



## How to Buy From a State or Collaborative Contract

The City of Somerville has access to a number of existing state and collaborative contracts that allow departments to purchase goods and services without going through a lengthy procurement process, allowing the City to purchase with greater ease and availability. State and collaborative contracts are great resources that offer competitive prices and ease of access. Many of the goods and services the City purchases through our own competitive processes can be found in these state and collaborative contracts. This guide will help you find and utilize these contracts to make your purchasing process easier.

### State Contracts

The Operational Services Division provides a broad spectrum of goods and services for municipal use on state contracts through their web-portal [CommBuys.com](http://CommBuys.com), formerly known as [CommPass](http://CommPass.com). Many of these services are commonly used by departments throughout the City. Examples of such goods and services included in these state contracts include photocopier maintenance, carpet installation, office equipment, and custodial services.

### Purchasing off of a State Contract

To purchase goods or services off of a state contract, we will need to confirm that the chosen vendor can provide the necessary goods and services. Many times vendors are “on a state contract” but the contract they are on is not actually applicable to the goods or services we need. Search [CommBuys.com](http://CommBuys.com) to confirm the vendor is on the correct contract, or contact the Purchasing Department for assistance.

When you have identified the state contract for the good or service you require, note the contract number on your PO.

### Collaborative Contracts

A concerted effort has been made in recent years by municipalities to search out, create, or otherwise join purchasing consortiums or collaboratives. Similar to state contracts, purchasing collaboratives allow municipalities to purchase goods and services that have been previously procured through a competitive process, saving the City time and effort, while offering competitive pricing. Unlike state contracts, not all purchasing consortiums satisfy Massachusetts’ competitive procurement requirements.

The City has a number of collaborative contracts that have been vetted to ensure they meet M.G.L requirements. These include, among many others:

- MHEC: The Massachusetts Higher Education Consortium. MHEC contracts in concert with state contracts; many vendors that are MHEC contracts are not on state contracts and vice versa to avoid overlap and a broader array of vendors. MHEC contracts include all sorts of services and supplies, ranging from air conditioners, graphic arts and design, automobile rentals, plumbing and heating services, and telecommunications equipment and maintenance.
- MAPC: Metropolitan Area Planning Council. MAPC contracts include street resurfacing treatment, street sweeping, debris disposal, police vehicles, and heavy-duty vehicles.
- HGAC: Houston-Galveston Area Council: H-GAC emergency vehicles, infrastructure equipment and services, communications equipment, parks equipment, and energy purchasing.

#### **To purchase off of a Collaborative Contract**

To purchase goods or services from a collaborative contract, the City must be a member of the collaborative and the contracts must satisfy M.G.L purchasing guidelines. The City is already a member of the examples above so to purchase from them, just add the collaborative contract number to your PO.

The City can also enter into new agreements with purchasing consortiums that you may come across. If you find a purchasing consortium that interests you, provide the information to the Purchasing Department so that we may vet the consortium with the Legal Department for compliance.