



OPERATIONAL SERVICES DIVISION

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

OSD Booklet

Engaging Public Buyers and Vendors of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts



This informational guide describes the programs and services provided by each unit of the Operational Services Division



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About OSD

The Operational Services Division (OSD) is an oversight agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts within the Executive Office for Administration and Finance. OSD's operational and oversight activities facilitate and guide the evaluation, acquisition, management, and disposal of goods and services, providing government organizations access to a wide range of solutions, and working with businesses to fulfill public purchaser needs and grow the business economy.

OSD is comprised of several units that administer a broad range of activities, including Category Management, Climate and Sustainability, the Surplus Property Program, Special Education Pricing, and the Local Government Enablement Team, among others. This reference guide provides descriptions of all OSD units and the services offered.

Our Mission

The Operational Services Division's mission is to build deep and lasting relationships with the partners we work with, focusing on the needs of agencies and local governments, and opening doors for business partners. OSD strives to find smart approaches to the challenges we face, showing up quickly, reliably, and attentively.

Category Management

The Category Management Unit (CMU) is responsible for establishing and managing the Commonwealth's Statewide Contracts (SWCs). Their efforts enable public buyers to efficiently procure goods and services at best value from a network of diverse businesses that are awarded contracts through an open, fair, and competitive bidding process.

Statewide Contracts offer a wide range of products and services that meet the broad needs of public buyers — from automobiles and office supplies to safety equipment and IT services. Commonwealth Executive Departments, Massachusetts' cities and towns, public school districts, housing authorities, public institutions of higher education, and out-of-state public purchasers are among the buyers that use the negotiated benefits offered through OSD's more than 100 SWCs.

Category Management Strategy

The Category Management procurement strategy groups products and services into distinct categories to optimize spending, improve efficiencies, and enhance vendor relationships. This systematic process includes:

- » Defining categories
- » Analyzing markets and customer needs
- » Developing strategies
- » Evaluating and selecting vendors
- » Implementing plans
- » Engaging buyers throughout the contract lifecycle.





How Buyers Benefit

Best Value — Each year, buyers spend billions of dollars to acquire goods and services through OSD's SWCs. These purchases provide the Commonwealth with significant purchasing power, which is leveraged to achieve best value for public buyers.

Reduced Administrative Work — OSD handles the procurement process: building market intelligence, developing the Request for Response (RFR), coordinating the evaluation of bid responses, awarding vendors, negotiating the contracts, and managing the contract to its expiration date.

Excellent Customer Service — Each OSD contract has a Category Management Team to address buyer questions and ensure vendors are meeting their contractual obligations. The OSD Help Desk also is available to assist the buyer and vendor communities.

Find Contract Resources

Statewide Contract Index — For buyers who are unsure if a product or service is available on Statewide Contract, the SWC Index provides the ability to conduct a keyword search to identify the Statewide Contract that may best meet their needs. The Index also allows for easy identification of awarded vendors and the ability to search for small and diverse vendors.

Contract User Guides — Written by OSD's Category Managers, these documents are specific to each contract and explain the type of goods or services available on the contract; provide instructions for making purchases, such as whether quotes are required; and detail awarded vendor information.

Explore the [Statewide Contract Index](#) and [Contract User Guides](#).

Climate and Sustainability

The mission of the **Climate and Sustainability Unit (CSU)** is to advance sustainability and combat climate change through strategic procurements and practices. The team is dedicated to integrating climate and environmental considerations across all stages of the procurement cycle, driving markets toward greener products and services, promoting responsible business practices, and positively influencing industries and supply chains.

Key Climate Initiatives

Strengthened RFR Language — Create an updated Standard Request for Response (RFR) template used for Statewide Contracts to strengthen climate and environmental considerations in public procurement, with a focus on vendor sustainability performance.

Climate and Environmental Practices (CEP) Form — Every Statewide Contract bid solicitation requires bidders to complete the CEP Form enabling OSD to assess vendors across four sustainability indicators — policies, practices, monitoring, and certifications. OSD uses this data to identify trends and gaps in vendor sustainability.

Statewide Contract Vendor Assessment — The CSU evaluates vendors' broader sustainability practices, which helps ensure that vendors demonstrate environmental responsibility, not only in their products and services offerings, but also across their operations.

[Explore the Climate and Sustainability Unit Initiatives.](#)



Environmentally Preferable Products Procurement Program

Established in 1995, the **Environmentally Preferable Products (EPP) Procurement Program** is administered by OSD with the support of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA) and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). The program's mission is to promote the purchase of EPPs to state agencies and local government entities throughout the Commonwealth and foster responsible purchasing choices that are cost effective and support planetary and health benefits.

The EPP Procurement Program is part of OSD's Climate and Sustainability Unit and it has a dedicated EPP Director who works with Category Management to build sustainable product and service specifications into Statewide Contract procurements, enabling the Commonwealth to offer an increasingly widening array of environmentally preferable choices. Currently, 69 Statewide Contracts feature EPPs, which consist of goods or services that:

- » Contain recycled materials
- » Minimize waste
- » Conserve energy and/or water
- » Consist of fewer toxic substances
- » Reduce the amount of toxic substances disposed or consumed
- » Protect open spaces
- » Lessen the impact to public health

Find EPP Resources

OSD's [EPP Procurement Program](#) has compiled an [EPP Products and Services Guide](#) to help buyers find thousands of sustainable products and services on Statewide Contracts.

The EPP Procurement Program offers policies, reports, case studies, and in-depth information on a variety of environmental topics, such as saving money with EPPs, commercial battery-powered landscape equipment, and remanufactured toner cartridges.

Learn more about the EPP Procurement Program at mass.gov/EPP.



COMMBUYS

COMMBUYS is the Commonwealth's eProcurement platform supporting online commerce between government purchasers and businesses. [COMMBUYS](#) supports government modernization, strengthening the public sector's buying power, expanding market opportunities for vendors, consolidating purchasing of goods and services with online bid management, and enabling data collection and analysis to drive meaningful business decisions.

With COMMBUYS, the purchasing process occurs online – reducing paperwork and time. COMMBUYS is designed for posting bid opportunities, receiving responses to bids, evaluating bid responses, and awarding contracts. COMMBUYS also provides online catalog purchasing from OSD Statewide Contracts, or Master Blanket Purchase Orders (MBPOs), as they are referred to in COMMBUYS.

Who Uses COMMBUYS?

Commonwealth Executive Departments are mandated to utilize COMMBUYS for their procurement and purchasing needs. Additionally, Commonwealth municipal organizations and other eligible entities are able to adopt the system for bidding, buying from SWCs, and locating grant opportunities.

Under certain circumstances, municipal organizations must adhere to certain Notice/Advertising Requirements which include posting those items on COMMBUYS. To learn more, visit the [Office of the Inspector General's website](#) to view the Charts on Procurement Procedures.

To compete for contracts and to conduct business with the state, vendors must be registered in COMMBUYS.



OSD Help Desk

OSD Help Desk staff are the first point of contact when buyers or the vendor community have questions about OSD's programs or services.

The OSD Help Desk provides a centralized point of contact for responsive support. Through education and the removal of roadblocks, the team empowers customers to use OSD resources and tools to find timely solutions.

Buyers often reach out to the team about selecting the right Statewide Contracts for their purchasing needs and identifying awarded vendors.

The business community frequently has questions about registering their business in COMMBUYS, finding available training classes, and responding to Statewide Contract bid opportunities.

On average, the Help Desk fields more than 1,000 phone calls and emails each month.

Contact the OSD Help Desk

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (ET), Monday-Friday

1-888-627-8283 or OSDHelpDesk@mass.gov



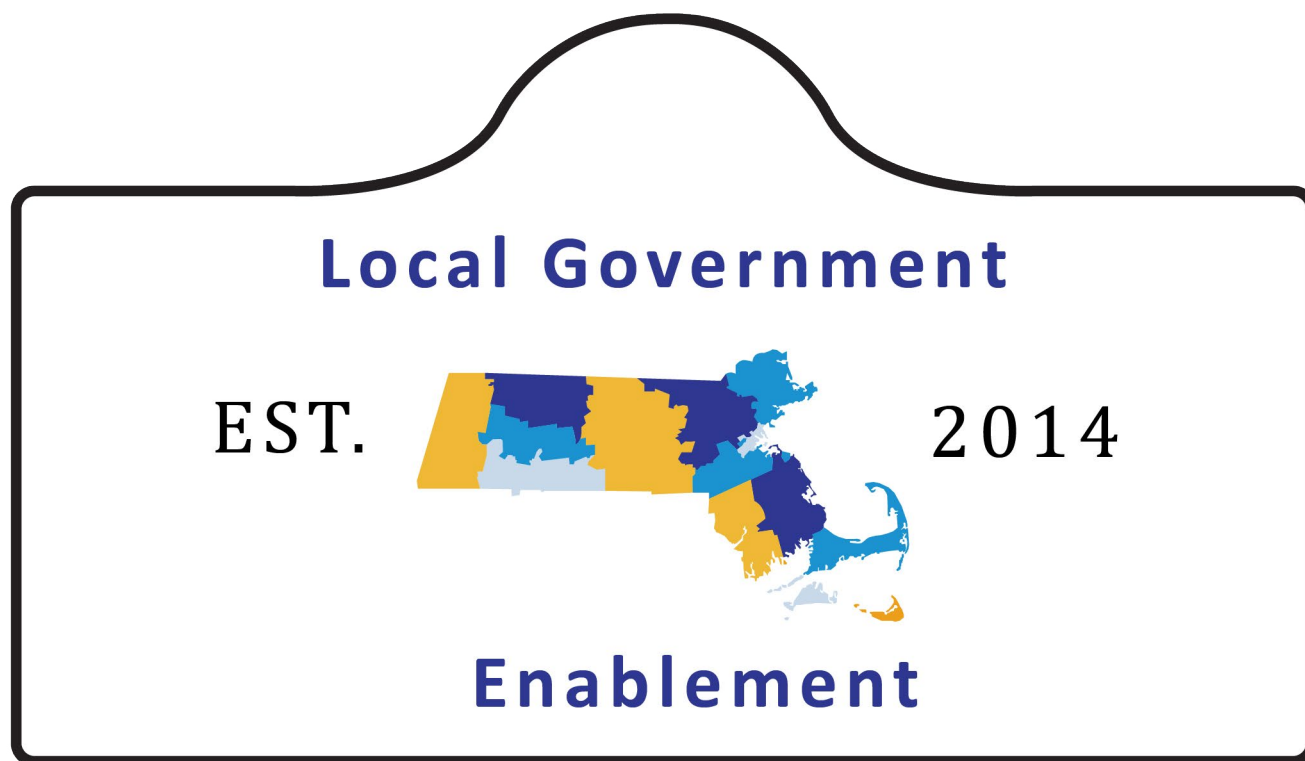
Local Government Enablement

The Local Government Enablement (LGE) team is committed to establishing long-term partnerships with municipalities and eligible entities. They serve as trusted advisors by offering innovative solutions and recommendations for modernization of procurement practices that meet compliance requirements and provide operational efficiencies. LGE provides a dedicated contact to ensure organizations have familiarity and ease of access to the selection, pricing, and added benefits negotiated by the state through OSD's Statewide Contracts.

The team understands that each municipal organization – city, town, school, housing authority, or other entity – is different and offers solutions that vary based on clients' needs. Among the services offered are:

- » Assistance in navigating OSD's wide selection of Statewide Contracts
- » Acting as intermediary to facilitate contract and vendor questions
- » Implementing COMMBUYS solutions that complement local needs, to include online purchasing, full bid management capabilities, and grant notifications
- » Constructing and implementing tailored training for municipal staff

[Explore the Local Government Purchasing website](#). Schedule a visit with a [Local Government Enablement team member](#) or call 617-720-3329.





Commonwealth Print and Mail Services

Commonwealth Print and Mail Services (CPMS) offers on-demand digital printing and copying using the latest in printing and document management technology.

Print services include:

- » Letterhead
- » Envelopes
- » Business cards
- » Forms
- » Booklets
- » Brochures
- » Reports
- » Flyers
- » Postcards
- » Posters
- » Banners
- » Binding
- » Folding
- » Layout
- » Design
- » Delivery

Mail services include:

- » Postage optimization
- » Intelligent inserting
- » Fulfillment
- » Inventory management

CPMS is a Statewide Contract Vendor on [OFF48 Print, Copy and Mail Services and Printed Promotional Products](#) and has provided quality printing for state agencies and municipalities for more than 40 years. All eligible entities, including Executive Departments and municipal organizations, and the general public, may purchase printing and copying services directly from CPMS.

Commonwealth Print and Mail Services is an environmentally responsible shop and only uses recycled papers and environmentally preferable inks.

CPMS offers complimentary estimates, competitive pricing, and exceptional customer service. Commonwealth Print and Mail Services may be reached via email at CPMS@mass.gov or by phone at 617-720-3340.

[Explore CPMS services.](#)



Office of Vehicle Management

The Office of Vehicle Management (OVM) is responsible for the acquisition, administration, leasing, maintenance, and repair of the Executive Branch fleet of light-duty trucks, vans, SUVs, and passenger vehicles. Encompassing vehicles up to 10,000 pounds Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW), these assets are used by state employees to provide a wide array of services to the Commonwealth. OVM also offers complete fleet support, including vehicle maintenance, accident repairs, subrogation, and fuel cards.

OVM sets the policies and procedures followed by Executive Branch Departments to ensure that state vehicles are allocated, operated, marked, repaired, efficiently and economically maintained, and in compliance with all applicable legal requirements. The policies apply to state vehicles that are owned, leased, rented, or received as gifts by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.¹

Efficiencies and Reducing Environmental Impacts

Decarbonizing and minimizing the environmental impacts of the state fleet, as mandated in [Executive Order 594](#), is a top priority for OVM. The OVM team is highly focused on right-sizing the fleet and advocating for fuel-efficient or carbon-reducing vehicles.

OVM supports the Executive Order with data-driven recommendations from the telematics program, deployed in 2020. The installation of telematics devices in more than 3,000 fleet assets under OVM's purview has enabled a new level of information gathering and decision making. Telematics devices use GPS and cellular networks to transmit a variety of information, such as vehicle location, utilization, diagnostic trouble codes, as well as Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, helping to reduce fleet operating expenses and environmental impacts.

[Explore the OVM website.](#)

1. Vehicle fleets maintained by the Commonwealth's Constitutional, Legislative, and Judicial Offices; the public institutions of higher learning; the Department of Transportation; independent authorities; the State Police; and the Environmental Police are not governed by the policies and procedures of the OVM.

Surplus Property Program

The State Surplus Property Office (SSPO) is responsible for the distribution and disposal of state-owned surplus property, which may include equipment, tools, clothing, electronics, office furniture, and vehicles. When a state agency no longer needs items in usable condition, they are reported to the SSPO, which lists items on the [Surplus Property website](#) for reallocation to eligible entities.

Commonwealth agencies receive first priority for 30 days and do not pay a fee to acquire surplus property. If an item is not acquired by a Commonwealth agency within 30 days, it becomes available to other entities based on the following priority levels:

Priority Level	Entity Type	Cost to Entity	Eligibility
1	State Agency with Declared Need	No Cost	Any Time
2	State Agency	No Cost	Any Time
3	Cities and Towns	Administration Fee (usually \$10-20 per unit)	After 30 Days
4	Eligible Non-Profits	Administration Fee (usually \$10-20 per unit)	After 50 Days
5	General Public	Auction/Bid	After 60 Days

Explore the [Surplus Property Program's website](#) to learn about the simplified process to list new surplus items and search for and browse photos of surplus property available to public entities.

Several times a year, the SSPO runs surplus vehicle auctions, allowing eligible bidders to choose from a selection of vehicles and related equipment retired by Massachusetts state agencies and the Massachusetts State Police. Available auction items are posted on the [Auctions International website](#) and Commonwealth items are labeled "Mass OSD." [Follow OSD on LinkedIn](#) to know when new auctions are posted.

Federal Surplus Property Program

The SSPO is authorized by the Federal Government to act as its agent in obtaining Federal Surplus Property for eligible entities throughout the Commonwealth, including state agencies, municipal organizations, eligible non-profits, and veteran-owned small businesses. Contact the [SSPO](#) for credentials to view the General Services Administration Federal website.



Legal

OSD's Legal Unit supports the agency's programs and processes by providing day-to-day legal advice on the agency's statutes and regulations, participating in the drafting and review of policy and training materials, negotiating agency-specific and Statewide Contract terms, as well as reviewing and developing bid specifications, standard contract terms, and forms.

Unit responsibilities include:

- » Providing statutory, regulatory, and policy interpretation for OSD and Executive Branch Agencies
- » Reviewing OSD Statewide Contract bid and Request for Response documents
- » Negotiating contracts with non-standard terms
- » Participating in resolution of vendor disputes, debriefings, and corrective actions
- » Participating in the drafting and interpretation of policies, templates, and forms
- » Reviewing outbound marketing communications
- » Managing the appeal process for Purchase of Service (POS) bids
- » Working with the Attorney General's Office on agency litigation
- » Drafting legislation
- » Managing public records requests and records retention
- » Legal trainings

The OSD Legal Unit may be reached at OSDLegal@mass.gov.

Quality Assurance

The mission of the **Quality Assurance Unit** is to ensure fair, open, and competitive procurement practices across state government to obtain best value and procurement integrity for agencies and the people they serve.

The Quality Assurance team conducts Quarterly Procurement Practice and Quality Assurance (QA) reviews of Level III Executive Departments' procurement activities in accordance with [801 CMR 21.00](#), which governs the procurement of commodities and services.

Current review categories include:

- » Mandatory training
- » Procurement file compliance
- » COMMBUYS bid compliance
- » Mosaic encumbrance reference completion
- » Statewide Contract utilization

The OSD Quality Assurance Unit provides quarterly lists of potentially expiring contracts in current and subsequent fiscal years. This serves as a helpful reminder for agencies to assess procurement planning options and obtain OSD support. Additionally, the Quality Assurance Unit established a new review category — Statewide Contract (SWC) Utilization — to conduct reviews of select transactions which do not reference a Statewide Contract. This will allow the unit to assess agency compliance with 801 CMR 21.00, ensure agency awareness of SWC offerings, and assist in identifying gaps in SWC category offerings.

The OSD Quality Assurance unit may be reached at OSD.QA@mass.gov.

Executive Department Buyers may access resources at the [Quality Assurance Portal](#).





Special Education Pricing and Financial Auditing

The Special Education and Financial Auditing Unit is responsible for the financial reporting and auditing requirements applicable to all procurements of Human and Social Services and to [M.G.L. c. 71B](#) Approved Private Schools.

Under M.G.L. c. 7, § 22N, OSD is responsible for setting tuition prices for approved special education programs in private schools to accommodate students with needs that are unable to be met by their current school district. The set tuition price is paid by municipal organizations and/or executive departments such as the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

OSD sets tuition prices for more than 200 programs within approximately 100 schools and increases prices annually by a percentage inflation factor. The OSD Special Education team also:

- » Sets prices for services not included in tuition, such as one-to-one aides
- » Adjusts tuition prices throughout the year for reasons such as extraordinary relief (for health and safety concerns), program reconstruction, and salary upgrades, with prior approval from DESE
- » Reviews tuition prices through Administrative Review oversight

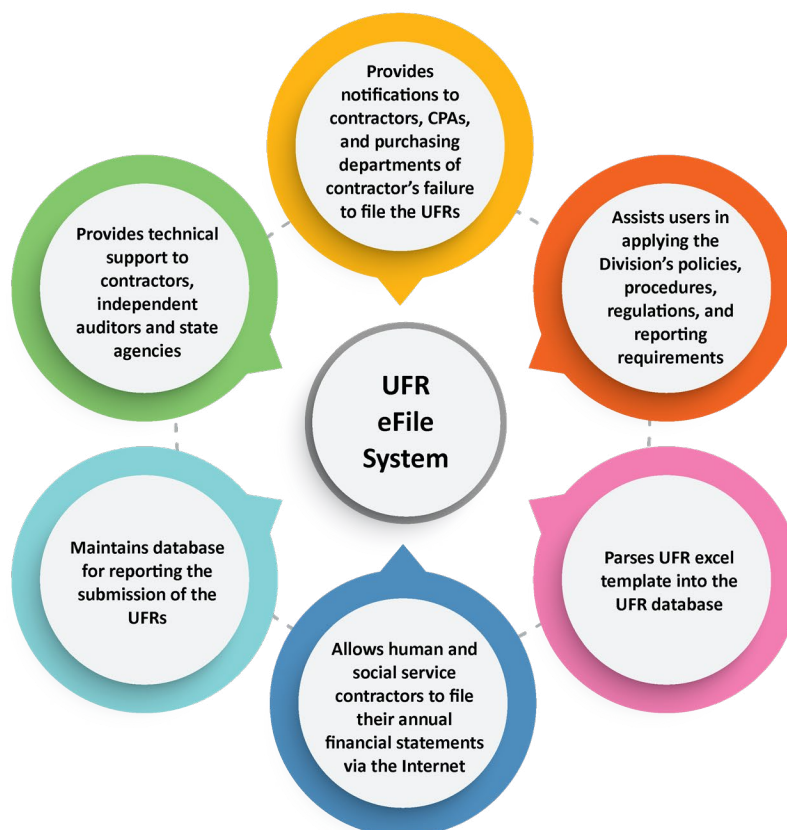
Private schools may appeal OSD's price-setting decisions to the Division of Administrative Law Appeals. Private schools receiving public funding for their special education programs may purchase from Statewide Contracts to achieve cost savings.

For more information, visit the [Special Education Pricing website](#).



OSD **Financial Auditing** is responsible for working with Purchase of Service (POS) vendors and state agencies to ensure full adherence to all applicable federal and state requirements for human and social services contracts and private special education programs.

Each year, contractors must file the Uniform Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report (UFR) with OSD. The UFR eFile system allows human and social service contractors to file their annual financial statements online. It also provides these statements to the general public at no charge. For a nominal fee, subscribers may access additional financial information in a variety of ways. For more information, explore the [UFR website](#).



Performance Analytics

The Operational Services Division has a data-driven mindset and the **Performance Analytics (PA)** data team serves an integral function in the daily operations of the agency, maximizing efficiency of ongoing business operations. The team leverages their expertise in system functionality and data, business analysis, and quality assurance to assist in identifying, recommending, and implementing systems and business process improvements. Here are some of the initiatives supported by the PA team:

Quality Assurance

One of OSD's oversight responsibilities is to ensure that Executive Agencies are conducting procurements in compliance with the Commonwealth's policies and regulations.

To assist with these initiatives, the PA team built a data visualization dashboard that collects information about COMMBUYS bids which assists with Executive Department compliance and quality assurance monitoring.

Telematics

The PA team assists with the agency's telematics program that enables the collection of data from more than 3,000 telematics devices installed in vehicles and equipment within the Executive Branch fleet. This data gives agencies greater insight to the usage and utilization of their state fleet vehicles, including underutilization of vehicles, and opportunities for future battery-electric vehicles and safe driving improvements.

Vendor Report Management (VRM) System

On a quarterly basis, Statewide Contract (SWC) Vendors provide sales data to OSD through the Vendor Report Management system, a SaaS-based tool that facilitates SWC data collection. The PA team works closely with OSD units to share SWC purchasing trends and provide insight to vendor sales performance.

EPP Procurement Dashboard

The PA team was intrinsically involved in the development of the Environmentally Preferable Products (EPP) dashboard which transforms vendor-reported quarterly sales data from the VRM system into interactive visuals that show overall EPP spend, purchasing trends, contract-level performance, and vendor activity.

COMMBUYS Enhancements

COMMBUYS is ever-changing, adapting to users' needs. When enhancements are incoming, the Performance Analytics team acts as the liaison between OSD and SOVRA, the host provider of COMMBUYS. The team reviews and provides feedback on the planned enhancements and conducts an extensive testing period to ensure an effective product is delivered to users.



WELCOME TO OUR TEAM



Human Resources and Finance

The Human Resources and Finance Unit is a multifaceted team of administrative professionals who assist and support all functions of the Operational Services Division. In addition to providing a variety of support services to OSD employees, the team manages financial matters for the agency, including oversight of the Statewide Contract Administration Fee that is based on Statewide Contract expenditures by eligible entities. The unit provides high-quality support to OSD staff, agency partners, and Statewide Contract Vendors.

Human Resources and Finance Unit activities include:

- » Hiring
- » Payroll
- » Benefits
- » Budgeting
- » Accounts receivable/payable
- » Revenue and chargebacks
- » Encumbrances
- » Agency procurement
- » OSD operations and facility management
- » IT coordination and support
- » Statewide Contract Administration Fee



Strategic Communications and Learning

The **Strategic Communications and Learning Unit (SCL)** is responsible for developing and executing the comprehensive communications strategy for all OSD services, programs, and activities, and providing learning experiences to buyers and vendors.

The SCL unit seeks to expand the reach of OSD's activities through multi-channel communication efforts that effectively convey OSD's value to our buyer and vendor communities. Additionally, SCL staff network with external organizations to advance OSD's mission and collaborate with all OSD units to promote their efforts through communication support:

- » Content marketing
- » Writing/editing
- » Event planning and management
- » Media relations
- » Website management

OSD Publications

SCL publishes OSD's bi-monthly magazine, *Buy the Way*. [Explore past issues of Buy the Way.](#)

Online and In-Person Events

SCL hosts many of OSD's online webinars and attends conferences, tradeshows, and networking events across the Commonwealth to facilitate the exchange of information between buyers, vendors, and OSD.

The unit also hosts the [MASSBUYS EXPO](#), historically the largest business-to-government event in the Commonwealth, which brings together OSD's Statewide Contract Vendors and public purchasers for a day of networking and education. Discover [OSD events](#).

Complete the [OSD Communications Form](#) to receive upcoming communications.



The Strategic Communications and Learning Unit includes a team of **Training** professionals who serve OSD's public buyers and the vendor community by developing and delivering interactive and engaging training at no cost. The team's mission is to make complex concepts and practices understandable for customers across a variety of topics, including procurement policies, purchasing procedures, and related online tools. Courses are offered online and in person, and eLearning courses are available for viewing at your convenience.

The Training team offers a full curriculum of courses designed to help public buyers learn how to purchase goods and services from Statewide Contracts and conduct their own procurements. Frequently offered and well-attended buyer sessions focus on COMMBUYS functionality and cover topics such as purchasing, procurements, and how to make use of Statewide Contracts.

For the vendor community, the Training team provides guidance for doing business with the state and utilizing COMMBUYS. Popular vendor courses include *How the State Buys Goods and Services* and COMMBUYS-oriented sessions such as *COMMBUYS Essentials* and *How to Locate and Respond to Bids in COMMBUYS*.

The Training Unit also offers:

eLearning Courses — Learn at your own pace and on your own schedule with a library of prerecorded sessions on a variety of topics.

Job Aids — Buyers may download step-by-step instructions on how to use COMMBUYS and post and search for Grant opportunities. Vendor Job Aids provide step-by-step instructions to assist in navigating COMMBUYS, including vendor registration, finding and responding to bids and quote requests, working with purchase orders, and more.

Customized Training — OSD trainers are available for personalized buyer and vendor training sessions. Email [OSD Training](mailto:OSDTraining) to request a session.

Training Resources

Course descriptions, training schedules, and job aids may be found on the [OSD Training website](#).

Need more information? Contact OSDOutreach@mass.gov.

OSD Resources at Your Fingertips

Frequently Requested Information

[Statewide Contract User Guides](#)

[Procurement Schedule](#)

[COMMBUYS](#)

[Training Classes](#)

[Local Government Purchasing](#)

[Environmental Purchasing](#)

[Surplus Property Program](#)

[OSD Help Desk](#)

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