Non-Conforming Purchases

I. Non-conforming purchases are those which do not conform to University purchasing procedures.
   A. University purchasing procedures are instructions for University compliance with state statutes and State of Wisconsin, UW System and campus policies. Failure to adhere to those policies may result in reduction or withdrawal of purchasing delegation granted by the State Bureau of Procurement through UW System.
   B. The primary sources of policies for University purchasing procedures are the State Procurement Manual, UW System Financial Administration Policies and UWM Selected Academic and Administrative Policies.

II. Non-conforming purchasing behavior can range from the use of the wrong form to unauthorized purchases.
   A. An unauthorized purchase results from a University staff member obligating the University to a vendor in excess of the authority granted in published University Low Dollar Order procedure.
   B. Emergency situations are very narrowly construed in the State Procurement Manual section on Emergency Procurement and can rarely be used to justify an unauthorized purchase.

III. It is University practice to pay invoices resulting from non-conforming purchases that are within the University's limits of its delegation from the State and UW System, to prevent problems stemming from failure to pay the vendor promptly.

IV. The initiator of an unauthorized purchase owns the transaction to include the audit liability. Purchasing cannot support the transaction in the event of an adverse audit finding.
   A. Purchasing will notify originators of non-conforming purchases in writing of the non-conforming purchases, the nature of the non-conformance and will offer the originator the opportunity to provide documentation that they wish to add to the transaction record. No statement of clearance or adequacy of the supplied documentation is provided by Purchasing. The documentation provided by the transaction initiator stands on its own in event of an audit.
   B. Copies of the correspondence from Purchasing regarding unauthorized purchases are sent to the Dean, Unit Business Representative and Internal Audit.
   C. Recurrence of unauthorized purchases within a department or grant will result in withdrawal of small dollar ordering privileges and purchasing cards.
   D. Non-conforming transactions, to include non-conforming direct payment requests are assigned a requisition number with the suffix "N" for tracking purposes.

V. Purchasing offers training on University purchasing procedures once a month during the fall and spring semester and upon request.

Contact Purchasing with questions regarding non-conforming purchases.