

SECTION 2: PURCHASING AUTHORITIES AND CODE OF CONDUCT

SUBJECT: SIGNATURE AUTHORITY

PROCEURE 2.10

POLICY:With limited exceptions, only the University of Washington Procurement Services Department has delegated signature authority for contracts to purchase goods and services (other than capital projects) on behalf of the University of Washington. Delegated signature authority is granted to the University of Washington by the State Legislature, and is further delegated internally to the Executive Director for the Procurement Services department, who has further delegated signature authority to Procurement Services staff.¹

Except upon specific delegation under Administrative Order No.1 and any internal delegations to implement such Administrative Order, UW employees do not have authority to execute contracts to commit University of Washington funds for the purchase of goods or services on behalf of the University of Washington, regardless of title. UW employees without delegated signature authority for the purchase of goods or services are unauthorized agents with respect to the execution of contracts for the purchase of goods or services. Contracts for the purchase of goods or services signed by University of Washington employees without delegated signature authority are **unauthorized**. Signing a contract for goods or services without delegated signature authority can subject an employee to personal liability for the contract.

PROCEDURE:

All purchases that require execution of a contract by the parties should be completed by the University of Washington Procurement Services department, without regard to the value of the purchase.

Purchases under the direct buy limit may be completed by University of Washington employees with budgetary authority if such purchase does not require execution of a contract. If such purchase does require execution of a contract, the contract should be forwarded to Procurement Services staff for review. The department on whose behalf the contract was executed will be responsible for retaining the official, signed copy.

When Procurement Services determines that an unauthorized purchase has been made, it will notify the department of the unauthorized purchase and provide assistance and training to properly protect the University's interests and improve University of Washington employees' understanding of proper contracting policies, practices, and procedures.

¹ For further information regarding the delegation of signature authority, see Policy 2.4 "Delegated Authority"