

Updated to the Federal Purchase Threshold in Child Nutrition Programs

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Regulatory Authority: [90 FR 41872](#), [2 CFR Part 200](#)

Response Required: No

Attention: Superintendents and Child Nutrition Directors

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The purpose of this memo is to inform program operators of updates to the federal purchase threshold in Child Nutrition Programs. This update applies to all child nutrition programs including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

The final rule at [90 FR 41872](#) amends the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) to further implement a statute, which requires an adjustment every five years of statutory acquisition-related thresholds for inflation. Thresholds administered under Federal awards are referenced in [48 CFR 2.101 \(also known as FAR 2.101\)](#) and increased to the following starting October 1, 2025:

- Federal micro-purchase threshold - increased from \$10,000 to \$15,000 and;
- Federal simplified acquisition threshold (formerly known as the Federal small purchase threshold) increased from \$250,000 to \$350,000. Note that public schools in Arkansas must adhere to the more restrictive Arkansas Small Purchase Threshold.

Micro Purchases:

Micro-purchase procurement procedures apply to the purchase of supplies or services when the aggregate dollar amount does not exceed \$15,000. The district may establish a lower micro-purchase threshold and if so, the most restrictive must be followed.

Micro purchases may be awarded without soliciting competitive quotations if program operators consider the price for goods and services being purchased to be reasonable.

Things to consider when determining if a purchase is reasonable:

- Compare to previous purchases
- Have personal knowledge of the item being purchased

- Compare to similar items being purchased

Micro-purchases must be distributed among qualified suppliers equitably.

Small Purchases:

Small purchase procurement procedures apply to the purchase of supplies or services when the aggregate dollar amount is higher than the micro-purchase threshold but does not exceed the simplified acquisition threshold. The state purchasing threshold for bidding under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-304 for the 2025-2026 school year is \$26,500. Public school program operators must follow the more restrictive state threshold when purchases exceed the Arkansas purchase price as established by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. This price is adjusted annually based on the percentage of change in the Consumer Price Index.

Small purchases require program operators to seek at least competitive quotes from an adequate number (two or more) sources. Small purchases are awarded to the vendor with the lowest price.

Formal Purchases:

Formal purchase procurement procedures apply to the purchase of supplies and services when aggregate dollar amount exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold. Formal procurement methods are competitive and require public notice.

Invitation for Bid (IFB): a procurement method in which bids are publicly solicited through an invitation and a firm fixed-price contract is awarded to the responsible bidder whose bid conforms with all the material terms and conditions of the invitation and is the lowest in price. Bids must be advertised to the public and solicited from an adequate number (two or more) sources. IFBs must define the items or services with specific information, including any required specifications.

Request for Proposal (RFP): procurement method used when conditions are not appropriate for using sealed bids. This procurement method may result in either a fixed-price or cost-reimbursement contract. RFPs require public notice and all evaluation factors, and the relative importance must be identified, with price carrying the most weight. SFAs must have written procedures for conducting technical evaluations of responses and making selections. Contracts are awarded to the responsible offeror whose proposal is the most advantageous.

Contact your Area Specialist via email or at 501-324-9502 for further details.