAT, FSC, Cradle to Cradle).
- Prioritize products with third-party sustainability certifications, ensuring value and performance.
- Prioritize reusable, recyclable, compostable, or high-recycled-content products

#### 2. Engage Sustainable Suppliers

- Encourage suppliers to offer innovative, sustainable options at competitive prices.
- Support supplier development for improved sustainability.
- Request service providers minimize environmental impacts during delivery.

#### 3. Assess Supplier Sustainability

- Use sustainability scorecards to evaluate vendors' environmental and social performance.
- Use life cycle assessment (LCA), Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG), and other relevant metrics in purchasing decisions, as applicable and beneficial.
- Request reporting on emissions, resource use, and waste.

#### 4. Ensure Compliance

- Observe and apply relevant laws, regulations, and executive orders in procurement activities.
- Incorporate supplier sustainability metrics and require regular reporting on key performance indicators (KPIs) such as GHG emissions, water usage, and recycled content
- Verify supplier claims to prevent exaggerated or misleading claims (e.g. greenwashing).

#### 5. Continuously Improve

- Regularly review and update procurement procedures.
- Provide training on sustainable procurement and regulatory updates.
- Promote an internal culture of environmental responsibility.
- Ensure products/services meet functional needs and are reasonably priced and available.
- Set measurable sustainability goals and report progress.

**Nothing in these guidelines shall be construed as requiring a department, agency or contractor to procure products that do not perform adequately for their intended use or are not available at a reasonable price in a reasonable period of time.**

**Procedures and Guidelines shall be established as necessary to ensure the continuation of a strong Environmental Procurement Program.**