SECTION 10: VENDOR INTERACTIONS

SUBJECT: VENDOR COMPLAINTS/PROTESTS Procedure #10.1

Vendors may submit a complaint or request for clarification prior to responding to a solicitation if they believe the solicitation unduly constrains competition or contains inadequate or improper criteria. This request is to be made in writing before the due date of the solicitation response and sent to the Buyer. The Buyer should contact the department for additional information or clarification and, if necessary, process an Addendum which must be sent to all vendors who were sent or given the original documents. This may require the Buyer to extend the Bid opening date. If no Addenda is issued, the Buyer needs to respond to the vendor's issues in some documented manner.

When a vendor wishes to protest a purchase, they should be instructed to send a written protest to the Buyer or the Buyer Supervisor within five (5) business days of their original inquiry. Once the protest is received, all management staff in the chain of command must be notified. The protest will then be reviewed and a decision made as to whom will respond. Usually, the Purchasing Manager will respond, notifying the vendor of the appeal process. This should be determined on a case-by-case basis and resolved at the lowest possible level in the organization.

The Buyer needs to be aware that depending on the nature of the protest, the order may need to be put on hold; in which case, the requesting department will be notified by the Buyer of the reason and possible delay in receiving their order.