



Department of Finance- 42 West Madison, 2nd Floor · Chicago, Illinois 60602
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March 11, 2015

Dear CPS Partners and Suppliers,

Chicago Public Schools has been working over the past several years to streamline our processes to make interaction with CPS easier and more efficient. We are making additional improvements now that we want to share with you, and to remind you of some policies and practices that remain in place.

New: Paperless Invoicing

CPS central office receives annually over 120,000 paper invoices which must be scanned into our system before we can process payment. This leads to payment delays and errors, as the scanning process is manual and frequently must be repeated before the invoice is correctly loaded.

We are now able to accept invoices electronically via e-mail at the central office, which will avoid the cumbersome manual process. Effective April 15, 2015 CPS central office will fully transition to this paperless invoice processing system and **will no longer accept paper invoices**.

Does this affect payments made by schools from their local checking accounts?

No. Payments made by schools from their local checking accounts are not affected by this change.

What does paperless invoicing mean for you?

After April 15, vendors who are paid from the central office will need to submit invoices electronically via email in PDF format. These invoices must be sent directly to cpsinvoice@cps.edu. After April 15 only electronic invoices in the format described below will be accepted by the central office. Paper or faxed invoices will not be accepted by the central office.

To ensure there is no delay in your payment:

- Each email may only contain one invoice
- Subject line of your email include your Vendor Name and the CPS Purchase Order (PO) number
- Just like now, your invoices must include:
 - Company name and payment address
 - Unique invoice number {determined by you}
 - Valid CPS PO number
 - Only one PO may be referenced on each invoice
 - Invoices without a valid CPS PO will not be processed
 - Invoice date
 - Date goods or services were delivered to CPS
 - Quantities, unit prices, extensions and a final net amount due (before any discounts)
- Be sure invoices match the PO line for line
- Additional information that may be included to help facilitate quicker processing of invoices:
 - Your Vendor Number
 - CPS contact name

What should you do if you don't have an email account or can't create PDF files?

There are several email providers who offer free email if you do not already have one. There are free programs available via the Internet that can convert invoices to PDF format if you need.

Who can you contact if you have questions?

- To check the status of your invoice/payment visit the CPS vendor portal:
<https://supplier.cps.edu>
- Send questions to accountspayable@cps.edu. This is a different email address from where you will send invoices. Please note that the invoice e-mail box is not monitored for questions.

New: Updates to Payment Terms

Payment terms are governed by state statute, specifically the Illinois Local Government Prompt Payment Act (50 /LCS 505). We are changing our practices to reflect this statute.

What does the Illinois Local Government Prompt Payment Act mean for you?

Effective April 15, 2015, CPS's default payment terms will be thirty days after the invoice has been approved for payment. Invoice payment will no longer be based on invoice date. Vendors may offer a discount on the invoice for consideration of earlier payment terms.

Required Electronic Submission of Certificates of Insurance

CPS collects hundreds of certificates of insurance from our various vendors and partners, all of whom are required to carry insurance coverage and provide a Certificate of Insurance before a vendor number will be issued.

All suppliers continue to be required to register with the Board's designated insurance monitoring company, Topiary Communications, to remain active. As of April 15, only certificates received by Topiary will be considered for contract compliance. All certificates must be submitted electronically to Topiary. Insurance Certificates should NOT be sent to CPS directly.

How do I submit my Certificate of Insurance?

- All Certificates should be uploaded through our third-party insurance tracker, Topiary Communications. Please upload your certificate to www.cpsvendorcert.com and remit a \$12 annual fee, which covers monitoring and notification.
- The Certificate of Insurance must name the Board of Education of the City of Chicago as an additional insured
- Indicate the Board as the "Certificate Holder" with name & address: The Board of Education of the City of Chicago, 42 W Madison, Chicago IL 60602
- Commercial General Liability (CGL) coverage with limits of \$1,000,000 per occurrence and a \$2,000,000 aggregate
- Specific instructions and samples are included on the website shown above

What if I am a sole proprietor or small business and can't secure insurance on my own?

You or your firm may be eligible for the small vendor program that is endorsed by the Board of Education for vendors who are unable to secure commercial general liability insurance through their own brokers. This program is only for sole proprietors or small businesses that conduct educational/consulting/speaking engagements and visit CPS locations. For more information go to www.cpsvendorcert.com for the application and instructions.

IMPORTANT: Valid Purchase Orders Must Be in Place Before Goods or Services are Delivered

A valid purchase order must be in place before you provide goods or services. Payments may be significantly delayed if you deliver goods or provide services without a valid purchase order. If you are not provided with a valid purchase order do not provide the goods or services. Instead, direct the school or department to obtain a valid purchase order. You can check to see if you have a valid purchase order at the CPS vendor portal: <https://supplier.cps.edu>. Schools and departments have been put on alert that ordering goods or services without a valid purchase order is a violation of Board Rule 7- 13(b).

Invoices will not be processed if a valid purchase order is not open in the system at the time an invoice is received resulting in delays in payments.

Thank you for your continued partnership with CPS as we streamline our processes.

Sincerely,

Chicago Public Schools



Sebastien de Longeaux
Chief Procurement Officer



Ginger Ostro
Chief Financial Officer