

TIPS MISSION

To connect Members and Vendors together by creating valuable relationships while providing substantial savings and the best value for Education, Government and Non-Profit Agencies.

TIPS LOCATION



TIPS is located at the Region 8 Education Service Center, our Lead Agency.
4845 US Hwy 271 N
Pittsburg, Texas 75686
www.reg8.net
903.572.8551

CONTACT US

 4845 US Highway 271 North
Pittsburg, Texas 75686
 866.839.8477
 tips@tips-usa.com
 www.tips-usa.com

CONNECT WITH US



MEET THE TIPS TEAM:

Administration

Dr. David Wayne Fitts | Executive Director Region 8 ESC
903.572.8551 | www.reg8.net
Meredith Barton | TIPS Manager
903.575.2791 | meredith.barton@tips-usa.com

Management

David Mabe | Construction Manager
903.243.4759 | david.mabe@tips-usa.com
Jeff Shokrian | Business Development Manager
832.752.5978 | jeff.shokrian@tips-usa.com
Heath Hinton | Project Estimator
903.573.4901 | heath.hinton@tips-usa.com
Rick Powell | General Counsel & Procurement Compliance Officer
903.575.2726 | rick.powell@tips-usa.com
Whitley Allen | Inside Business Development & Marketing
903.575.2734 | whitley.allen@tips-usa.com

Office Support

Kim Thompson | Office Manager
903.575.2608 | kim.thompson@tips-usa.com
Miguel Kenedy | Database and Website
817.319.1818 | miguelk.bacallao@tips-usa.com
Karen Walton | Purchase Order Compliance
903.575.2761 | karen.walton@tips-usa.com
Sarah Bond | Customer Relations
903.575.2689 | sarah.bond@tips-usa.com
Reid Williams | Membership Services
903.575.2714 | reid.williams@tips-usa.com
Joni Elms | Conference Planner
903.575.2674 | joni.elms@tips-usa.com

Field Team

Pat Adams | TIPS Ambassador
903.649.2075 | pat.adams@tips-usa.com
Zack Buquet | Program Manager
503.758.4229 | zack.buquet@tips-usa.com
Bill Herries | Program Manager
817.239.5293 | bill.herries@tips-usa.com
Mickey McFatrige | Program Manager
870.926.9250 | mickey.mcfatrige@tips-usa.com
Frank Meyran | Program Manager
706.372.0359 | frank.meyran@tips-usa.com
Randy Ramey | Program Manager
630.802.1518 | randy.ramey@tips-usa.com
Lyndsey Sawyer | Program Manager
713.585.5069 | lyndsey.sawyer@tips-usa.com
Javier Farias | TIPS Representative
956.802.5677 | javier.farias@tips-usa.com

Email us: tips@tips-usa.com



Connecting Members and Vendors Together



www.tips-usa.com | 866.839.8477

WHAT IS TIPS?

TIPS (The Interlocal Purchasing System) is a leading, national purchasing cooperative benefiting Education, Government and Non-Profit Agencies. Established with over a decade of experience in the purchasing procurement industry, we make purchasing for our Members EASY, COMPLIANT and ECONOMICAL. Our competitively bid contracts streamline the purchasing process and save our Members both TIME and MONEY. We offer opportunities for greater efficiency in pricing and delivery of goods and services by contracting with "high performance" Vendors.

HOW TIPS GOT STARTED

- ★ TIPS originated in 2002 by the Lead Agency, Region 8 Education Service Center in Mount Pleasant, Texas, with 48 school districts as charter members.
- ★ In 2003, Dawson Education Cooperative in Arkadelphia, AR partnered with TIPS to create the Texas-Arkansas Purchasing System (TAPS).
- ★ In the years following, other partnering state organizations have joined TIPS which further advanced the purchasing opportunities for entities in the respective states.
- ★ Today, TIPS is a premier purchasing cooperative with eligible memberships in all 50 states.

WHO CAN BECOME A MEMBER?

- ✓ K-12 School Districts
- ✓ Private Schools
- ✓ Cities
- ✓ Municipalities
- ✓ State Agencies
- ✓ Counties
- ✓ Townships
- ✓ Charitable Organizations
- ✓ Churches
- ✓ Charter Schools
- ✓ Universities
- ✓ Colleges
- ✓ Emergency Service Districts
- ✓ Park Districts
- ✓ Other entities with legislated purchasing/bidding requirements

HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER

1. Register for FREE at www.tips-usa.com
2. Click on the Membership tab
3. Follow the registration instructions

Sign up for free today!



HOW TO MAKE A PURCHASE

1. Search the TIPS website for products and services
2. Contact the Vendor of choice and request a "TIPS QUOTE"
3. Create a Purchase Order
 - ★ Make PO payable to the TIPS Vendor
 - ★ Please notate the applicable TIPS Contract # on the PO
4. Go to the Vendor's profile page on the TIPS website to view the PO submission instructions specific to each Vendor
 - ★ If the Vendor is NOT "Automated" send to tipspo@tips-usa.com
 - ★ If the Vendor is "Automated" send directly to the email address noted at the top of the Vendor's profile page
5. Please include both the PO and the TIPS Quote as one .pdf
6. Payment is made directly to the Vendor

TIPS MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- ★ Free Membership
- ★ Available to All 50 States
- ★ Larger Group Buying Power
- ★ Publicly Advertised & Competitively Bid Contracts
- ★ Manufacturer Contracts
- ★ Reasonable Shipping Fees (if any)
- ★ Multi-year Contracts
- ★ Easy Purchasing Process
- ★ Web Access to Vendors
- ★ Advertisement Cost Savings
- ★ Multiple Awarded Vendors Per Category

HOW TO BECOME AN AWARDED VENDOR

Step 1: To become an Awarded Vendor and have the ability to sell your products and services through a TIPS contract, you will need to enroll your company as a "Registered Supplier" to be notified of upcoming bid opportunities that meet your company's commodities.

1. Go to the TIPS website and click on the "SIGN UP" tab
2. Click the image that says, "SIGN UP TO BE A TIPS VENDOR"
3. Click on the "TIPS POTENTIAL BIDDER" hyperlink which will take you to the TIPS ebid website
4. Complete your registration and submit for approval

HOW TO SUBMIT A BID PROPOSAL

Step 2: Once your registration is approved, monitor your emails for notifications of bid opportunities to submit a proposal.

1. Access the TIPS ebid website <https://tips.ionwave.net> and log in with the username and password previously created
2. Go to "EVENT CALENDAR" to see current bids available
3. Click on the applicable bid # to take you to that category's bid information page
4. Click on the "ATTACHMENTS" tab to download the bid forms required to submit your proposal
5. Click on "ATTRIBUTES" tab to provide required information about your company
6. Click on "RESPONSE ATTACHMENTS" to upload complete documents
7. Click on "RESPONSE SUBMISSION" to digitally sign and submit your bid

AWARDED CONTRACT PROCESS

- ★ Submitted proposals are reviewed by a committee and scored using the pre-determined rubric included in the original solicitation instructions.
- ★ Proposals must receive a minimum score of 80 points to be recommended for an award to Region 8 Education Service Center Board of Directors.
- ★ If your company is awarded a TIPS contract, you will receive an official TIPS Award Letter along with a Vendor Packet of TIPS education, sales & marketing strategies and best practices.





STATE OF ARKANSAS
**Department of Finance
and Administration**

OFFICE OF STATE PROCUREMENT
1509 West Seventh Street, Suite 300
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201-4222
Phone: (501) 324-9316
Fax (501) 324-9311
<http://www.arkansas.gov/dfa/procurement>

OSP Policies

Cooperative Procurement – Cities and Counties

The Office of State Procurement (OSP) has authority over the procurement practices of State Agencies only. One of OSP's primary functions is to research frequently purchased items and items where the formulation of a Statewide contract would bring the best value to the State. Arkansas cities and counties are allowed by law to purchase off these Statewide contracts, but are not required to do so.

Cities and counties function under separate laws, ACA §14-58-303 (city) and ACA §14-22-101 thru §14-22-115 (county), which give authority to their respective governing boards. What a city or county can do in the procurement arena depends on these laws and the guidelines and authority formulated by its governing body.

If a city or county is approached by a vendor who has a contract with a Cooperative Entity (such as US Communities, TIPS/TAPS, NJPA, NIPA, etc.), its administration should review the contract to see if it meets that cities or counties procurement requirements and provides the best value. If the Cooperative's process meets these requirements, then it may be used by the city or county.

Cooperative agreements should not be used just for convenience. A city or county should determine whether a particular Cooperative contract provides the best value to the buying entity. If not, the buying entity should issue its own solicitation.

If OSP approves a specific contract that was solicited by a Cooperative, the approval is only for that particular contract, and not for all contracts awarded by the Cooperative. In other words, it is not a blanket approval for all contracts awarded by that particular Cooperative. When OSP approves a particular Cooperative contract, it will be posted on the OSP website under Statewide Contracts.

The following Arkansas Attorney General's Letter of Opinion regarding Interlocal Agreements and City/County/Town/Municipal Government or State Agencies. If you feel that this opinion applies to your entity, then you may choose to complete the TIPS/TAPS Membership Information Sheet at the bottom of the Opinion, in lieu of the Interlocal Agreement and Board Resolution documents normally required for Membership in TIPS/TAPS. It is at the discretion of the entity to determine which document is required by their organization to legally participate in the TIPS/TAPS Purchasing Cooperative.

Ark. Op. Atty. Gen. No. 2008-087, 2008 WL 2487900 (Ark.A.G.)

Office of the Attorney General
State of Arkansas
Opinion No. 2008-087

*1 June 17, 2008

The Honorable R. Gunner DeLay
Prosecuting Attorney
Twelfth Judicial District
Sebastian County Courthouse
35 South Sixth Street
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72901-2421

Dear Mr. DeLay:

You have requested approval, pursuant to the Interlocal Cooperation Act (A.C.A. § 25-20-101 - 108 (Repl. 2002 and Supp. 2007)) of a proposed agreement ("the Agreement") between Sebastian County, Arkansas and Arch Ford Education Service Cooperative ("Arch Ford"), the stated purpose of which is the "obtain substantial savings ... through volume purchasing." Agreement at 1.

In my opinion, the Agreement is not governed by the Interlocal Cooperation Act. Rather, I believe there is separate, specific authority in the statutes for the Agreement. Accordingly, my approval of the Agreement is not necessary.

As stated in the Agreement, the Arkansas Purchasing Law (A.C.A. § 19-11-201 *et seq.* (Repl. 1998 and Supp. 2007)) provides authority for the services contemplated by the Agreement. The Agreement states: "Authority for such services is granted under Arkansas Code 19-11-206, 19-11-230, 19-11-249, 19-11-250, 19-11-251 and [Arkansas] Code 6-13-102." I believe this statement is generally correct. [FN1] In my opinion, A.C.A. § 19-11-249 is the clearest authority for the Agreement. This subsection provides:

Any public procurement unit may either participate in, sponsor, conduct, or administer a *cooperative purchasing agreement for the acquisition of any commodities or services with one (1) or more public procurement units* or external procurement activities in accordance with an agreement entered into between the participants. Such cooperative purchasing may include, but is not limited to, joint or multiparty contracts between public procurement units and open-ended state public procurement unit contracts which are made available to local public procurement units. (Emphasis added).

The definitions pertaining to the type of agreement contemplated by this statute are found in A.C.A. § 19-11-206 (Supp. 2007). This section defines "cooperative procurement" as "procurement conducted by, or on behalf of, more than one (1) public procurement unit or by a public procurement unit with an external procurement activity." *Id.* at (1). A "[l]ocal public procurement unit" under this statute means, *inter alia*, "[a]ny county, city, town, state agency, and any other subdivision of the state or public agency thereof[.]" A.C.A. § 19-11-206(3)(A) (Supp. 2007). [FN2] Sebastian County clearly falls within this definition. Regarding Arch Ford, I note that my immediate predecessor had occasion to determine that the definition embraces an education service cooperative in its capacity as an "agency" of a political subdivision. Op. Att'y Gen. 2006-042 (regarding the Dawson Education Cooperative of Arkadelphia, Arkansas). I agree with that analysis, which would apply equally to Arch Ford.

*2 Accordingly, it seems clear that A.C.A. § 19-11-249 authorizes an agreement such as the one you have submitted. Indeed, my predecessor observed the following regarding this subsection: A.C.A. § 19-11-249 appears to stand as independent authority for engaging in "cooperative purchasing" as contemplated therein. This provision was enacted in 1979 as part of the original Arkansas Purchasing Law (A.C.A. § 19-11-201 *et seq.*), and there is no indication that any law other than the Purchasing Law governs with respect to "cooperative purchasing agreements" entered under § 19-11-249. Op. 2006-042 at 8.

The Agreement is therefore distinct, in my view, from the type of "joint or cooperative undertaking" authorized under the general authority of the Interlocal Cooperation Act. *Cf.* Op. Att'y Gen. 1997-413 (declining to apply the Interlocal Cooperation Act to an agreement, entered pursuant to A.C.A. § 26-74-2 14(b)(2) (Repl. 1997), establishing a sales tax distribution formula other than per capita) and Op. Att'y Gen. 93-134 (same regarding an agreement concerning the distribution of payments received in lieu of taxes, entered pursuant to A.C.A. § 14-164-703).

Because the Agreement is not an "Interlocal Agreement" under the Interlocal Cooperation Act, but instead is separately authorized by statute, my review and approval is unnecessary.

Assistant Attorney General Elisabeth A. Walker prepared the foregoing opinion, which I hereby approve. Sincerely,

Dustin McDaniel
Attorney General

[FN1]. I am somewhat uncertain as to the applicability of A.C.A. §§ 19-11-250 and - 251, although it may be that these provisions will apply, depending upon the particular facts. Subsection 19-11-250 authorizes agreements with respect to "commodities *belonging to or produced by* another public procurement unit or external procurement activity" (Emphasis added.) Subsection 19-11-251 authorizes agreements "for the *intergovernmental use* of commodities" (Emphasis added.) For the definition of "public procurement unit" and "external procurement activity," see A.C.A. § 19-11-206 (Supp. 2007).

[FN2]. "External procurement activity" means "any buying organization not located in this state which, if located in this state, would qualify as a public procurement unit." A.C.A. § 19-1 1-206(2)(A) (Supp. 2007).

The Interlocal Purchasing System (TIPS/TAPS) Arkansas City, County, State Agency or Government Entity **Membership Form**

(Interlocal Agreement and Board Resolution Documents are not required for the above listed entities)

RECITALS

WHEREAS A.C.A. §19-11-249 Any public procurement unit may either participate in, sponsor, conduct, or administer a cooperative purchasing agreement for the acquisition of any commodities or services with one (1) or more public procurement units or external procurement activities in accordance with an agreement entered into between the participants. Such cooperative purchasing may include, but is not limited to, joint or multiparty contracts between public procurement units and open-ended state public procurement unit contracts which are made available to local public procurement units. Because the Agreement is not an "Interlocal Agreement" under the Interlocal Cooperative Act, but instead separately authorized by statute, Attorney General approval is unnecessary nor is an Interlocal Agreement. See Ark. Op. Atty. Gen. No. 2008-087, 2008 WL 2487900 (Ark. A.G.) dated June 17, 2008.

GENERAL INFORMATION FORM

Entity Name _____

Primary Contact Name

Secondary Contact Name

Street Address

Secondary Contact's Telephone No.

City, State Zip

Secondary Contact's Email Address

Telephone Number

Fax Number

Primary Contact's Email Address

INSTRUCTIONS

Please fax this Member Information Sheet to TIPS/TAPS at 866-839-8472.



Cooperative Purchasing For Arkansas FAQ

1) What is TIPS?

TIPS is an acronym for The Interlocal Purchasing System. TIPS is a national purchasing cooperative that offers access to competitively procured purchasing contracts to its membership. TIPS is housed at and managed by the lead agency, Region 8 Education Service Center, located in Pittsburg, Texas.

2) Who can become a member of TIPS?

The benefits of using TIPS are available to Education, Government and Non-Profit Agencies. This includes but is not limited to: K-12 School Districts, Charter Schools, Private Schools, Colleges, Universities, State Agencies, Municipalities, Townships, Emergency Service Districts, Park Districts, Churches, Charitable Organizations, Counties and other entities with legislated purchasing/bidding requirements.

3) How much does it cost to be a member of TIPS?

Membership in The Interlocal Purchasing System is FREE with no purchasing obligation.

4) How does my organization benefit from using a purchasing cooperative like TIPS?

Membership in a purchasing cooperative offers the following benefits:

- Access to competitively procured contracts with quality vendors
- Savings of time and financial resources necessary to fulfill bid requirements
- Assistance with the purchasing process by qualified TIPS staff
- Access to pricing based on "national" high-profile contracts

5) Where are TIPS solicitations advertised?

TIPS solicitations (RFP's/RFQ's) are advertised for 2 consecutive weeks in the Pittsburg Gazette in Pittsburg, Texas as well as on a national scope in the USA Today. Copies of these advertisements are also available to view on the TIPS website.

6) How does my organization become a member of TIPS?

The TIPS website offers step-by-step instructions on how to become a member. The process is fast, and it's free. It is, however, specific to state or organizational guidelines. Please visit this link to access the membership instructions and documents: <https://www.tips-usa.com/membershipconditions.cfm>

7) How can my business become an Awarded Vendor to sell products or services through TIPS?

The only way a vendor can sell products or services through the TIPS cooperative is to be awarded a contract by TIPS. This can only happen when a vendor responds to a TIPS solicitation (RFP/RFQ) for their specific product or service and meets the scoring requirements to receive an awarded contract from the Region 8 ESC Board of Directors (which serves as the governing board of TIPS). For further information, please visit the following link: <https://www.tips-usa.com/becomebidder.cfm>

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CURRENT/UPCOMING RFP'S

Current Postings:

- #170101 -Assistive Technology Goods & Services
- #170102 -Comprehensive Facilities Management & Services
Postings Close on 2/17/17
- #170103 -Energy Savings Performance Contracts (RFQ)
Closes on 2/24/17
- #170104 -Janitorial and Sanitation Supplies & Services
Closes on 3/10/17

February 2nd Postings:

- RCSP#170201 -Trades, Labor and Materials (JOC)
- #170202 -Multi-Tiered Private Collaboration Network
- #170203 -Security Systems, Products & Services
- #170204 -Sports, Activity Equipment and Related Services
- RCSP#170205 -Synthetic or Natural Sports Fields, Courts or Track (JOC)
Postings Close on 3/17/17

Coming in March:

Pavement/Asphalt (JOC), Furniture and Technology



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1. Go to the TIPS ebid website: <https://tips.ionwave.net>
2. Register your company and select any categories that fit your company's commodities
3. Submit your registration and await approval

HOW TO SUBMIT A BID PROPOSAL

Step 2: Once your registration is approved, monitor your emails for notifications of bid opportunities to submit a proposal.

1. Access the TIPS ebid website <https://tips.ionwave.net> and log in with the username and password previously created
2. Click on the applicable bid # to take you to that category's bid information page
3. Click on the "ATTACHMENTS" tab to download the bid forms required to submit your proposal/view bid specs
4. Click on "ATTRIBUTES" tab to provide required information about your company
5. Click on "RESPONSE ATTACHMENTS" to upload complete documents
6. Digitally sign and submit proposal on the "RESPONSE SUBMISSION" tab

AWARDED CONTRACT PROCESS

- ★ Submitted proposals are reviewed by a committee and scored using the pre-determined rubric included in the original solicitation instructions.
- ★ Proposals must receive a minimum score of 80 points to be recommended for an award to the lead agency, Region 8 Education Service Center Board of Directors.
- ★ If your company is awarded a TIPS contract, you will receive an official TIPS Award Letter along with a Vendor Packet of TIPS education, sales & marketing strategies and best practices.





HOW TO MAKE A PURCHASE THROUGH TIPS

1. Visit www.TIPS-USA.com

- ❖ For a list of categories, choose “All Contracts”
- ❖ For a list of awarded vendors, choose “All Vendors”

Helpful Hint: Use the search bar located at the top right to search by company name, item or service description

2. Contact TIPS vendor for a quote.

- Be sure to tell them you are requesting a “TIPS Quote”

3. Issue purchase order!

- ❖ Make PO payable to the TIPS Vendor
- ❖ Please note vendor contract number on PO
- ❖ If using an awarded vendor’s reseller, PO should be made out to Vendor / Reseller

4. Go to vendor’s profile on the TIPS website for PO submission instructions specific to each vendor.

- ❖ If vendor is not “Automated”, you will send to tipspo@tips-usa.com.
 - TIPS will verify purchase order against vendor’s contract then forward to vendor for processing. Member will receive confirmation email with printable confirmation letter.
- ❖ If vendor is “Automated”, you will send directly to them.
 - Email address for PO’s will be noted at top of vendor’s profile.
 - Automated vendors are TIPS awarded vendors that have accepted responsibility for processing and reporting all TIPS member’s PO’s.

5. Payment is made directly to the vendor.

Need Help? Contact TIPS: 866-839-8477 or tips@tips-usa.com