

Purchasing Equipment

If you are a Child Nutrition Program participant that is considering or needing to purchase equipment it can sometimes feel overwhelming and/or you may not know where to start. ISBE staff are here to help you.

First let's note that all purchases made with funds from your non-profit school food service account must be an allowable use of those funds, whether they meet the definition of Equipment or not and must be purchased through the appropriate procurement method.

Step 1

Determine if it is an allowable expense to your nonprofit school food service account. Determine if this purchase is necessary and reasonable and will be used for the operation and improvement of the school food service. If you are unsure about your answer to this question, please reach out to our Resource Management staff, Mike (mgogerty@isbe.net) or Toby (rturek@isbe.net).

Step 2

Does the item(s) meet the definition of Equipment?

Equipment is defined by OMB and the USDA as:

Tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of one year or longer and a per-unit acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser capitalization level established for financial statement purposes, \$5,000, or a lower threshold set by local level regulations.

If the item(s) that you are considering purchasing do NOT meet this definition of equipment, then you will need to ensure that the purchase is necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient performance and administration of the Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) and that the purchasing process follows applicable procurement requirements.

If the item(s) that you are considering purchasing DO meet the definition of equipment, then the following steps should be followed.

Step 3

Read and check the [Pre-Approved Equipment List](#) on our website to see if the item(s) you are looking to purchase are included on this list.

If the item(s) you are purchasing are on the Pre-Approved Equipment List, then you will need to read through the [Equipment Purchase Attestation Statement](#) and certify that all of the required criteria are true and sign the form. The SFA does NOT need to send this form to ISBE, but they MUST maintain this documentation.

If the item(s) you are purchasing are NOT on the Pre-Approved Equipment List, then the SFA will need to obtain approval if they wish to use funds from the nonprofit school food service account for this purchase. The [Equipment Purchase Pre-Approval Request form](#) needs to be completed and submitted to nutritionprocurement@isbe.net.

Step 4

If the equipment is allowable based on the previous steps, then the SFA may move forward with purchasing the equipment. The SFA should determine based on the price of the purchase which procurement method is required. Do you need to follow the [micro-purchase](#) method, [small/informal](#) procurement method or does this require a [formal procurement](#) process?

If you have questions regarding which procurement method you must use or if you need assistance in following the proper procurement process please reach out to the procurement team, Lindsay (lblough@isbe.net) or Christina (csmith@isbe.net) and we will be happy to assist you. The SFA must document this entire process, must maintain this documentation for a minimum of 3 years plus the current and it must be readily available upon request.