



STATE PURCHASING DIVISION

EMERGENCY PURCHASING

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

During an emergency, normal procurement rules are suspended to ensure state entities can quickly obtain needed goods and services. As a reminder, the state entity is not required to obtain SPD's approval prior to making an emergency purchase. However, SPD is available to support state entities as needed with emergency purchases. Please reference the following information related to emergency purchasing.

1. What is an emergency?

An emergency condition is a situation which creates an immediate threat to public health, welfare, or safety such as may arise due to extreme weather conditions, epidemics, riots, equipment failures, or official declared emergencies. An emergency can also include medical or severe transportation issues involving students travelling with USG and TCSG entities. Emergency procurements are handled outside the normal solicitation process because of the urgency of the circumstance. Poor planning or the pending expiration of funds does not constitute a valid justification for an emergency purchase.

2. Do I have to conduct a competitive bid before making an emergency purchase?

No, there is no requirement to conduct a competitive solicitation in an emergency situation. Buyers should quickly canvass available sources of supply and select the option that best meets the state entity's needs.

3. What resources are available to me?

State entities may use any of the following (in any order) during an emergency:

- [Statewide contracts](#)
- Existing state entity contracts
- [GSA Advantage Disaster Relief Program](#), which allows state and local governments to buy supplies and services directly from all GSA Schedules to facilitate disaster preparation, response or major disaster recovery. Purchases made in support of recovery must be in response to a Stafford Act Presidential declaration. Note: For an emergency purchase, there is no requirement to conduct a public posting as otherwise required by [Georgia Procurement Manual](#) Section 1.3.4.4 Consortia or Cooperative Purchasing.
- Purchases on the open market (Amazon, etc.)

4. Do I need SPD's prior approval to make an emergency purchase?

No, SPD prior approval is not required prior to making an emergency purchase. However, buyers must document the emergency purchase as required by the [Georgia Procurement Manual](#), Section 1.3.5 Emergency Purchases.

5. Do I need to document emergency purchases?

Yes, all emergency purchases must be documented as required by the [Georgia Procurement Manual](#), Section 1.3.5 Emergency Purchases whether or not the dollar value of the purchase falls within the agency's delegated purchasing authority. Thorough documentation may also be necessary to support the use of federal funds or, as applicable, to receive reimbursement.

6. Can the purchasing card be used to make an emergency purchase?

Yes, the purchasing card can be used to make an emergency purchase. Please review the additional questions listed below for transactions that cannot be completed within your normal purchasing limits or would conflict with the Statewide Purchasing Card Policy.

7. My entity needs to make a purchase using a purchasing card and the identified cardholder(s)' single transaction and/or cycle limits are not enough to make the purchase. Must I get permission from SPD/OPB for a Special Temporary Approval before making the purchase?

No, SPD/OPB prior approval is not required to raise STLs and/or CLs in order to make an emergency purchase. However, the entity's P-Card Administrator must notify SPD within 72 hours of the identified need. When providing documentation for emergency purchases to SPD, include the [Special Approval Form](#) SPD-PC003 and invoices/receipts. In the case of paying for accommodation, include the number of people involved, both state employees and non-state employees, respectively.

8. If I submit a Temporary Special Approval after the emergency purchase, what action does SPD take after submittal?

SPD will review the form and supporting documentation as applicable and confirm receipt. SPD does not provide after-the-fact approval. However, should there appear to be misapplication of the emergency purchase exception or documentation is lacking, the P-Card Administrator will be contacted for more information.

9. What if I need to make a purchase on the purchasing card that would be prohibited in policy such as hotel rooms for state employees during a declared state of emergency?

Per policy, there may be allowable exceptions to otherwise prohibited purchases as noted in the [Statewide Purchasing Card Policy](#), Section IX, Subsection C. For example, TeamWorks™ Travel and Expense (TTE)

agencies are generally prohibited from paying for hotel rooms for state employees with the purchasing card. However, in a declared state of emergency, the TTE agency may use the purchasing card to pay for hotel rooms for state employees as reasonably necessary to respond to the emergency event. In this instance, SPD/OPB prior approval is not required; however, the agency must report the transactions to SPD within 72 hours as required by the [Statewide Purchasing Card Policy](#), Section D. Declared Emergencies and Natural Disasters. Remember, if you are in doubt please contact SPD. If that is not possible, consider the impact to health and welfare of employees, the public, and students and the emergency status of the situation. Urgency is not synonymous with emergency.

10. Who do I contact for additional assistance?

For any policy questions, please contact us at process.improvement@doas.ga.gov. For questions regarding the purchasing card, please contact us at cardprograms@doas.ga.gov. For assistance with sourcing, please contact us at agency.sourcing@doas.ga.gov.