

USFS Limits for Various Types of Procurement Processes

California Fire Safe Council

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The following information on the US Forest Service's own procurement procedures can provide policy and procedure guidance to grantee organizations.

The Forest Service uses 3 basic methods for procurement.

1. Micro-purchases: For purchases of \$3,000 or less for supplies, or \$2,500 or less for services, and \$2,000 or less for construction, what they call "micro-purchases", they just buy it with a credit card: no price quotes or bids.
2. Simplified Acquisition Procedures : For supplies, services, and construction projects that exceed those thresholds, up to \$150,000, the Forest Service uses the Simplified Acquisition Procedures found in FAR Part 13. Competition from three sources generally meets the requirement for "competition to the maximum extent practicable." A non-binding "Request for Quotation" is used to document the sources and the prices quoted.
3. Sealed Bids: For all acquisitions over \$150,000, including supplies, services, and construction, the Forest Service uses either a Request for Proposal or Sealed Bids.

The Code of Federal Regulations says that grantees must follow their own organization's normal procurement procedures, but for federal grant funds, the procedures used should not exceed the dollar limits shown above for each type of procurement.

For organizations that want to update their procurement procedures, or for organizations that don't yet have formal procurement policies and procedures in place, these Forest Service procedures represent the minimum procedures and the maximum dollar amounts that a USFS auditor would allow.

Sources:

1. The Forest Service's on-line "Small Business Program" brochure tells how they use the "Simplified Acquisition Procedures" for procurements under \$150,000. (April 2013)
2. The website of the USFS Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands lists the procedures for conducting micro purchases. (April 2013)