



Buy the Way

COMMBUYS Celebrates 5th Anniversary!

On March 24, the Operational Services Division (OSD) commemorated the fifth anniversary of the launch of [COMMBUYS](#), the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' online procurement platform, by looking back at the successes achieved during the past five years.

In addition to attaining these significant milestones, we are happy to report that, to date, 343 cities and towns in Massachusetts have active COMMBUYS accounts and several quasi-public agencies, including the MBTA, the Massachusetts Gaming Commission, and MassHousing, among others, are using the tool for their bid posting and purchasing activities. This is a tremendous accomplishment, since there are no requirements for these organizations to utilize COMMBUYS.

Gary Lambert, Assistant Secretary for Operational Services, shared his views of the successes achieved over the past five years. "It is rewarding to see continuous year over year growth in the use of COMMBUYS. Reaching \$2 Billion in gross Purchase Order values is a tremendous milestone, but we have plenty of room to grow. We are constantly looking to the customer experience to find new ways to attract more buyers and vendors to COMMBUYS."

Gary continued, "The data captured in COMMBUYS gives us insights into what customers want, what businesses are there to meet those needs, valuable information about how those needs are being met, and



what gaps we need to address to continue to try and exceed our customers' expectations of OSD. As use of COMMBUYS further expands, our knowledge and understanding of what and how our customers conduct their purchasing and procurements also expands, which is to the benefit of all," Gary concluded.

Chris Kennedy, Chief Operating Officer of Periscope Holdings, Inc., the COMMBUYS software as a service (SaaS) provider, played a key role in the implementation and deployment of COMMBUYS and he spoke about OSD's approach to COMMBUYS being a whole eco-system

that supports executive departments, local government, schools, and non-profits.

"What separates OSD from other organizations was the decision to establish the Local Government Enablement Team, which is solely focused on engaging municipal organizations in the use of COMMBUYS and Statewide Contracts through training and

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**Official Newsletter of the
Operational Services Division**
March 2019



Training for Buyers

Introduction to Statewide Contracts and COMMBUYS

April 17 (Boston)

COMMBUYS Purchasing

April 18 (Boston)

COMMBUYS Purchasing for Eligible Non-Profits

April 30 (Webinar)

Essentials of State Procurement

April 30 (Boston)

Introduction to Statewide Contracts and COMMBUYS

May 2 (Boston)

COMMBUYS PunchOut Catalog and Line Item Catalog Ordering

May 2 (Webinar)

[Click here to see the full calendar.](#)

Training for Businesses

Connecting Your Business to the Commonwealth

April 3 (Somerville)

SDO Pre-Certification Workshop

April 10 (Somerville)

Demystifying the RFR: Understanding the Importance of the Request for Response

April 11 (Westfield)

SDO Pre-Certification Workshop

April 17 (Springfield)

Supplier Diversity Plan (SDP) Overview for Bidders and Prime Contractors

April 18 (Webinar)

Supplier Diversity Plan (SDP) Overview for Certified Businesses

April 18 (Webinar)

COMMBUYS for Awarded Statewide Contract Vendors

April 23 (Westfield)

[Click here to see the full calendar.](#)

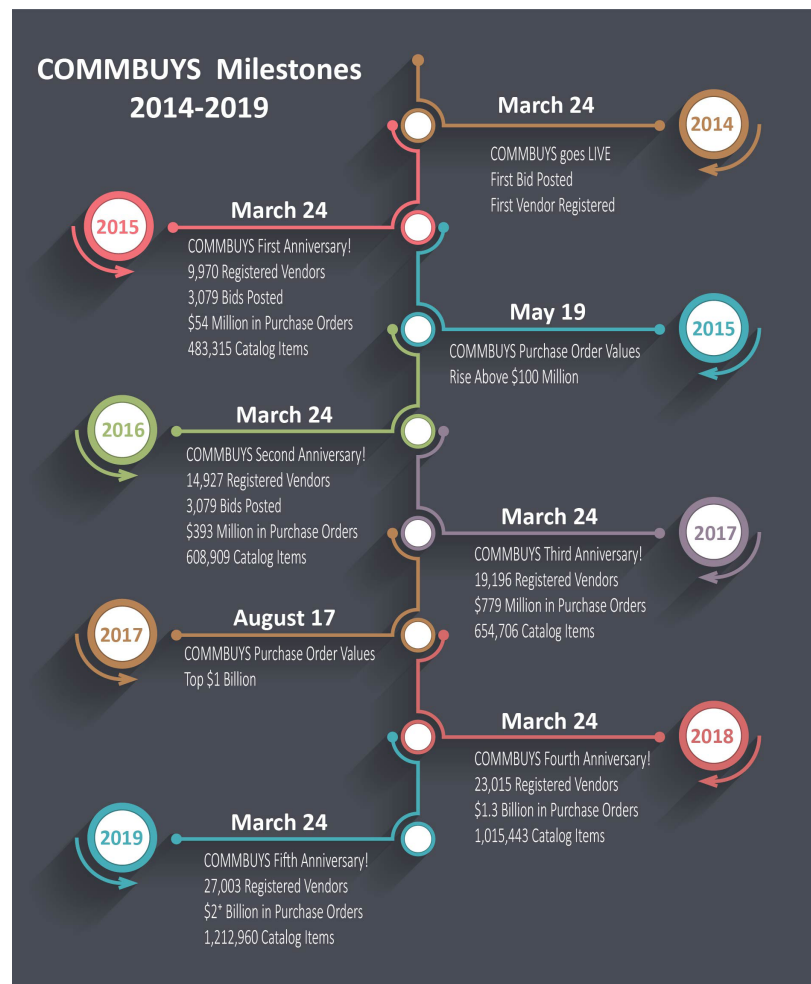
COMMBUYS Celebrates 5th Anniversary! (continued)

continuous outreach. This team does great work and, in my experience, no other state procurement team has taken such a proactive approach to reaching and working with their customers," he said.

Chris also discussed the partnership Periscope developed with OSD. "We realized from the earliest stages that we had to be successful together. Working with OSD and Massachusetts has been a very

good experience and it's a constructive relationship," said Chris.

He added, "OSD continually pushes us to do better, to look for the next best thing that would be good for OSD's varied customers. We consider Massachusetts as a model for our other clients. We work with OSD to test software updates and changes, but we also work on improving COMMBUYS operationally so that we can serve all government entities."



Save the Date — OSD Conference 2019

When: November 7, 2019

Where: DCU Worcester, MA

Who should attend: Participation is limited to Public Sector Chief Procurement Officers (CPOs) and their key purchasing decision-makers and Statewide Contract Vendors.

The **OSD Conference 2019** is a one-day educational and networking event that will provide opportunities for peer-to-peer learning, sharing solutions and best practices, as well as frequent interactions between key buyers and statewide contractors on a range of purchasing-related topics offered in a variety of educational formats. Additional details coming soon!

STATEWIDE CONTRACT UPDATES | MARCH 2019

[Procurement
Schedule](#)

[Statewide Contract
Reference Guide](#)

[COMMBUYS](#)

[Statewide Contract
User Guides](#)

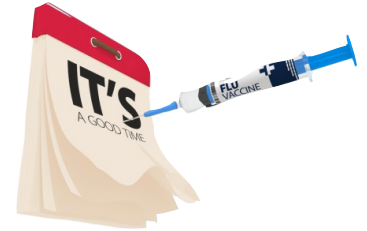
[Save\\$mart](#)

Protecting Your City, Town, or School Against Influenza Plan now for the 2019-2020 Flu Season

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) asserts that, “a yearly flu vaccine is the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses.”

Cities, towns, and schools considering large-scale vaccinations as a bulwark against influenza outbreaks may pre-book their supply of flu vaccine for **2019-2020 flu season** now. There are several reasons to act today:

- Each year only a finite amount of influenza vaccine is produced;
- Reserve your 2019-2020 supply now to ensure availability;
- Payment for the vaccine is not due until delivery later this year.



The five vendors on Statewide Contract [MED53](#) are ready to address your future flu vaccine needs. Locate additional information in the [Contract User Guide](#), as well as under each vendor's MBPO in [COMMBUYS](#) (select Contract & Bid Search > Contracts/Blankets > Enter MED53 in the Contract/Blanket Description field).

Contact [Gustav Pearson](#), Contract Manager, if you have questions at 617-720-3101.

Considering an Office Flooring Project?

The Statewide Contract for flooring offers a wide selection of products, competitive pricing, turn-key service option, and comprehensive environmental specifications.

Things to Know

- Fourteen (14) contractors support statewide coverage. Refer to the Awarded Contractor Spreadsheet in [COMMBUYS](#);
- Products offered at percentage off MSRP/list price. Locate price files on each vendor's MBPO in [COMMBUYS](#) (select Contract/Blankets > Enter FAC98 in the Contract/Blanket Description field);
- Services available at percent markup over prevailing wage. Remember: labor is capped at \$50K;
- Turn-key service option at no additional charge – includes room measurement, assistance with flooring selection, detailed price quote, and installation. Materials/supplies contractors must be an authorized dealer/distributor for flooring products provided;
- Review the environmental specifications/certifications associated with the contract in the RFR document in [COMMBUYS](#); vendors' price files detail specs by product offering;
- All products must carry a valid commercial warranty and warranties must be clearly stated by vendors before buyers place orders;
- When requested in statement of work specifications, vendors must conduct a site inspection at no charge.

Refer to the [FAC98](#) Contract User Guide for additional information or contact [Katherine Morse](#) at 617-720-3153.



COMMBUYS

Help Desk Assistance
Questions about COMMBUYS?
Contact us for help.

1-888-627-8283
COMMBUYS@mass.gov

Staff are available
8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET,
Monday through Friday.

STATEWIDE CONTRACT UPDATES | MARCH 2019



Take the PRF57 Temporary Help Survey!
Focus Group Participants & Sourcing Team
Members Needed for Successor Contract

Have you purchased from the PRF57 Enterprise Temporary Help Services Statewide Contract over the last 12 to 18 months? If so, we would like feedback about your purchasing experience.

The Temporary Help Contract will be rebid over the next several months and understanding our users' past buying experiences is an important component of the Strategic Sourcing process.

Link to the [survey](#). Please share your feedback by Thursday, April 11, 2019.

Other Opportunities to Share Your Temporary Help Requirements

Would you be interested in participating in a brief temporary help focus group? Would you like to assist in the development of the new Temporary Help Statewide Contract?

Express interest to Contract Manager [Ann-Maria Bennett](#).

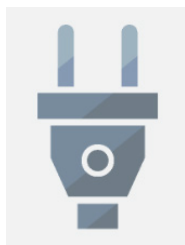
World Trade Organization/Government Procurement Agreement Thresholds

In response to recent inquiries, we are providing information about World Trade Organization/Government Procurement Agreement (WTO/GPA) U.S. dollar thresholds, which were last set in December 2017, for the 2018-2019 calendar years.



The WTO/GPA applies to all procurements for goods and/or services, including human and social services, currently valued at more than \$492,000 (US). Thresholds are generally adjusted every two years.

Executive Department goods and services bids that exceed the \$492,000 (US) threshold must be advertised for a minimum of 40 days' advance notice pursuant to the WTO Treaty on Government Procurement. Departments may find additional information in the [Conducting Best Value Procurement Handbook](#). COMMBUYS bid posting guidance is provided in the [How to Create a World Trade Organization \(WTO\) Notice of Intent to Post](#) job aid.

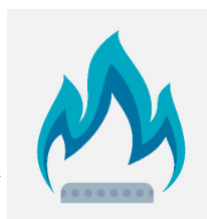


Act Now to Get Statewide Contract Pricing for Electricity, Natural Gas

Enel X North America, Inc., working on behalf of the Operational Services Division (OSD) under the direction of Contract Manager, Michael Woods, is preparing to go out to bid for successor Statewide Contracts for Electricity ([ENE43](#)) and Natural Gas ([ENE44](#)). The anticipated start date for these contracts is September 1, 2019.

Eligible entities interested in learning more about these statewide energy contracts or joining the respective aggregations in advance of the upcoming procurements should contact Enel X:

- Jon Harvey, Public Sector Procurement Manager
703-795-8927 / jonathan.harvey@enel.com; or
- Jarred Clements, Public Sector Procurement Manager
774-836-8772 / jarred.clements@enel.com.



For contract-related questions, contact Michael Woods at 617-720-3191 or michael.woods@mass.gov.

Six Vendors on GRO38 Prime Grocers Contract

OSD is pleased to announce that the GRO38 contract now has six vendors to meet buyers' grocery needs: B&B Trading Corp., Global Foods, National Food Group, Inc., New England Food, Performance Group, and US Foods. Canned goods, cereals, meats, frozen foods, pasta, as well as organic and non-organic vegetables, are among the products offered through the [GRO38](#) Prime Grocers Statewide Contract.

Locate price sheets for each vendor in [COMMBUYS](#): Select Contract & Bid Search > Contracts/Blankets > Enter GRO38 in the Contract/Blanket Description field.

Refer to the [GRO38](#) Contract User Guide for additional details, including Prompt Pay and Volume Discount opportunities. Reach the Contract Manager, [Betty Fernandez](#), at 617-720-3133.



Locate Trades Vendors in a Flash

New Enhancement Added

Almost universally, buyers are wowed by the [Trades Index](#)!

This tool makes it quick and easy to see which vendors – across 27 Trades categories – are on a Trades Statewide Contract. Simply select your county and desired Trades category from the dropdowns and the Index returns a list of awarded vendors, along with their contact and pricing information. The Trades Index, located at mass.gov/trades, is updated weekly to include our newly awarded vendors.



Try the [Trades Index](#)!

User dropdown menu to select coverage COUNTY >>>>	Select County	
User dropdown menu to select TRADE CATEGORY >>>>	Select Trade Category	
Vendor Name	Vendor Contact Info	% Markup Prevailing Wage

Suspended Vendor Information Added

On the occasion when OSD needs to suspend a vendor’s contract, the Trades Index will be updated to reflect that status. In this instance, the following notation will appear after the vendor’s business name: Suspended as of: [date]. Note that buyers should not enter into Statewide Contract agreements with vendors that are under suspension. If circumstances necessitating their suspension are rectified and the vendor is reinstated to the contract, the suspension status will be removed from the Index. Vendor suspension is apparent in [COMMBUYS](#), as well: suspended vendors are removed from the contract record.

Refer contract-specific questions to OSD Contract Managers (information also provided in the Trades Index). Contact the [COMMBUYS Help Desk](#) with questions about COMMBUYS or using the Trades Index at 888-MA-State (627-8283).

Spring/Summer Training Schedule Posted – Sign Up!

OSD’s training schedules for [Buyers](#) and [Vendors](#) are updated through September 2019, making this an opportune time to review what’s available, assess your needs, and sign up for training! Be sure to review our complete curriculum of buyer and vendor training classes and schedules.

OSD offers *free* classroom-based training and webinars, online webcasts, and job aids to serve the needs of our buyer and vendor communities. Our live classes are offered in various locations throughout the Commonwealth.

If you consider the time, effort, and, ultimately, the expense it takes to send staff to training, on-site training may be a practical solution to introduce staff to new material and fill knowledge gaps. OSD’s requirements for buyer on-site training are simple: you provide at least eight staff members and the meeting space, and we’ll do the rest – even merging course topics to meet the specific needs of your organization!



Contact OSDTraining@mass.gov to learn more.

Meet OSD’s Local Government Enablement Team

Eric Murphy, Jackie Abbott, Patricia Burke, and Jennifer Forsey — the OSD Local Government Team — will be attending two upcoming events. Stop by the OSD exhibit table and say hello!

Mass School Library Association Annual Conference

March 31 and April 1
Sheraton Framingham Hotel & Conference Center, Framingham

[Register to Attend](#)

Mass. Chiefs of Police (MCOPA) Annual Trade Show

April 3
Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel, Marlborough

[Register to Attend](#)



OSD’s Local Government Enablement Team, from left: Account Managers Jennifer Forsey, Patricia Burke, Jackie Abbott, and Manager Eric Murphy.

This information is provided as a courtesy and should not be construed as an endorsement by OSD.



[Sign-up for OSD
email communications!](#)

About OSD

The Operational Services Division (OSD) administers the procurement process for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Executive Agencies by establishing Statewide Contracts for commonly purchased goods and services. OSD's mission is to create and promote dynamic programs and services that anticipate and fulfill our customers' needs. Our operational and oversight activities facilitate and guide the evaluation, acquisition, management, and disposition of goods and services. We strive to deliver a personalized customer experience by creating a climate of communication and cooperation and leveraging innovative business techniques.

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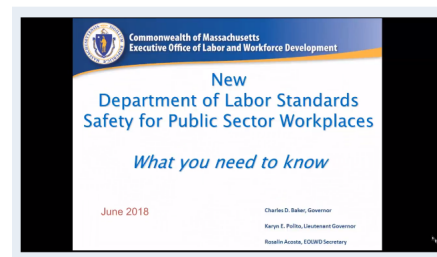
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Connecting Public Sector Workplace Safety to Statewide Contracts

On March 9, 2018, Chapter 44 of the Acts of 2018, An Act Relative to Standards of Employee Safety, was enacted. The law amends G.L. c. 149, § 6 ½, updates and clarifies employee safety requirements in public sector workplaces, and will be enforced by the [Department of Labor Standards](#) (DLS). The law took effect on February 1, 2019.

DLS offers a [webcast](#) describing what public sector employers should know and has published information on their [website](#). Refer questions to the Department of Labor Standards at 508-616-0461 or safepublicworkplace@mass.gov.



Fulfill Many Workplace Safety Requirements with Statewide Contracts

The Operational Services Division is working with DLS to ensure our buyer community is aware of this regulation update and to highlight resources on Statewide Contract that support compliance. A few examples include:

- Facilities Contracts ([FAC](#)), particularly Maintenance, Repair, and Operations products. Be aware that tool and equipment purchases may include safety training;
- Trades services ([TRD](#)) when organizations lack the required in-house expertise;
- Professional Services Contracts ([PRF](#)), providing engineering and training services, for example;
- Safety products ([FIR/HLS](#)); and
- Medical safety products ([HSP](#)).

Our [Contract User Guides](#) outline what is offered, awarded vendors, and contract usage guidance. Refer contract-specific questions to the Contract Manager listed on each Guide or contact the [COMMBUYS Help Desk](#) for general inquiries at 888-MA-State (627-8283).

Additionally, OSD offers an [Introduction to Statewide Contracts and COMMBUYS](#) course. The [Buyer Training schedule](#) provides available dates and times. Send Training questions to OSDTraining@mass.gov.

Four Opportunities to Learn about the State's Procurement Process and Business Programs

The Operational Services Division offers a free class that outlines the state's goods and services procurement process, as well as introduces small and diverse business programs that may boost your company's marketability.

Choose from four upcoming classes: Lawrence, Somerville, Springfield, and Worcester.

[Sign up](#) to attend a *Connecting Your Business to the Commonwealth* class.

