



Local Procurement Policy

Policy Number: 01-19 Revision DE

Effective Date: TBD

Supersedes: Policy # 01-19 Revision GD

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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide direction to employees and agents of the Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board (FRWDB) in conducting procurement and purchasing activities in compliance with federal and state procurement standards.

The FRWDB shall conduct all procurements in compliance with federal and state regulations governing the Final Rule of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA, or the Act). All provisions of the WIOA Final Rule became effective July 22, 2014. All WIOA-funded programs and activities must comply with applicable provisions in the Final Rule.

A. Controlling Legislation

- WIOA (Public Law 113-128)
- Stevens Amendment (Public Law 100-463, Section 8136)
- Title 2 *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) Part 200: "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards" (Uniform Guidance)
- Title 2 CFR Part 2900: "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards" (Department of Labor [DOL] Exceptions)
- Title 20 CFR WIOA, "DOL; Final Rule"
- Title 34 CFR WIOA, "Joint Rule for Unified and Combined State Plans, Performance Accountability, and the One-Stop System Joint Provisions; Final Rule"
- California State Contracting Manual, Subject: Chapter 5: "Competitive Bidding Methods" (April 2015)
- Workforce Services Directive WSD17-_08, Subject: Procurement of Equipment and Related Services
- Workforce Services Directive WSD16-10, Subject: Property - Purchasing, Inventory, and Disposal (November 10, 2016)
- WSD16-05, Subject: *WIOA Closeout Requirements* (July 29, 2016)
- WSD 22-13, Subject: Selection of America's Job Center of California (AJCC) Operators and Career Services Providers (May 1, 2023)
- WSD16-16, Subject: Allowable Costs and Prior Written Approval (February 21, 2017)
- Memorandum dated June 20, 2018: Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, "Implementing Statutory Changes to the Micro-Purchase and the Simplified Acquisition Thresholds for Financial Assistance"
- •WSIN 25-17, Federal Adjustment of Dollar Amounts and Rates (January 23, 2026)

SECTION II - GENERAL GUIDELINES AND PROVISIONS

All procurement actions are to be conducted in a manner that provides for full and open competition. The following four (4) methods may be used to procure goods or services:

- Micro-Purchase
- Small Purchase
- Competitive Procurements
 - Small Purchase
 - Request for Proposals
 - Request for Quotes
 - Sealed Bids, and
- Non-Competitive Procurement - Sole Source.

The type of purchase is determined by the “per transaction” value of the procurement and the type of goods or services being purchased. “Per transaction” is a single solicitation for a single item (e.g., copying machine), a group of related items (e.g., office furniture), or a specified service (e.g., staff training).

Purchases must not be divided, i.e., broken down into smaller components to avoid more stringent procurement requirements.

Any equipment purchases with a unit price greater than \$5,000 must be analyzed for leasing versus purchasing before purchase. See Section V, Prior Approval for additional requirements.
Responsibility

A. Responsibility

The Procurement Facilitator is responsible for developing and maintaining the processes and tools used to implement this policy. The Executive Director oversees the approval of all procurement processes and updates, while the FRWDB Board of Directors is responsible for approving the policy.

The FRWDB, through the Procurement Facilitator, is responsible for drafting and distributing procurement documents, publishing the procurement notices, receiving the proposal documents, and coordinating with the requesting department manager for the evaluation of the proposal documents. Depending on the goods or services being procured, the Procurement Facilitator may request information and/or assistance from, or delegate the procurement to, other FRWDB departments.

The department managers are responsible for providing the Procurement Facilitator with all information related to program design and/or bid specifications (including independent estimates), background statement of work, evaluation factors, etc., to assist the Procurement Facilitator in preparing and drafting the procurement instrument and other related documents. The department managers are responsible for completing a cost-price analysis as required.

In those circumstances where the General Services and Information Technology departments have a need to procure services or products that fall under \$50,000, as defined in Section III, Item B, Small Purchases (see page 8), those departments will be responsible for performing and

documenting the procurement as outlined in this policy, subject to the review of the Procurement Facilitator.

B. Applicability

This Policy applies to all procurements of the FRWDB, the Fresno Area Workforce Investment Corporation (FAWIC), and its sub-contractors who are sub-recipients of federal funds. See Section VIII - Procurement Activities by Sub-Recipients for additional guidance, requirements, and limits.

The provisions in this Policy do not apply to the selection of training services paid through Individual Training Accounts (ITA) or On-the-Job Training (OJT) contracts. Procurement for these services is outlined in separate FRWDB procedures

C. Approval

The following table provides approval levels for the purchases of goods and services for amounts that are included in a budget or pool allocations approved by the FAWIC or FRWDB, e.g., the FAWIC agency budget, or America’s Job Centers of California budget:

Amount of Purchase	Staff Approval Levels
\$.01 to \$1,000	Designated Leads and Managers
\$.01 to \$5,000	Deputy Directors
\$5,001 to \$49,999 <u>\$50,000</u>	FRWDB Executive Director for FAWIC and FRWDB budgets
<u>Over \$50,000 and over</u>	FAWIC (for agency budget) or FRWDB (for all other budgets) Boards of Directors

- All other purchases for goods and services over \$50,000 that are not included in an approved budget must be approved by the FRWDB Board of Directors.
- For special grants and discretionary awards that fall between regularly scheduled FRWDB meetings, may be approved (Board) or the Executive Committee.
- ~~Approvals are for special grants and discretionary awards that fall between regularly scheduled FRWDB meetings. This is~~ subject to the veto authority of each Chief Local Elected Official if the matter is opposed by a majority of their respective governing board (Fresno County Board of Supervisors) or council (Fresno City Council).

D. Standard of Conduct and Conflict of Interest

All procurement activities adhere to FRWDB’s/FAWIC’s code of conduct and conflict of interest policies. Including sanctions as prescribed by law, described in the FRWDB’s policies and Operational Directives.

All FRWDB staff, FRWDB/FAWIC Board members, and outside rating staff must not divulge, in advance, purchasing or specific proposal information. Procurement activities must be conducted in a confidential manner.

Confidentiality must be maintained for all procurements. All proposals and/or quotes submitted are securely handled and stored. FRWDB/FAWIC staff involved in any aspect of procurement must not reveal or disclose information to anyone outside of the identified group engaged in

conducting the procurement, rating bids, and making contract award decisions. All information will remain confidential until the FRWDB/FAWIC has awarded and signed a contract with the awardee(s).

Unauthorized communication with bidders is prohibited by FRWDB/FAWIC staff or Board members is strictly prohibited. Authorized staff will be identified in each procurement and will be the primary point of contact for discussion or information about the procurement. In the event a bidder attempts to communicate with unauthorized staff or Board members, the staff or Board member shall immediately notify the FRWDB Executive Director of such attempt(s). Violation of this clause may constitute grounds for rejection of the bidder's proposal by the FRWDB/FAWIC.

Individuals in a decision-making capacity, including FRWDB/FAWIC Board members, are prohibited from engaging in any activity, including the awarding or administration of a contract, if they have a conflict of interest, as defined by federal and state laws, including but not limited to the California Political Reform Act and California Government Code Section 1090 et seq. Conflict-of-interest and nondisclosure policies and procedures are provided to all FAWIC employees, outside agency raters, and FRWDB/FAWIC Board members participating in procurement review teams. These individuals must agree to abide by these policies and procedures by signing a "Conflict of Interest/Nondisclosure Statement." The original signed statements must be maintained in the procurement file. Documentation of conflict-of-interest compliance for FRWDB/FAWIC Board members regarding any procurement or contract award will be recorded in the minutes of the FRWDB/FAWIC Board meeting.

The original procurement file for Requests for Small Purchases, Requests for Proposals (RFPs), Requests for Quotes (RFQs), Invitations for Bids (IFBs), and Non-Competitive Procurements, shall be maintained by the Procurement Facilitator, except as noted below.

Procurement records for all small purchases (~~(\$0.01 to \$49,999.99)~~) shall be retained for a minimum of three (3) years following the submission of the final expenditure report for each procurement by the Fiscal Department. Procurement files for activities exceeding \$50,000 shall be retained for the same period by the Procurement Facilitator.

E. Sub-recipient and Contractor Distinctions

A sub-recipient is a legal entity to which a sub-award of federal funds is made and that is accountable to another sub-recipient or recipient for the use of the funds provided.

A contractor is an entity that receives a contract, as defined in Uniform Guidance Section 200.23.

Sub-recipient: A sub-recipient carries out a portion of a federal award and creates a federal assistance relationship with the pass-through entity. The following descriptions are indicative of a non-federal entity in the role of a sub-recipient:

Determines eligibility for the federally funded program

- Performance is measured against the objectives of the federal program
- Maintains programmatic control or independent discretion over work Responsible for adherence to applicable federal program compliance requirements (e.g., WIOA)

- Uses federal funds to carry out a program for a specified public purpose as opposed to providing goods or services for a program or pass-through entity directly supports goals of the grant

Contractor: A contractor is a vendor, dealer, distributor, merchant, or other seller providing goods or services that are needed to conduct a federal program. The following descriptions are indicative of a contractor in a procurement relationship with the non-federal entity disbursing federal funds:

- Provides goods and services to a variety of purchasers within normal business operations
- Operates in a competitive environment
- Provides goods or services that are ancillary to the operation of the federal program
- Not subject to federal compliance requirements of the program resulting from the agreement
- Does not take part in program design
- Holds little or no independent discretion over program work or direction
- Undelivered work will result in non-payment
- Not required to directly support the goals of the grant

The chart provided in Exhibit C includes a list of indicators that may be of assistance in distinguishing subrecipients from contractors. This guidance is based in part on the information found in the Uniform Guidance Section 200.330.

F. Request for Concept Papers

The FRWDB may request, at any time, concept papers to help identify innovative, custom, or unique employment and training activities, services, and programs, subject to the interest of the FRWDB and the availability of funds. If the FRWDB is interested in a further review, then the proposer will submit a full proposal and be subject to the conditions of the standard procurement process as described herein.

G. Exclusion of Contractors

Contractors or Individuals that develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, or invitations for bids or RFPs must be excluded from competing on such procurements.

H. Right to Reject Proposals, Finalize and Establish Agreement Deadlines

The FRWDB will not pay for any costs incurred by the responding entities in the preparation of proposals, quotes, or bids.

The RFQ, RFP, or Sealed Bid does not commit FRWDB staff or FRWDB Committees/Councils to recommend approval of an agreement based solely on the highest score of the applicants or the lowest price, with reasonable justification.

The FRWDB reserves the right to:

- Accept or reject any or all proposals received in response to the procurement.

- Cancel, in part or its entirety, the procurement.
- Conduct a cost and/or price analysis of the proposed budget.
- Add, delete, or amend the cost/price analysis as a part of the finalization process with the successful responsive entity. Items that may be included, but are not limited to:
 - Budget line items
 - Staffing patterns/cost of salaries
 - Overhead cost, to determine necessary and reasonable costs

The procurement for the RFQ, RFP, or Sealed Bid, shall include the time, dates, and activities, starting with the issuance of the procurement document to the time that an agreement is awarded, as indicated in the timetable. If an agreement has not been finalized by the deadline, FRWDB staff reserves the right to recommend appropriate action to be taken. Action may include reissuing the RFQ, RFP, or Sealed Bid, recommending the next qualifying proposal, or any other actions deemed reasonable or necessary as decided by FRWDB staff or FRWDB Board, as applicable.

Funds may not be spent until the execution of a formal contract, agreement, or formal purchase order (P.O.), where appropriate, and State approval when required.

SECTION III: PROCUREMENT METHODS

Within the context of open competition, there are five procurement methods for acquiring goods or services: micro-purchases, small purchases, sealed bids, competitive proposals, and noncompetitive proposals.

~~For transactions under \$250,000, the small purchase method may be used; however, the sealed bid or RFP may also be selected if appropriate. For transactions of \$250,000 or more, the competitive procurement process (either a Sealed Bid or RFP) must be used. A sole source procurement may be used for transactions of any amount but only when justified.~~

A. Micro-Purchase

~~Micro-Purchases are used when the per transaction value of a purchase is less than the micro purchase threshold, currently at ~~(\$1 – \$9,999.99)~~ \$15,000 per the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 48 CFR Subpart 2.1. and may be used without soliciting competitive quotation if the price is reasonable sets the fiscal threshold. Procurement by micro-purchase refers to the acquisition of supplies or services where the total dollar amount does not exceed the micro-purchase threshold.~~

~~To the extent practicable, FRWDB staff shall distribute micro-purchases equitably among qualified suppliers. Micro-purchases may be awarded without soliciting competitive quotations if FRWDB staff determines that the price is reasonable.~~

~~Micro-purchases do not require prior written approval; however, they must be documented, including justification for the purchase and the selection of the vendor. This justification must be included with the purchasing documents.~~

~~Micro-purchases must be documented, including justification for the purchase and vendor selection. This justification shall be included with the purchasing documents.~~

B. Competitive Procurements

1. Small Purchase

The small purchase procurement method may be used when the pre-transaction value of equipment or services is less than the Simplified Acquisition Threshold, currently \$350,000, as defined in FAR 48 CFR Subpart 2.1.

~~The State of California defines a Small Purchase as being less than \$250,000 in the aggregate. The following defines the documentation required for the specified dollar range:~~

Purchase Amount	Required Documentation
\$10,000.00 to \$49,999.99	Two (2) documented quotes
\$50,000.00 to \$249,999.99	Three (3) written quotes in response to an RFQ

Small purchases between ~~(\$10,000.00 – \$15,000 – \$49,99.99)~~ \$15,000 and \$350,000 require a minimum of ~~At least two~~ (2) documented quotes must be obtained from qualified sources. Documented quotes can be obtained from catalogs, price lists, or from a contractor in writing.

~~Catalogs or price list . Documentation may include product or service catalogs and current price lists, which should must be no more than one (1) year old. The justification and quotes received shall be included with the purchasing documents.~~

~~References: EDD State Directive WSD 17-08, Procurement of Equipment and Related Services EDD WSIN 25-17, Federal Adjustment of Dollar Amounts and Rates, and 2 CFR §200.320, Procurement Standards.~~

~~**Small Purchases (\$50,000.00 – \$249,999.99):** At least three (3) written quotes and a Request for Quotes (RFQ) are required. The RFQ must specify the quantity, time frames, and all other requirements for the product or service. Proposals must be solicited from vendors that can be reasonably expected to provide the necessary goods or services. The identification of sources and solicitation of proposals must be documented.~~

~~The RFQ must be provided in writing using one (1) of the following methods:~~

- ~~• Mail services~~
- ~~• Fax~~
- ~~• Email~~
- ~~• Downloadable from the FRWDB website~~

~~The written response must be signed and dated by the proposer.~~

~~**Small Purchase Selection Basis:**~~

~~FRWDB staff shall review quotes based on the specifications of the request or RFQ. For commodity goods or services, the primary selection criterion is the lowest total price (excluding sales tax), provided all other specifications are met. However, selecting the lowest quote is not always required, as long as reasonable justification is provided.~~

~~Additional selection factors may include:~~

- ~~• Vendor qualifications~~
- ~~• Availability of goods or services~~
- ~~• Service quality~~
- ~~• Geographic location~~

~~The procurement file must document the basis for vendor selection. If the selection is based on criteria other than price, the documentation must describe:~~

- ~~• The additional selection criteria.~~
- ~~• The relevance of the criteria to the procurement need.~~
- ~~• The relative advantage of the selected vendor's offering.~~

~~Proper Documentation for a Small Purchase Includes:~~

- ~~• The reason for selecting the small purchase method.~~
- ~~• The subrecipient's estimate of the potential purchase price.~~

- A description of the goods or services, including quantity and any additional selection criteria used to determine the procurement decision, e.g., a copy of the RFQ, if required.
- A record of all providers contacted/considered, and the prices offered ~~or formal quotes for purchases between \$10,000 and \$250,000 using current catalog, price lists, and prior sales receipts~~
- Justification for selection, including how the provider met additional criteria and price analysis (FRWDB/FAWIC agenda item or Method of Procurement Form, as applicable).
- A copy of the purchase document (e.g., sales receipt, contract, purchase order, or agreement).

- See State Directive WSD 17-08, Procurement of Equipment and Related Services, and 2-CFR 200.320

~~If fewer than three (3) responsive quotes are received for procurements between \$50,000 and \$250,000, the solicitation will be considered a failed competition. FRWDB then has the option to re-compete the procurement or enter into a sole source procurement.~~

2. Requests for Proposals/Request for Quotes

Request for Proposal (RFPs)/Request for Quotes (RFQs) are used when the purchase is in excess of the small purchase amount of ~~\$250,000~~ \$350,000. This method is typically used when the nature of the goods or services to be acquired cannot be defined as precisely required by the Sealed Bid method.

RFPs are specifically used when factors other than price are important in the selection decision or if the technical requirements or specifications are of a functional nature or unclear.

RFQ's are specifically used when specifications of a product or service are already known and when price is the main or only factor in selecting the successful contractor. e.g., equipment purchases.

~~Once the RFP method has been determined to be appropriate, an RFP will be developed.~~ The RFP/RFQ will include the following information, as applicable:

- Statement/Scope of Work.
- Service area, if applicable.
- Deadline for receipt of the ~~RFP~~ proposals/quotes.
- ~~Proposal~~ submission checklist.
- Requirements for time, place, and methods or performance of service.
- Appeal process.
- Agreement clauses that outline what the proposers will be required to comply with and perform, in addition to the basic Statement of Work.
- Certifications, assurances, and representations (forms that the proposer will have to complete to affirm that it will comply with the regulatory requirements set by the United States DOL, the State of California, the local governing bodies, and the FRWDB).
- Instructions on how to prepare and submit, at a minimum, the technical and cost/price analysis sections of the proposal. Other submissions may include proposal summary,

statement of financial capability, and certification of the adequacy of the proposer's accounting system.

- Evaluation factors for the award and method for scoring the proposals, including qualifying criteria.
- Solicitation provisions and the ~~RFP calendar~~ procurement timeline.
- The right of the FRWDB to reject any or all proposals when the proposal(s) is/are not responsive in providing the services as stated in the RFP. The specific reasons must be fully described and documented in the procurement file.
- The requirement of the signature of an appropriate official who is authorized to submit the proposal for the responding agency/entity, and their Board Resolution providing the name and title of the official with this authorization.

At the discretion of the FRWDB, a draft Statement of Work (SOW) for the services may be released for public comment. The public comment period will be defined by the FRWDB and may be extended as deemed necessary. The following process will be used for draft SOWs:

- Public meetings ~~will~~ may be ~~in-person scheduled at appropriate locations~~ or virtual to record the public comment.
- Once the public comment period has ended, the FRWDB will review the comments and make any changes to the SOW that the FRWDB deems necessary.
- A summary of the comments will be made, which will include the actual comment, whether or not the SOW was changed as a result of the comment, and if the RFP was not changed, the reason.
- The SOW, with the summary of the comments, will be submitted to the appropriate FRWDB Committee/Council for recommendation to the FRWDB Board.
- Once the FRWDB Board approves the SOW, the RFP will be released, and the process will continue as outlined further in these procedures and in the RFP.

~~The Request for proposal (RFP) must be publicly solicited or advertised to an adequate number of known suppliers. The RFP will be publicly notified for a minimum of two (2) consecutive days through local newspaper(s), local advertising, and/or trade papers that covers the entire service area~~ and sent to those listed on the FRWDB's prospective bidders' list and to all interested parties upon request. The RFP and all addendums will also be available on the FRWDB website.

At the FRWDB's discretion, there may be a mandated Bidders' Conference, for bidders to ask questions of FRWDB staff pertaining to the RFP process and/or the Statement of Work. If a proposer does not attend the mandatory Bidders' Conference, any proposal submitted will not be accepted.

If any person planning to submit a proposal finds discrepancies in or omissions from the RFP or has any doubt about the true meaning or interpretation of any item, clarification may be requested in writing or email, from the contact person(s) listed in the RFP, by the deadline established in the RFP timeline. The person submitting the request will be responsible for its prompt delivery.

Clarification of the RFP will be made by written addendum only. Only duly authorized FRWDB staff may discuss and/or prepare the addendum to the RFPs. The FRWDB will not be responsible

for any other explanation or interpretation. Written addendums will be emailed to all persons who have received an RFP and posted to the FRWDB website.

Proposals will be submitted to the FRWDB by the specified time and date listed in the RFP. The proposals will be time and date stamped upon receipt by FRWDB staff. Late proposals will be rejected and will not be considered for funding.

If less than three (3) responsive proposals are received, the RFP will be considered a failed competition. The FRWDB then has the option to re-compete the procurement or to enter into sole source contract or cancel the procurement.

All submitted proposals become the property and the official files of the FRWDB. The proposals will not be made public until after the agreement is signed by the FRWDB Board Chair. The FRWDB reserves the right to reject all proposals in response to the RFP.

RFP Selection Process: The proposal review process will include the following activities to ensure that the FRWDB procurement system meets the required standards:

- All proposals will be screened for compliance with the WIOA, federal regulations, state policy, the Local FRWDB Five-Year Plan, and compliance with the specifications of the RFP.
- Awards will be given to organizations possessing the demonstrated ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the proposed sub-grant or contract.
- Proposers may be invited to answer specific questions, at the discretion of the FRWDB. General presentations will not be permitted.
- All proposals will be reviewed, scored, and ranked. The selection of a proposal for a contract award will be made through a two-phase process:
 - Phase I: FRWDB staff will initially evaluate each proposal for acceptability, with emphasis placed on responsiveness to the RFP specifications; and
 - Phase II: A specialized rating team will evaluate for acceptability all proposals forwarded from FRWDB staff for consideration, with emphasis placed on the proposal's ability to meet the requested performance and costs that are reasonable, allowable, necessary, and competitive, as measured by the review of the line-item budget, the program design, and comparison to all other proposals. Proposals will be scored on a 100-point scale and must receive a minimum rating of 70 points to be considered for funding.

At the discretion of the FRWDB, the Phase II point scale may be increased based on the complexity of the Scope of Services of any particular RFP. In these cases, the required minimum rating will be 70 percent.

The FRWDB may also conduct interviews and site visits of the proposer's site(s) as a result of the ranking of written applications.

Only those proposals that have met the minimum score threshold of 70 percent will be considered for recommendation to the appropriate FRWDB Committee/Council or the FRWDB Board. Recommendations made to the FRWDB Committee/Council must be forwarded to the FRWDB Board. The FRWDB Board must approve all final awards, subject to the veto authority of each

Chief Local Elected Official serving on the FRWDB Board, if the matter is opposed by a majority of their respective governing board (Fresno County Board of Supervisors) and council (Fresno City Council). In the situation where the timing of the FRWDB Board meeting is not conducive to the need to award a contract(s) promptly, the FRWDB Board may authorize the FRWDB Executive Committee to receive the recommendation and make the appropriate decision on behalf of the FRWDB Board. The actions of the Executive Committee will be reported at the next full Board meeting.

The bidder with the highest points, and who has met the technical requirements of the solicitation, will receive the award. Notice of the award will be emailed to the successful proposer. Those proposers who were not accepted will also receive emailed notification of the award.

FRWDB staff shall negotiate and execute contracts with those entities whose proposals were approved for funding. These negotiations will take place after final funding approval by the FRWDB Board. Discussions may center on such items as cost, program design, service levels, service by geographic locations and/or target populations, and miscellaneous clarifications.

Proper documentation for an RFP includes:

- The reason for selecting the competitive proposal method.
- The estimate of the potential purchase price.
- A copy of the Public Notice.
- A copy of the RFP.
- Bidders' Conference attendance documentation
- Copy of questions and answers.
- Copies of all the bids received.
- The scoring criteria and the evaluation/scoring sheets for each proposal, including the determination of the responsibility of the bidder and the cost analysis.
- The public notice of intent to award (Evaluation Summary).
- Why the bidder was selected (FRWDB/FAWIC agenda item and minutes).
- Copy of the award document (FRWDB/FAWIC agenda item and minutes).
- Method of Procurement form (Exhibit A).
- Cost and Price Analysis form (Exhibit B).

3. Sealed Bid

Sealed Bids are publicly solicited procurements for which a firm-fixed-price award (lump sum or unit price), or another fixed-price arrangement, is awarded to the responding entities whose bid has conformed to all the requirements, terms, and conditions of an IFB, and is lowest in price. This method is appropriate when the desired goods and services to be provided can be specified and described with a high level of precision and completeness. The best examples are commodity-type goods or services that are widely available in the marketplace. Sealed bids may be used for purchases over ~~\$250,000~~ \$350,000 that meet these criteria.

Once the sealed bid method has been determined as appropriate, an IFB will be developed, which shall include the following:

- Statement/Scope of Work.
- Service area, if applicable.
- Deadline for receipt of the IFB.
- Proposal submission checklist.
- Requirements for time, place, and methods or performance of service.
- Appeal process.
- Agreement clauses that outline what the proposers will be required to comply with and perform, in addition to the basic Statement of Work.
- Certifications, assurances, and representations (forms that the proposer will have to complete to affirm that it will comply with the regulatory requirements set by the United States Department of Labor (DOL), the State of California, the local governing bodies, and the FRWDB).
- Instructions on how to prepare and submit, at a minimum, the technical and cost/price analysis sections of the proposal. Other submissions may include proposal summary, statement of financial capability, and certification of the adequacy of the proposer's accounting system.
- Evaluation factors for the award including qualifying criteria.
- Solicitation provisions and the IFB calendar.
- The right of the FRWDB to reject any or all proposals when the proposal(s) is/are not responsive in providing the services as stated in the IFB. The specific reasons must be fully described and documented in the procurement file.
- The requirement of the signature of an appropriate official who is authorized to submit the proposal for the responding agency/entity, and their Board Resolution providing the name and title of the official with this authorization.

IFBs must incorporate a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product, or service to be procured, identify all requirements that responding entities must fulfill, and all other factors to be used in evaluating bids.

The IFB will be publicly notified for a minimum of two (2) consecutive days through local newspapers, local advertising, and trade papers that cover the entire service area and sent to those listed on the FRWDB's prospective bidders' list and, upon request, all interested parties.

At the FRWDB's discretion, a mandatory Bidders' Conference may be held, allowing bidders to ask questions of FRWDB staff regarding the IFB process and/or the Statement of Work. Bidders who do not attend the conference will not have their bids accepted.

Clarification of the IFB will be made by written addendum only. Only duly authorized FRWDB staff may discuss and/or prepare the addendum to the IFB. Each entity that received an IFB and attended any mandatory Pre-Bid Conference may make a written request for an addendum. The FRWDB will not be responsible for any other explanation or interpretation. Written addendums will be emailed to all persons who have received an IFB.

Sealed Bid Selection Basis: All bids received at the time and place stated in the IFB will be publicly opened and reviewed for qualification or disqualification. Circumstances under which bids will be rejected or disqualified are:

- The bid is not submitted on time,
- The bid does not meet all qualifying criteria, or
- The bidder does not meet all of the requirements/specifications of the IFB.

The bidder with the lowest price, and who has met the technical requirements of the solicitation, will receive the award. Notice of the award will be emailed to the successful bidder. Those bidders who were not accepted will also receive email notification of the award.

FRWDB staff shall negotiate and execute contracts with those entities whose bids are awarded. These discussions will take place after final funding approval by the FRWDB Board. Negotiations may center on miscellaneous clarifications and execution/performance timelines.

If less than three (3) responsive bids are received, the solicitation will be considered a failed competition. The FRWDB then has the option to re-compete the procurement or to enter into a sole source procurement.

Proper documentation for sealed bids includes:

- The reason for selecting the sealed bid method (Method of Procurement Form).
- The estimate of the potential purchase price.
- A copy of the Public Notice.
- A copy of the IFB.
- Copies of all the bids received.
- Determination of the responsibility of the bidder.
- Why the bidder was selected (FRWDB/FAWIC agenda item and minutes).
- Copy of the award document (FRWDB/FAWIC agenda item and minutes).
- Method of Procurement form (Exhibit A).
- Cost and Price Analysis form (Exhibit B).

4. Cooperative Purchasing Agreements/Procurements

Equipment, products, services, or consultant services may be purchased through contracts established by the State of California, the City or County of Fresno, other qualified governmental entities, or other Workforce Development Boards in the San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Unit through a competitive bid process or cooperative purchasing contracts. Equipment, products, services, or consultant services acquired through this process are considered competitively procured and deemed compliant with FRWDB procurement requirements.

FRWDB staff must obtain documentation to verify that the contract and procurement process used by the other agency for any item is valid and less than five (5) years old before making a purchase. Sole source procurement is not permitted under this provision.

Required Documentation:

- A copy of the procurement document(s) used by the other agency (see Section III, paragraphs A, B, or E).
- A copy of the issued contract.
- A copy of the selected/winning bid, proposal, or quote.

- A copy of the selection justification document (e.g., rating results).
- A completed FRWDB cost analysis (see Exhibit B).

Equipment, products, services, or consultancy services acquired under this provision must meet the specification requirements determined by FRWDB.

5. Approved Vendors Lists

The FRWDB shall use Approved Vendor Lists (AVLs) when staff needs to select from a list of pre-approved contractors or consultants for services or tools categorized under a specific service type (e.g., Soft Skills Services, Marketing Services, Consulting Services, Information Technology Services, or Contracted Education Training Services).

The Procurement Facilitator shall utilize the RFQ process as the procurement method. The intent is to obtain multiple proposals that will either cover all requested services or portions thereof (see Section III, Item B).

If the anticipated annual cost of services exceeds the Small Purchase limit of ~~\$250,000~~ \$350,000, then an AVL is not the correct methodology, and the RFP process must be used to issue a single contract. Purchases must not be divided to avoid competitive procurement requirements.

Once a contractor or consultant is placed on the AVL, no further procurement activity is required to enter into a contracted relationship. However, if multiple contractors or consultants on the AVL offer the same services, staff must complete a cost or price analysis (see Section IV) and engage in contract negotiations to ensure the cost of the contracted services is reasonable and justified based on the proposals listed in the AVL.

If the contracted service requires pre-approval from the State, documentation must be secured before executing any contract (see Section V).

C. Non-Competitive Procurements (Sole Source)

The FRWDB shall not allow the use of Sole Source procurement except under one (1) of the following conditions (must be documented in the procurement file):

- The item or service is available only from a single source.
- A public emergency precludes delay.
- The awarding agency (State of California Employment Development Department (EDD)) authorizes the specific noncompetitive procurement; or
- After solicitation from several sources, competition is determined to be inadequate. This condition is only allowable after a competitive process has been used and there are insufficient bidders (fewer than three (3)).

Use of the Non-Competitive Procurement for public emergency reasons should be for goods, supplies, or services that will provide for the agency's immediate need to enable correction or to resolve the emergency. For long-term or on-going needs, one (1) of the competitive procurement methods must be used.

A cost or price analysis is needed for all Non-Competitive Procurements. The reason for selecting the method along with the justification for the provider selection must be carefully documented and maintained in the contract and/or procurement files, as appropriate.

Proper documentation for Non-competitive Procurements includes:

- Completion of the "Method of Procurement" form (Exhibit A), Non-Competitive Proposal section, detailing the reason for selecting the sole source method, including why the procurement was infeasible under one of the other procurement methods and which of the additional sole source conditions the procurement met.
- The estimate of the potential purchase price.
- A copy of the RFQ/IFB/RFP for noncompetitive procurement.
- A determination of the responsibility of the bidder.
- A copy of the Price and Cost analysis form (Exhibit B).
- Justification for bidder selection.
- Copy of the award document.

No Sole Source contract will be signed and finalized until all procurement activities have been verified, documented, and filed.

If the decision to sole source a procurement is the result of inadequate competition, the following areas of the RFQ, IFB, or RFP will be reviewed to ensure that the process was as competitive as possible and documented in the procurement file:

- The specifications to ensure they were not unduly restrictive or would favor the selection of one (1) supplier or service provider.
- The price or cost estimates to ensure that they are fair and reasonable; and
- The timetable to verify that there was ample time in the planning process to publicize solicitations in newspapers and other sources.

If the Sole Source method was chosen due to a public emergency, a complete description of the emergency and the rationale for the Sole Source procurement must be documented in the procurement file.

FRWDB staff will document in the procurement file the conditions that required the Sole Source procurement. In all cases, FRWDB staff will determine that the costs for the program are necessary and reasonable as required by federal regulations and document the determination in the procurement file.

The Sole Source contract award must be approved by the FRWDB Executive Director, if under \$50,000. A Sole Source procurement in excess of \$50,000 must be approved by the FRWDB Board or the FRWDB Executive Committee.

SECTION IV – PROTESTS, APPEALS and GRIEVANCES

A. Protest/Appeals Process

If an entity has submitted a proposal and is not recommended for funding during the review process, the entity may appeal the recommendation to the FRWDB. Protests/Appeals may not dispute the particular score received by the petitioning entity, or the scores assigned to a competing entity. The scores given by the rating panel are final and not subject to question by an appealing entity. An appealing entity may protest/appeal the recommendation of the evaluators if it can show that any material portion of the FRWDB-approved procurement process has not been followed.

Any protest/appeal must be submitted in writing to the FRWDB within five (5) working days of the posting of the preliminary award notification. All protests/appeals are to be addressed to the FRWDB Executive Director. Only protest/appeals, which cite the specific section(s) of the RFP that have been violated, will be considered. The FRWDB Executive Director will review all protests/appeals and may seek clarification from the party appealing the award. The protest/appeal shall be elevated to the appropriate FRWDB Committee/Council, and then to the FRWDB Board. Protests/appeals received after the established time frame will not be accepted.

The decision made by the full FRWDB Board as to which proposal(s) are funded will be final.

B. Grievances

Filing a formal grievance is the second step in the dispute resolution process available only after denial of a protest/appeal. The FRWDB Grievance Procedures are intended for a more formalized, comprehensive process usually involving legal representation by both parties. This process does not allow for resolution prior to contract award in accordance with the procurement timetable. In no event shall the filing of a grievance delay the procurement process in accordance with the timetable.

Grievances regarding procurement procedures may be made using the procedures outlined in the FRWDB's WIOA Complaint and Hearing Procedures available upon request and available on the FRWDB website. Contract awards will not be delayed pending the outcome of a formal grievance. The grounds for filing a grievance are limited to charges that the procedures specified in the procurement document, FRWDB policies, or that are required by law, have not been followed. The grievance shall set forth specific facts and evidence and specify which law, procurement procedure, or FRWDB policy has been violated. All grievance procedures must be exhausted at the FRWDB before proceeding with a grievance to the State Workforce Services Division.

SECTION V – PRIOR APPROVAL

Prior approval written from EDD is required for equipment and related services under the following criteria:

- Procurements with a per-unit cost that exceeds ~~\$5,000~~ \$10,000,
- Related procurements with cumulative costs that exceed ~~\$5,000~~ \$10,000 within the same state fiscal year.
- Procurements resulting in improvements to land, buildings, or equipment that exceed ~~\$5,000~~ \$10,000.

See References: State Directives WSD 17-08, Procurement of Equipment and Related Services, and WSD 16-16, Allowable Costs and Prior Written Approval, for further details and procedures.

SECTION VI – COST OR PRICE ANALYSIS

A Cost or Price Analysis must be completed for all procurement activities that exceed the Simplified Acquisition Threshold over ~~\$250,000~~\$350,000 and all non-competitive procurements. Additionally, the analysis will be performed at contract modifications of monetary contract terms and contract renewals. The method and degree of analysis are dependent on the facts surrounding the particular procurement situation, and an estimate shall be required before receiving bids or proposals. The analysis will be documented in the procurement file. Exhibit B is used to document this decision process.

An analysis of contractor prices shall be performed by comparing proposed prices to catalog or market prices of comparable products sold to the public or based on prices set by law or regulation.

C.A. Cost Analysis

Cost Analysis is the review and evaluation, element by element, of the cost estimate supporting a proposal to price a contract. Cost Analysis is required when price analysis alone is not sufficient to determine whether a price is fair and reasonable for a product or service. A Cost Analysis is required for all Provider of Services RFPs and all Non-competitive procurement actions. Cost Analysis must be conducted when:

- The bidder is required to submit the elements of the estimated cost.
- Adequate price competition is lacking.
- For sole source procurement, including contract modification or change orders unless price reasonableness can be established based on market price.

The Cost Analysis Worksheet must be completed, and a copy must be maintained in the procurement file. When acquiring equipment, a cost comparison between leasing and purchasing is to be completed. See Section V, Prior Approval, for additional requirements.

D.B. Price Analysis

Price Analysis is the process of examining and evaluating a price without looking at the estimated cost elements and proposed profit of the offeror whose price is being evaluated. The sole purpose of Price Analysis is to determine if the final price is fair and reasonable.

- The recommended process for comparisons is:
- Comparison of prices of competing offers and selecting the best price.
- Comparison of prior quotes and contracts for the same or similar requirements, taking inflation into account.
- Comparison of offers to parametric estimates or benchmarks, e.g., dollars per square foot or cost per instructional hour.
- Comparison of offers to an independent agency estimate.
- Comparison of material contractual terms and conditions associated with the quotes.

The Price Analysis Worksheet must be completed, and a copy must be maintained in the contract file.

SECTION VII – OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. Services for WIOA Participants

Procurement of sub-recipients for services to WIOA participants will be performed once every five (5) years, following the appropriate procurement methodology, with the exception of the AJCC operator. Procurement for this service will be once every four (4) years. Renewal of the second, third, fourth, and (where applicable) fifth year of funding is contingent upon satisfactory performance in the prior years, as well as the availability of funds. If performance is not satisfactory, the service may be re-procured or awarded to the bidder with the next highest score.

B. Contracted ~~Vendor~~ Services

Procurement of ~~vendor~~-contracted services will be completed at least once every five (5) years. At least annually, FRWDB staff will:

- Conduct a cost/price analysis.
 - If that analysis determines that the services can be provided by another vendor at a lower cost, a procurement for these services will be conducted in accordance with this Procurement Policy.
 - In the event there is a tie between two (2) or more bidders, and at least one (1) of the bidders is a local business, the contract will be awarded to the local business, unless such preference is legally invalid. A local business is defined as a business that has a physical location in Fresno County.
- Review each request for goods and services to avoid purchasing unnecessary or duplicate items.

C. Debarred Parties

The federal government prohibits awards to any party that is debarred. No recipient or sub-recipient shall make any awards, or permit any awards at any tier, to any party that is debarred or suspended, or is otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in federal assistance programs, in accordance with DOL regulations. All contracts and awards to vendors and/or sub recipients, in excess of the small purchase threshold as defined in the following sections, shall include debarment certifications. Further guidance and the current Debarred Companies list can be found at <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>

D. High-Risk Sub-Recipient

A sub-recipient may be considered “high-risk” if the FRWDB determines that the sub-recipient is otherwise responsible, but:

- Has a history of unsatisfactory performance.
- Is not financially stable.
- Has a management system that does not meet standards set forth in 20 CFR Part 627.
- Has not conformed to the terms and conditions of a previously awarded grant or sub-agreement; **or**
- Is otherwise not responsible.

If the FRWDB determines that awards will be made to a high-risk organization, special funding restrictions that address the high-risk status may be included in the award. Restrictions may include, but are not limited to:

- Payment on a reimbursement basis.
- Withholding authority to proceed to the next phase until the receipt of evidence of acceptable performance within a given funding period.
- Requiring additional, more detailed financial reports.
- Additional project monitoring.
- Requiring the grantee or sub-grantee to obtain technical or management assistance; **and/or**
- Establishing additional prior approvals.

If the FRWDB decides to impose such funding restrictions, the sub-recipient will be notified in writing, as early as possible, of the following:

- The nature of the funding restriction(s).
- The reason(s) for imposing the funding restriction(s).
- The corrective actions that must be taken before the funding restriction(s) will be removed.
- The time allowed for completing the corrective actions; **and**
- The method of requesting reconsideration of the funding restrictions imposed.

E. Additional General Procurement Policy Requirements

- FRWDB will have procedures that promote the use of shared resources and other agreements for common goods and services, as well as the use of federal excess and surplus property wherever possible.
- FRWDB will have procedures to utilize small, minority, or women owned business or labor surplus area firms whenever possible.
- FRWDB will have procedures for analysis of lease versus purchase alternative to determine the most economical and practical procurement.
- All Procurements will comply with the Stevens Amendment, specifying the approximate percentage of funding from Federal sources. See Public Law 100-463, Section 8136.

F. Required Contract Clauses

In addition, to other provisions required by the Federal agency or non-Federal entity, all agreements funded by federal funds must contain the following contract clauses referred to in Uniform Guidance Appendix II to Part 200, as appropriate:

- Contracts for more than the simplified acquisition threshold currently set at ~~\$250,000~~ **\$350,000**, which is the inflation adjusted amount determined by the Civilian Agency Acquisition Council and the Defense Acquisition Regulations Council (Councils) as authorized by 41 U.S.C. 1908, must address administrative, contractual, or legal remedies in instances where contractors violate or breach contract terms, and provide for such sanctions and penalties as appropriate.

- All contracts in excess of \$10,000 must address termination for cause and for convenience by the non-Federal entity including the manner by which it will be affected and the basis for settlement.
- Equal Employment Opportunity. Except as otherwise provided under 41 CFR Part 60, all contracts that meet the definition of "federally assisted construction contract" in 41 CFR Part 60-1.3 must include the equal opportunity clause provided under 41 CFR 60-1.4(b), in accordance with Executive Order 11246, "Equal Employment Opportunity" (30 FR 12319, 12935, 3 CFR Part, 1964-1965 Comp., p. 339), as amended by Executive Order 11375, "Amending Executive Order 11246 Relating to Equal Employment Opportunity," and implementing regulations at 41 CFR part 60, "Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, Equal Employment Opportunity, Department of Labor."
- Davis-Bacon Act, as amended (40 U.S.C. 3141-3148). When required by Federal program legislation, all prime construction contracts in excess of \$2,000 awarded by non-Federal entities must include a provision for compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. 3141-3144, and 3146-3148) as supplemented by Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR Part 5, "Labor Standards Provisions Applicable to Contracts Covering Federally Financed and Assisted Construction"). In accordance with the statute, contractors must be required to pay wages to laborers and mechanics at a rate not less than the prevailing wages specified in a wage determination made by the Secretary of Labor. In addition, contractors must be required to pay wages not less than once a week. The non-Federal entity must place a copy of the current prevailing wage determination issued by the Department of Labor in each solicitation. The decision to award a contract or subcontract must be conditioned upon the acceptance of the wage determination. The non-Federal entity must report all suspected or reported violations to the Federal awarding agency. The contracts must also include a provision for compliance with the Copeland "Anti-Kickback" Act (40 U.S.C. 3145), as supplemented by Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR Part 3, "Contractors and Subcontractors on Public Building or Public Work Financed in Whole or in Part by Loans or Grants from the United States"). The Act provides that each contractor or subrecipient must be prohibited from inducing, by any means, any person employed in the construction, completion, or repair of public work to give up any part of the compensation to which he or she is otherwise entitled. The non-Federal entity must report all suspected or reported violations to the Federal awarding agency.
- Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. 3701-3708). Where applicable, all contracts awarded by the non-Federal entity in excess of \$100,000 that involve the employment of mechanics or laborers must include a provision for compliance with 40 U.S.C. 3702 and 3704, as supplemented by Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR Part 5). Under 40 U.S.C. 3702 of the Act, each contractor must be required to compute the wages of every mechanic and laborer on the basis of a standard work week of 40 hours. Work in excess of the standard work week is permissible provided that the worker is compensated at a rate of not less than one and a half times the basic rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in the work week. The requirements of 40 U.S.C. 3704 are applicable to construction work and provide that no laborer or mechanic must be required to work in surroundings or under working conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous. These requirements do not apply to the purchases of supplies, materials, or articles ordinarily available on the open market, or contracts for transportation or transmission of intelligence.

- Rights to Inventions Made Under a Contract or Agreement. If the Federal award meets the definition of “funding agreement” under 37 CFR §401.2 (a) and the recipient or subrecipient wishes to enter into a contract with a small business firm or nonprofit organization regarding the substitution of parties, assignment or performance of experimental, developmental, or research work under that “funding agreement,” the recipient or subrecipient must comply with the requirements of 37 CFR Part 401, “Rights to Inventions Made by Nonprofit Organizations and Small Business Firms Under Government Grants, Contracts and Cooperative Agreements,” and any implementing regulations issued by the awarding agency.
- Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401-7671q.) and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251-1387), as amended. Contracts and subgrants of amounts in excess of \$150,000 must contain a provision that requires the non-Federal award to agree to comply with all applicable standards, orders or regulations issued pursuant to the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401-7671q) and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act as amended (33 U.S.C. 1251-1387). Violations must be reported to the Federal awarding agency and the Regional Office of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Debarment and Suspension (Executive Orders 12549 and 12689). A contract award (see 2 CFR 180.220) must not be made to parties listed on the government wide exclusions in the System for Award Management (SAM), in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR part 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR part 1989 Comp., p. 235), “Debarment and Suspension.” SAM Exclusions contains the names of parties debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded by agencies, as well as parties declared ineligible under statutory or regulatory authority other than Executive Order 12549.
- Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. 1352). Contractors that apply or bid for an award exceeding \$100,000 must file the required certification. Each tier certifies to the tier above that it will not and has not used Federal appropriated funds to pay any person or organization for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with obtaining any Federal contract, grant or any other award covered by 31 U.S.C. 1352. Each tier must also disclose any lobbying with non-Federal funds that takes place in connection with obtaining any Federal award. Such disclosures are forwarded from tier to tier up to the non-Federal award.
- Procurement of recovered materials. A non-Federal entity that is a state agency or agency of a political subdivision of a state and its contractors must comply with section 6002 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. The requirements of Section 6002 include procuring only items designated in guidelines of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at 40 CFR part 247 that contain the highest percentage of recovered materials practicable, consistent with maintaining a satisfactory level of competition, where the purchase price of the item exceeds \$10,000 or the value of the quantity acquired during the preceding fiscal year exceeded \$10,000; procuring solid waste management services in a manner that maximizes energy and resource recovery; and establishing an affirmative procurement program for procurement of recovered materials identified in the EPA guidelines.

SECTION VIII – Procurement Activities by Sub-Recipients

All sub-recipients of the FRWDB are required to comply with all provisions of this Policy and current FRWDB Operational Directives and Information Bulletins pertaining to procurement activities.

All questions are to be directed to the FRWDB Procurement Facilitator.

For Micro-Purchases, the amount must be available in the sub-recipient's current year's contract budget. The sub-recipient is to maintain the required documentation to support the purchase as required in this Policy.

For Small Purchases, the amount must be available in the sub-recipient's current year's contract budget. The sub-recipient is to maintain the required documentation to support the purchase as required in this Policy.

If a sub-recipient needs to procure services or materials for greater than \$50,000 or it is not accounted for in their current year's contract budget, the FRWDB Procurement Facilitator must be contacted to confirm the process that will be followed to ensure compliance with this Policy. In addition, this requires the approval of the FRWDB Senior Deputy Director.

All documentation must be available for inspection by the FRWDB staff, the State of California, and/or the Federal Government, upon request.

SECTION IX - EXHIBITS

Exhibit A – Method of Procurement

Exhibit B – Cost Analysis and Price Analysis Selection Tool

Exhibit C – Subrecipient vs Contractor Indicators

FRESNO REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

AGENDA ITEM:	7
MEETING DATE:	April 15, 2026
ACTION:	INFORMATION

2125 Kern Street, Suite 208 • Fresno, CA 93721 • (559) 490-7100 • Fax (559) 490-7199 • www.frwdb.net

TO: Executive Director
FROM: Blake Konczal, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Generative Artificial Intelligence Usage Policy

INFORMATION:

As the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) continues to evolve, an increasing number of staff are interacting with AI systems. To ensure these systems are used responsibly, ethically, and securely, Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board (FRWDB) staff have issued the attached AI usage policy. This policy provides guidance for staff, Providers of Services, and contractors on the proper use of AI tools.

The policy outlines permitted and prohibited uses, establishes data protection and bias mitigation requirements, and includes a reference guide of approved AI tools. All staff are required to review and acknowledge the policy to ensure compliance.

This item is presented for information only; no action is required by the Executive Committee at this time.

ATTACHMENTS:

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage Policy

**Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board
Fresno Area Workforce Investment Corporation
Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage Policy**

Effective Date: March 31, 2026

Last Updated Initial Release

I. PURPOSE

This policy outlines the Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board (FRWDB) / Fresno Area Workforce Investment Corporations (FAWIC) approach to using AI tools and systems responsibly, ethically and with appropriate security. It is designed to benefit from the advantages of AI, while protecting the FRWDB, FAWIC and, its staff, and WIOA clients.

The following policies and procures are intended to:

- Define permitted and prohibited uses of AI within FRWDB/FAWIC, including Provider of Services and contractors
- Establish security measures to protect the information of the FRWDB/FAWIC and WIOA participants
- Encourage ethical application of AI in line with the FRWDB/FAWIC's principles and ethics
- Ensure all relevant legal requirements, regulations and contractual commitments are met, to lessen the risks from content produced by AI, encompassing inaccuracy, prejudice, and copyright problems, and
- Provide staff with a clear understanding of their obligations when employing AI tools

Due to the rapid pace of change in AI technology, this policy may undergo regular review and updates to reflect developments in technology, best practices, and legal changes.

II. BACKGROUND

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is quickly altering how organizations function, how they interact, and the provision of their services. These technologies hold considerable potential for productivity gains, better decision-making, and more efficient workflows, yet they also introduce specific data privacy, security, accuracy, bias, and ethical problems.

III. DEFINITIONS

Generative AI: Technologies capable of producing text, images, code, data summaries, or other content based on user prompts.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII): Any information that can be used on its own or in combination with other data to identify, contact, or locate a specific individual. Includes names, Social Security numbers, dates of birth, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, biometric records, and similar data.

Sensitive Information: Any data classified as confidential or restricted, including PII, PHI, financial data, trade secrets, or internal documents not available publicly.

AI Tool: Any software or platform that uses generative AI features.

Large Language Model (LLM): A type of artificial intelligence model trained on large volumes of text data that are capable of generating, summarizing, translating, and conversing in natural language. Examples include the models underlying ChatGPT and Gemini.

Prompt: A text-based instruction or query submitted by a user to a generative AI system. Prompts must be carefully constructed to avoid inadvertently disclosing sensitive or confidential information.

AI Bias: The tendency of AI systems to produce outputs that reflect, amplify, or perpetuate unfair assumptions or discrimination, often stemming from imbalanced or historically biased training data. AI bias can manifest along lines of race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, language, or socioeconomic status.

Approved AI Tool: Any generative AI application, platform, or service that has been reviewed and authorized for use by FRWDB and is included on the organization's current approved tools list.

Hallucination: A phenomenon in which a generative AI system produces output that is factually incorrect, fabricated, or unsupported by source data, but is presented with apparent confidence. Staff must verify AI-generated facts, statistics, citations, and other claims before use in official work.

IV. POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy applies to all FRWDB/FAWIC and Provider of Services staff and those working for, on behalf of, or with the FRWDB/FAWIC, including full-time and part-time staff, consultants and contractors, temporary personnel and any other individuals or entities who are given access to the FRWDB's and or the FAWIC's systems or data.

The scope of this policy includes all work-related use of AI tools and systems, including but not limited to:

- Creating or revising reports, memos, emails, or other communications
- Producing images, graphics, or multimedia content
- Analyzing program data to generate new insights
- Developing presentations and training materials
- Translating documentation or correspondence
- Summarizing meetings, documents, or data research

This policy covers all AI-driven tools and systems, including:

- Large language models (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot)
- AI writing support and productivity applications
- Automated transcription and translation services
- AI image, video, and audio production tools
- AI-enhanced software (including Microsoft Office)
- Any other applications utilizing artificial intelligence, machine learning, or automated decision-making

A. Personal Identifiable Information

Staff should not upload, enter, or disseminate to AI tools any employee or WIOA client PII. PII is defined as follows:

- Names, addresses, phone numbers, or email addresses of employees, WIOA clients
- Social Security numbers or other government identification numbers
- Dates of birth or other personal demographic information
- Financial information, including bank accounts or payment card data
- Health information or medical records
- Background check information
- Biometric data
- Any other information that could be used to identify a specific individual

When discussing scenarios or examples with AI tools, staff must anonymize all information and ensure that individuals cannot be identified through the combination of details provided.

B. Protecting Confidential Business Information

The following organizational information must not be shared with AI tools unless specifically authorized:

- Unpublished financial data
- Contract terms and negotiations
- Personnel matters and internal discussions
- Any information marked as “Confidential,” “Internal Only,” or “Restricted”

C. Bias and Fairness

- AI models may reflect societal, historical, or systemic biases, including underrepresentation or stereotypes
- Staff must evaluate outputs for potential bias related to race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or other protected characteristics
- Extra care is required for participant communications, evaluations, resource allocation, or content affecting historically disadvantaged groups
- Any AI-generated content containing biased assumptions, stereotypes, or discriminatory language must be revised or rejected

D. Intellectual Property

- Ensure the rights to use AI-generated content.
- Do not share proprietary materials with AI tools unless approved by FRWDB/FAWIC management

E. Tool Approval and Procurement

- Only FRWDB/FAWIC approved AI tools may be used for internal work
- Request approval before using new AI tools
- Unauthorized installations or extensions are prohibited

FRWDB will keep a current compilation of AI tools which have successfully undergone our evaluation; all personnel will have access to it. This list may be amended frequently, to include newly approved tools or alterations to current approvals and will be overseen by the specified department or role. Staff are required to use only those AI tools on the approved list (Attached), or those for which a documented exemption has been issued.

F. Acceptable Use

Staff are encouraged to utilize AI tools to improve productivity and efficiency in routine jobs, create first drafts or plans for further work, generate ideas, and explore creative answers, develop new skills, or grasp difficult concepts, and find and correct grammatical errors to improve writing.

All usage must comply with Federal, State, and local confidentiality and data protection regulations and policies.

1. Uses of AI that are allowable:

- Drafting emails, reports, or communication materials
- Research, brainstorming, or summarizing information
- Generating creative content such as images or presentations
- Writing and/or reviewing resumés (name, address, and phone number must be removed)
- Assisting with coding, documentation, or workflow automation
- Enhancing efficiency, quality, or clarity of work

2. Examples of Acceptable Prompts:

- 'Help rewrite this email to sound more professional
- 'Summarize this publicly available article
- 'Generate ideas for a training workshop agenda
- 'Explain a concept in simple terms

G. Prohibited Use

1. Uses of AI are not allowed

- Entering Passwords and other credentials
- Entering confidential or sensitive information (including PII, proprietary data, confidential business information or any data protected by Federal, State law, WIOA regulations or FRWDB policy)
- Use AI to make final decisions about a client's eligibility for services, employment, or any matter of real consequence to an individual
- Use AI to create case notes or other case management activities
- Use generative AI to replace required human judgment in compliance, legal, HR, or safety decisions
- Creating or distributing content that is discriminatory, harassing, inappropriate misleading, harmful, or unethical
- Representing AI generated content as your own work without appropriate review, verification, and editing

2. Examples of unacceptable Prompts

- “Analyze this participant’s personal data and determine eligibility”
- “Review this internal confidential report and summarize it”
- “Here are participant Social Security numbers – organize them”
- “Recommend disciplinary action for this employee situation”

H. Limitations of AI

- AI tools can produce incorrect information, invent references, or generate data that seems authoritative
- Their knowledge is based on past data and may not reflect current rules, regulations, or information
- AI does not understand meaning, nuances, or consequences as humans do, and repeated instructions may yield different results

I. Training and Awareness

- Complete required AI usage training including periodic training on responsible AI usage, data protection, and ethical considerations related to emerging AI technologies
- Remain informed about risks and policy updates

J. Verification Requirements:

- All AI-generated content, analysis, or recommendations must be reviewed by qualified staff with subject-matter expertise
- Staff must confirm accuracy using reliable sources, especially for:
 - Statistical data and figures
 - References and sources
 - Legal or regulatory requirements
 - Dates, deadlines, and time-sensitive information
 - Technical details or procedures
- Staff remain accountable for all work, even if AI was used

K. Security and data protection

All staff must comply with federal, state, and local laws and regulations, as well as FRWDB/FAWIC Policies and Operational Directives, to ensure the security and confidentiality of all staff and WIOA clients’ PII and disability or medical information.

Staff must not bypass cybersecurity controls to use AI tools, and any use of AI must follow established security protocols.

When utilizing AI to discuss situations or illustrative cases, all identifying details must be removed to ensure that individuals cannot be recognized from the information provided.

L. Transparency and Attribution

- Disclose use of AI when applicable
- Review and validate all AI-generated content
- Use AI as a support tool, not the sole decision maker

Staff must be open about their use of AI including:

- Disclosing the use of AI to record meetings, in-person and virtual, i.e., zoom and MS teams
- Disclosing the significant use of AI to managers
- Being honest with colleagues about which parts of the work involved AI tools, and
- Sharing knowledge and good practices with team members

V. COMPLIANCE

A. Follow-up and Monitoring

The FRWDB may monitor the use of AI tools to ensure adherence to this policy, operational directives and applicable laws and regulations. Staff are expected to use AI responsibly and in accordance with this policy.

B. Violations

Any violations of these requirements, including misuse of AI or failure to follow verification and bias assessment procedures, may result in disciplinary action.

C. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed and updated as follows:

- At least annually
- When significant changes occur in AI technology, capabilities, or risks
- When new laws or regulations affect AI use
- Following any significant incident or breach related to AI
- When organizational needs or priorities change

VI: ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This policy must be brought to the attention of all staff. All staff are required to read the policy and sign the acknowledgment form on page 7 to confirm their understanding and agreement to comply. Signed acknowledgment forms must be retained in personnel files as a record of compliance.

VII. INQUIRES

Questions related to this policy should be directed to Jimmy Ngo, FRWDB Information Services & General Services Manager

VIII: ATTACHMENT

FRWDB AI Tools Reference Guide

FRWDB/FAWIC GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) USAGE POLICY
STAFF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agree to abide by this policy.

Staff Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

AI Tools Reference Guide

For Internal Use | March 2026

Tool / Platform	Tier / Version	Primary Use Cases
CORE AI ASSISTANTS		
ChatGPT	Enterprise / Teams (OpenAI)	General writing, research, training content development, resume and cover letter assistance, summarization of long documents.
Gemini	Google (Workspace add-on)	Integrated assistance in Docs, Gmail, and Sheets; meeting summaries; email drafting; spreadsheet formula generation
Microsoft Copilot	Free / M365 integrated	Quick answers, web search integration, and basic drafting within Bing and Edge for staff not on full M365 Copilot license
WORKPLACE PRODUCTIVITY		
Microsoft 365 Copilot	M365 Business / Enterprise add-on	Automates tasks in Word, Excel, Outlook, Teams, and PowerPoint; drafts emails, generates meeting summaries, builds spreadsheet formulas
Google Workspace Gemini	Google Workspace add-on	Smart compose in Gmail, document drafting in Docs, data analysis in Sheets, meeting recaps in Meet
WRITING, COMMUNICATION & CONTENT		
Grammarly AI	Business / Enterprise	Writing improvement, tone adjustment, clarity scoring; useful for external communications, and partner correspondence
Canva AI (Magic Studio)	Canva Pro / Teams	Presentations, flyers, event graphics, training visuals, social media content; drag-and-drop AI image and layout generation
Gamma	Pro	AI-powered slide decks from outlines or prompts; fast creation of stakeholder presentations and board reports
Otter.ai	Business	Real-time meeting transcription, auto-generated summaries, action item extraction for partner meetings and MOU discussions
Microsoft Teams Copilot	M365 Copilot add-on	Live captions, meeting recaps, follow-up action items; deeply integrated if organization uses Teams
RESEARCH & DOCUMENT INTELLIGENCE		
NotebookLM	Free (Google)	Upload grant RFPs, policy documents, or reports; AI answers questions against your source documents with citations

AI Tools Reference Guide | Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board

Tool / Platform	Tier / Version	Primary Use Cases
DATA, ANALYTICS & REPORTING		
Microsoft Excel Copilot	M365 Copilot add-on	Formula generation, data cleaning, chart creation, and pivot table assistance via natural language prompts
Google Sheets Gemini	Google Workspace add-on	AI formula suggestions, automated analysis, smart fill, and conversational queries on spreadsheet data
IMAGE & MEDIA GENERATION		
Adobe Firefly	Adobe Creative Cloud	AI image generation integrated into Photoshop and Illustrator; commercially safe images for publications and grant materials
AUTOMATION & WORKFLOW		
Microsoft Power Automate	M365 / standalone	Native automation for Microsoft environments; AI Builder for document processing, form extraction, and approval workflows

FRESNO REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

AGENDA ITEM:	8
MEETING DATE:	April 15, 2026
ACTION:	INFORMATION

2125 Kern Street, Suite 208 • Fresno, CA 93721 • (559) 490-7100 • Fax (559) 490-7199 • www.frwdb.net

TO: Executive Committee
FROM: Blake Konczal, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Director's Quarterly Update

INFORMATION:

Updates will be provided on various subjects.

FRESNO REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

AGENDA ITEM:	9
MEETING DATE:	April 15, 2026
ACTION:	DIRECT

2125 Kern Street, Suite 208 • Fresno, CA 93721 • (559) 490-7100 • Fax (559) 490-7199 • www.frwdb.net

TO: Executive Committee
FROM: Edgar Blunt, Chair
SUBJECT: Referral of Agenda Items to Other Committees

RECOMMENDATION:

Discuss and direct staff regarding the referral of agenda items from this meeting to one or more of the other standing committees of the Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:

This item is intended to allow the Executive Committee to collectively decide which of the items you just discussed should be referred to another committee(s) and the reason they are being referred (information, action, etc.).