



# Purchasing Cooperative of America (PCA)

#	Cooperative Organization Questions	Response
1	Are your organization's cooperative contracts available for use by Arizona public entities? If so, do you have any local representation?	<p>Purchasing Cooperative of America ("PCA") contracts are available for use by and are being used by Arizona state agencies and K-12 educational institutions.</p> <p>PCA is represented by our dozen or so Awarded Contractors in Arizona and contracted representatives.</p>
2	What is the legal formation of your cooperative organization (public, non-profit, for profit, etc.)? How long have you been established?	<p>Region III Education Service Center ("Region III ESC", "ESC"), Victoria, Texas, an agency of the state of Texas, administers the PCA Co-op, and awards and holds the contracts. Education Service Centers were established by the Texas Legislature by Chapter 8 of the Texas Education Code in 1967. PCA, since 2014, is staffed by personnel with extensive contracting and procurement experience.</p>
3	Does your organization conduct its own procurements with in-house personnel or does it enlist a public agency to conduct the procurement? If a public agency is utilized, please identify that agency or agencies and briefly explain how those agencies are selected.	<p>Region III ESC-PCA conducts its own procurements, often using consultants in specialty areas to contribute to development of solicitations. The ESC Board of Trustees awards the contracts.</p>
4	If your organization handles all of the contracting functions in-house please explain if you periodically have a 3rd party audit firm review your internal contracting procedures.	<p>PCA, as a service of Region III Education Service Center, is subject to review during the annual audit by an independent audit firm.</p>
5	What governing procurement laws does your organization follow in the soliciting, evaluating and awarding of cooperative contracts? (Please be specific.) Also, what state is noted as the legal venue within your contracts for dispute resolution?	<p>PCA cooperative contracts follow Texas Education Code, Title 2. Public Education, Chapter 44. Fiscal Management, Subchapter B. Purchases; Contracts. Also, PCA contracts include Arizona and New Mexico statutes and the FAR (Federal Acquisition Regulations) by reference. Refer to Attachment 1: 'PCA CERTIFICATION OF PROCUREMENT PROCESS AND COMPLIANCE WITH TEXAS AND ARIZONA PURCHASING AND CONTRACTING STATUTES FOR SCHOOLS DISTRICTS'</p> <p>'Texas' is noted within PCA contracts as the legal venue for dispute resolution; however, PCA Members and Awarded Contractors may subsequently agree upon a different venue and and/or other agreements and these new agreements are eligible (as stated in the contract) to take precedence over the original contract.</p>
6	Does an agency need to register or sign an agreement with your organization in order to purchase from your contracts? If so, please attach the registration form or agreement. Also, is the agency charged a fee to join your cooperative organization?	<p>To become a PCA Member, the agency completes the Member Registration form at <a href="http://www.pcamerica.org/member">www.pcamerica.org/member</a>. If required by state statute or local policy, the Region III Education Service Center Interlocal Contact is available at <a href="http://www.pcamerica/forms">www.pcamerica/forms</a>. Attachment 2. Membership in PCA is free.</p>
7	Where can your organization's cooperative solicitations and resultant contracts be viewed? Describe what documentation is available at this site.	<p>PCA solicitations are available at <a href="http://www.pcamerica.org/solicitations">www.pcamerica.org/solicitations</a>. Due Diligence documentation, previously maintained in office, will soon be available at the website (password protected), including contact lists, advertising affidavit, documented postings on PCA, ESC and ESBD web sites, Responder List, Evaluation Committee Recommendation for Award, award packet or vendor non-award letter, the Contract with authorized signatures.</p>

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8	Do you periodically perform audits to ensure your contractors are fulfilling the contracts to include charging the correct price? If so, please briefly describe your internal audit program and explain if that program includes any benchmarking to ensure pricing stays competitive over the term of agreement.	<p>PCA annually (or upon request from a Member or Awarded Contractor) performs a desk review on each contract utilized during the year that includes comparing the purchase order against the contract. This includes scope, specifications and cost.</p> <p>We will also answer questions from other another agency's independent auditors.</p>
9	What is the total employee count for your cooperative organization? How many employees perform specific contracting functions (solicitation development, bidding, evaluation and awarding of contracts)?	<p>PCA has 4 full time staff, with overlapping responsibilities, and a number of consultants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 staff perform administrative functions.</li> <li>• 3 staff work on solicitation development, utilizing contracted specialists.</li> <li>• 4 persons serve on the evaluation committee, including the ESC Purchasing Manager.</li> <li>• ESC Board of Trustees awards contracts.</li> </ul>
10	Describe your approach to customer service and include any response time commitments.	<p>PCA was founded on the premises that public purchasing cooperative operations should be stream-lined and efficient, provide innovative well-written contracts, and charge a nominal fee so as to allow the co-op to cover operational costs. PCA is committed to Excellent Customer Service. Calls and emails are returned same day or as soon as is practical. If additional information is requested, or if a certain person needs to answer the questions, we will call to say when that response may be expected.</p>
11	How do you generate your bidders' list for any particular solicitation and what steps do you take to ensure Arizona companies are included in your notice?	<p>In order to generate a Bidders' List:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. PCA advertises in a national publication: Washington Post</li> <li>2. PCA advertises on Texas Comptroller's ESBD website.</li> <li>3. PCA emails a notice to appropriate vendors on PCA vendor list.</li> <li>4. PCA calls the vendors that we have collected business cards from.</li> <li>5. PCA advertises the solicitation on PCA and Region III ESC web sites.</li> <li>6. PCA attends numerous conferences and seminars.</li> </ol> <p>In order to meet the needs of public agencies in Arizona:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCA attends AASBO Conference to meet Arizona vendors.</li> <li>• PCA advertises in the Arizona Capital Times.</li> </ul>
12	How do you evaluate contractor performance? Do you have a process that allows agencies to report vendor deficiencies?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All vendor references are called during the evaluation process.</li> <li>2. There is an Awarded Contractor Performance Evaluation form available at <a href="http://www.pcamerica.org/forms">www.pcamerica.org/forms</a>.</li> <li>3. PCA Members who have used or are using the contract will be called regarding vendor performance at contract renewal time.</li> </ol>
13	Indicate any national cooperative coalitions/associations to which your organization is a member.	None.
14	How do you track the usage of contracts to ensure you are accurately conveying order volume within your solicitations?	<p>PCA issues indefinite delivery indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contracts, with no guarantee of order volume. We track the usage of our contracts by requiring Awarded Contractors to submit purchase orders to us, and the PO becomes part of the entire Contract.</p>