



Internal Memorandum

Subject: Office of Purchasing Name Change

Date: October 22, 2020

To: Lonnie R. Robbins,
Chief Administrative Officer

From: Dean Hof, Purchasing Administrator *DPH*
Office of Purchasing

The Office of Purchasing is seeking to update the name of the office to accurately reflect the terminology used in today's environment. Our office would like to update our name from Office of Purchasing to Office of Procurement and Contract Administration. The term 'purchasing' is outdated by current standards according to the National Institute of Governmental Procurement (NIGP) which is the leading authority on public procurement ethics, industry standards, best practices and professional certification. As explained in their training and certification textbooks, the term 'purchasing' was common nomenclature in the mid to later part of the twentieth century but has evolved over time. The skillset and function of a buyer has advanced from simply ordering materials to involve more strategic thinking and planning. The more appropriate term by today's standards is procurement. NIGP's two certifications recognized around the world in public procurement include the Certified Public Procurement Buyer and Certified Public Procurement Officer.

By definition, there are substantial differences between the two terms and to accurately reflect the work done by our office, the terminology should be updated. Purchasing is simply the process of buying products to meet demand. By contrast, procurement focuses on the larger picture of strategic sourcing of goods and services and involves market research, planning, supplier negotiations and contract management. In essence, purchasing is a subset of the overarching procurement function.

Our more progressive peers in surrounding jurisdictions have already updated their office name to reflect the work their teams accomplish such as Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Fairfax County and Loudoun County to name a few.

Because our staff performs as much contract administration as they do procurement activities, it is important to recognize this in our updated office name.

There will be minimal costs to update the name of our department such as updating the signage on our front door and new business cards. As for the printed brochures we use at outreach events, we will use the current ones and make it a running change for the next print runs.



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This package comprises two pieces of legislation. There is a Bill to change the name of our office as included in the County Code. Pursuant to Section 4.104 of the County Code, there is a separate Resolution to amend the Purchasing Manual to change the name of our office as included in that document. References to the Administrator of the Office need to be amended as well to reflect the new Office name.