

NJPA FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

HOW IS NJPA GOVERNED?

NJPA is governed by the NJPA Board of Directors. The eight-member board is comprised of governing officials; including school board, city council or county seats.

DOES NJPA HAVE A PROFESSIONAL PUBLIC PURCHASING BOARD OF ADVISORS?

Yes. At this point all current Participating Members are a part of our Board of Advisors. We are currently in the process of electing an “Executive Advisory Board” which will be nominated by and then elected by the membership.

HOW IS NJPA FUNDED?

NJPA is funded by vendor administrative fees. The awarded vendor pays NJPA a minimal administrative fee to participate in this program. This fee covers the costs for contract marketing and facilitation and it offsets operating expenses incurred by NJPA. NJPA does not receive state or federal aid nor do we have taxing or levying authority. Therefore, we are entirely entrepreneurial. We are a governmental agency acting as a self-supporting business. NJPA also shares these fees with other partnering cooperatives as they elect to help facilitate and market the contracts in their specific regions. Any excess funds will be returned to participating agencies through a declared dividend program.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARTICIPATE IN NJPA?

There is no cost to join or participate.

HOW CAN WE JOIN AND PARTICIPATE IN NJPA AND ITS PROGRAMS AND SERVICES?

Qualifying agencies must register to participate and may join in a matter of minutes online. There are several ways to join:

1. Download our [printable application](#) or
2. Simply participate in our programs and services. Your membership is automatically activated when a purchase order is executed through our contracts. When this happens, NJPA will get in touch with your agency, so you can supply us with the necessary organizational and contact information.

The BNJPA bylaws, Article II, Subd. C describes our membership and participation. There are two types of membership:

- **Participating Membership (Non-Voting)**
Participating Memberships are free and carry no liability.
- **Full Voting Membership**
Full voting memberships are limited to the school districts, cities, counties and other governmental units defined in M.S. 471.59 and as established annually by the NJPA Board of Directors. Full-voting Members are required to sign a membership agreement and pay a one-time \$10.00 membership fee. These organizations are eligible to nominate their governing board members to serve on the NJPA Board. They also become responsible for any liabilities NJPA may incur. Participating Memberships are free and carry no organizational liability.

HOW DOES A MEMBER PURCHASE USING THE NJPA CONTRACT?

After membership has been established, the member contacts the vendor directly for specific product, service, ordering, delivery and billing information. NJPA monitors contract compliance by the vendor to ensure a high level of service, quality of goods and customer service are being delivered to the member. Prior to executing the purchase order, it is the member's responsibility to review and accept the general terms and conditions of the specific IFB of interest and to execute the purchase order directly with the awarded vendor. Your membership allows the NJPA Board of Directors and NJPA staff to facilitate the bid and procurement responsibilities on your behalf.

WHAT ABOUT CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND ASSURANCE?

NJPA requires "manufacturer product and service responsibility". This eliminates the finger pointing and transferring of blame in the event the customer is not satisfied. Responding manufactures accept this responsibility. In extreme cases NJPA would be involved in specific communications to ensure the customer is satisfied with the complete process of procurement and contract compliance.

CAN MY PUBLIC AGENCY USE THE PROGRAM AND CONTRACTS WITHOUT GOING OUT FOR SOLICITATION?

Yes, in Illinois and most other states. All NJPA bid contracts have been competitively solicited nationally, reviewed and awarded by the NJPA Board of Directors in accordance with Minnesota public purchasing rules and regulations under the Municipal Contracting Laws, M.S. 471.345. Each solicitation and Invitation for Bid (IFB) contains language which includes all qualified customers in all fifty states. The IFB advises all responders that they must apply to all qualified customers in all 50 states and in some cases the provinces and territories of Canada. All IFB respondents understand that these contracts shall be used by member governmental, educational and non profit agencies throughout the United States.

CAN AGENCIES OTHER THAN GOVERNMENTAL AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES USE THE PROGRAM?

Yes, under M.S. 123A.21, all non-profit agencies may participate.

IF OUR AGENCY USE NJPA CONTRACTS, CAN WE STILL BUY FROM OTHER CONTRACTS?

Yes, all NJPA contracts are non-exclusive and are contracts of choice by our members.

WHAT IS THE SPECIFIC STATUTE LANGUAGE FOR ILLINOIS THAT WILL GIVE MY AGENCY THE AUTHORITY TO PARTICIPATE?

A copy of the State of Illinois statute can be found by clicking this [link](#).