

- (1) Colleges shall, as the circumstances require, publicly solicit the submittal of competitive offers from at least three (3) sources, when purchasing services or commodities exceeding the amount as specified in Section 287.017, Florida Statutes, for **Category Three**. Solicitations of competitive offers are defined as:
 - (a) "Competitive sealed bids", "competitive sealed proposals" or "competitive sealed replies", means the process of receiving competitive offers transmitted by secured electronic means or written bids, proposals, or replies.
 - (b) "Competitive solicitations" or "solicitations" means an invitation to bid, a request for proposal, request for quote, or an invitation to negotiate.

Boards of trustees may adopt smaller amounts beyond which to require the solicitation of competitive offers. The college president or designee reserves the right to reject any or all offers submitted in response to the college's solicitation, and/or solicit new offers as deemed in the college's best interest. When accepting responsive offers to the college's solicitations, colleges shall accept the lowest or best responsive offer. If other than the lowest or best offer meeting specifications is accepted, the college shall maintain a public record of the justification. Recommendation for awards not exceeding the Category Five threshold as specified in Section 287.017, Florida Statutes, may be approved or rejected by the president or a designee if such authority is delegated in policy adopted by the board of trustees. Recommendation for awards exceeding the Category Five threshold as specified in Section 287.017, Florida Statutes, shall be approved or rejected by the board of trustees.

- (2) **Exceptions** to the requirement to solicit competitive offers are:
 - (a) **Educational** tests, textbooks, **instructional materials and equipment**, films, filmstrips, video tapes, disc or tape recordings or similar audio-visual materials, graphic and computer based instructional software.
 - (b) **Library books**, reference books, periodicals, and other library materials and supplies.
 - (c) Purchases at the unit or contract prices established through **competitive solicitations by any unit of government established by law or buying cooperatives**.
 - (d) Food.
 - (e) Services or commodities available only from a **single or sole source**.
 - (f) **Professional services**, including, but not limited to, artistic services, instructional services, health services, academic program reviews, lectures by individuals, attorneys, legal services, auditors, and management consultants.
 - (g) **Information technology** resources defined as all forms of technology used to create, process, store, transmit, exchange and use information in various forms of voice, video and data, and shall also include the personnel costs and contracts that provide direct information technology support consistent with each individual college's information technology plan.
 - (h) Single source procurements for purposes of economy or efficiency in **standardization** of materials or equipment.
 - (i) Items for resale.
- (3) The college president or designee, may waive solicitation requirements in **emergencies** when there is an imminent threat to students, employees, or public safety or in cases when necessary to prevent damage to the facilities caused by an unexpected circumstance in accordance with rules established by the local board of trustees.
- (4) When a board of trustees solicits the submittal of competitive offers and **only one** responsive offer is submitted, the college may purchase such products or service under the best terms it can negotiate.