

4.23 INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT POLICY

The University's Consultant Policy applies to the engagement and payments for services rendered by individuals or firms who are not employees of the University. It is the responsibility of the originating party (Unit Head, Principal Investigator and Dean) to ensure that the desired professional services are not readily available internally through other University departments and/or personnel, and that funding is available within the department budget to cover the cost of the negotiated fee.

It is the responsibility of the (Unit Head, Principal Investigator, or Dean) to initiate an Independent Consultant/Contractor Approval Form and Agreement prior to the utilization of any services. All requests for consultant services must be pre-approved by the respective Vice President prior to service being rendered. The initiating department will submit the Consultant Agreement Form, Consultant Disclosure Statement, and Questionnaire for Hiring Independent Contractors, Request for Consultant Services Form, and the W-9 Form to their supervisor for review and signature.

The respective Vice President will submit the forms to the Division of Human Resources for review. Human Resources will review to ensure the consultant meets all requirements as defined by the IRS, and conflicts of interest guidelines.

If the individual is deemed an independent consultant, the appropriate paperwork with funds from Education and General Budgets will be forwarded to the Department of Purchasing and Travel. Paperwork with funds from grants and contracts will go to the Grants and Contracts Department for processing.

Independent consultants who fail to meet the guidelines will have their paper work returned to the initiating department. It will be the responsibility of the department to contact the consultant and explain the University's decision.

Procedures

A written contractual agreement is required for all consulting engagements. There is no statutory requirement for obtaining bids to acquire such services; however purchasing practices would indicate that the buying entity obtained the lowest possible price for the services required. (25-9-120 Miss. Code of 1972 Annotated) This can be achieved by obtaining two quotes.

The Vice President of the originating party must approve all requests for Independent Consultant and Professional services.