

The Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services (ITS) creates Express Products Lists (EPLs) for certain levels of technology products and services in order to expedite purchases while assuring discounted costs and full compliance with Mississippi purchasing law. By Mississippi law, state agencies and Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) are under ITS purview for their technology purchases. K-12 schools, community colleges, and local governments are considered “Governing Authorities” and are not under ITS purview. However, ITS makes its procurement services available to all state public governmental and educational entities who request them. All categories of ITS customers may use the ITS Express Products Lists (EPLs) up to the dollar limitation described on each EPL. There is no charge for using the EPLs. If a customer needs to exceed the EPL dollar limitation, that customer would need to come to ITS for additional approval and, in most cases, there will be an associated staff processing charge from ITS.

Customers using the EPLs must follow all EPL guidelines. In particular, please review:

- The “Instructions for Use” that accompany each EPL can be found with the Adobe version of the EPL. To access all EPLs, go to <http://www.its.ms.gov/EPL.shtml> . It is important to use “EPL Best Practices” in order to get the lowest and best pricing. Your written quotations from EPL vendors must be tracked to the pricing published on the EPL. At a minimum, you must include a copy of the EPL showing each product being purchased and, if applicable, a written explanation from the vendor for any purchase involving substitution, as described in the “Instructions for Use.”
- The dollar limitation for using the EPL is shown in the “Instructions for Use,” and each EPL has a separate limit.
- The “Per Project” definition: Each EPL limit is “per project.” See the Procurement Handbook on the ITS Website, <http://dsitspe01.its.ms.gov/its/procman.nsf/TOC4?OpenView> , Section 005-600. If you are dividing a dollar amount above the EPL limit among several “projects,” you need to be able to justify in your project file that these are separate projects. These are suggested guidelines. The Office of the State Auditor is the approving agency for your decision.
- “Setting a Manufacturer Standard”, Section 019-030 of the Procurement Handbook. If you send in a request to ITS for a specific manufacturer or product, you need to provide documentation to justify that standard.
- If the EPL quote chosen is not the low cost, substantiate your choice by detailed scoring, evaluation, and justification.

ITS has a process called “EPL Planned Purchase” that customers may use in order to exceed the EPL limit. The EPL Planned Purchase process is described in Section 013-080 of the Procurement Handbook, <http://dsitspe01.its.ms.gov/its/procman.nsf/TOC4?OpenView> .

- Submit your request to exceed the EPL limits using the “Planned Purchase Request Form” from the ITS website: <http://www.its.ms.gov/procurementforms.shtml> . You may also submit planned purchase requests through the On-Line Procurement Request system, accessed from the ITS website.

- Attach the written quotes from the EPL vendors. For acquisitions up to \$1,000,000, attach a minimum of two quotes from EPL vendors. Above \$1,000,000, attach a minimum of three quotes from EPL vendors.
- Include a printout of the EPL page(s) containing the product(s) to be acquired. Verify that the price on the quote from the awarded vendor is the same or less than the EPL pricing.
- If quotes requested were brand specific, include documentation on how the manufacturer standard was established.
- If the quote chosen was not the low cost, provide substantial justification for the selection.
- Include a copy of your current technology plan or ensure that your plan is already on file and up to date with the ITS Strategic Services Division. For plans already approved by ITS, include the project number in the Planned Purchase Request Form. It is important that the plan reference the project in question. The quantity and cost estimate in your technology plan should be in the range of what you are requesting.
 - Agencies use the ITS online planning system:
<https://www.appsd.ms.gov/ITPlan> .
 - K-12 School Districts should submit a copy of their plan filed with the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) to ITS.
 - Other non-agency entities should submit their plan in the format required by their regulatory agent.
 - You must update the technology plan you submitted to ITS if the project was not included or if the scope of the project has increased. Agencies must use the ITS online planning system to update plans. Non-agencies may update with written “hand-edits” or by attaching an addendum to your plan.
 - You may also choose to include the grant, E-Rate Funding Commitment Letter, etc. that more fully describes a special project.
- Send all the above plus any related documentation to ITS in any of these formats:
 - Email (scan to PDF or send Word format attachments) to projects@its.ms.gov
 - FAX to ITS at 601-354-6016
 - Mail, overnight or hand deliver to ITS at 301 North Lamar Street, Suite 508, Jackson, MS 39201

Expect the following from ITS:

- An initial email acknowledging receipt of the project will be sent after the project has been logged in, but there may be a delay in assigning the project to an ITS technology consultant depending on the queue of current projects.
- Once assigned, the technology consultant will contact the customer contact shown on the “Planned Purchase Request Form” and work through any additional needed documentation.
- Once your technology plan has been reviewed and approved by the ITS Strategic Services Division, you will receive an automated message via e-mail. (Note: this e-mail is not your authority to exceed the EPL Limits – it is only the approval of your long range project plan.)

- Once the project is approved to exceed the EPL Limits, you will receive the following:
 - *A letter under the signature of ITS Executive Director, David Litchliter, showing your request to exceed the limits is approved, along with a Planned Purchase Tracking Form.
 - *A “CP-1” Acquisition Approval document that gives you authority to purchase.
 - An invoice from ITS billing the time spent by the consultant on your project.
- *Retain in purchase file for audit purposes

ITS Contact Information

- For questions about long range technology plans, contact either Kevin Gray (601-359-5221, Kevin.gray@its.ms.gov) or Rhonda Allen (601-359-2655, Rhonda.allen@its.ms.gov) in the ITS Strategic Services Division.
- For questions about the EPL Planned Purchase process, contact the ITS Procurement Help Desk, 601-576-HELP (4357), or isshelp@its.ms.gov.