

PURCHASING POLICY: ACCOUNTS and LOCAL PREFERENCES

Dated: July 6, 2015

As a unit of Indiana government, a county may adopt rules to regulate purchases of the unit which may supplement the Indiana Code (5-22) and not be inconsistent with the Indiana Code (5-22). For the purposes of improving budgetary oversight and in furtherance of their policy of encouraging commerce in Starke County, the Board of Commissioners of Starke County does hereby implement the following purchasing policies:

1. **Retail charge accounts; approval by Commissioners.** No Starke County Department or County Official is authorized to open retail, charge, debit or department store accounts without authorization of the Board of Commissioners as expressed by them during a regular session of the Board and evidenced in the minutes thereof. If the Board approves the establishment of an account it will be in the name of the Starke County Government and not a specific Starke County Department.
2. **Current Departmental Accounts – Transfer to County.** Those County Departments with currently established accounts with stores such as Menards, Lowes, or similar retail establishments must turn over the account information to the Starke County Auditor's Office and, consistent with this policy, assist in the transfer of the account to the County and not a specific department.
3. **Sears account; Consolidation.** In regard to the two currently established accounts at Sears: Sears is offering to consolidate one of the existing accounts into an account for Starke County and the other account will be closed. That will allow any Department who wants to shop locally within the County, who was not in the past able to "charge" the purchase of any materials or supplies at Sears, will now be able to do so.
4. **Local purchasing preference.** It is the policy of the Starke County Board of Commissioners to support businesses located in Starke County. For all purchasing contracts within the purview of Ind. Code Chapter 5-22-15-1, the commissioners hereby establish the maximum allowable purchasing preference. For purchases not governed by I.C. 5-22-1, the Board of Commissioners hereby adopt a price preference allowance up to 10% difference.

Person purchasing supplies and equipment for the country are urged to shop within the county when possible. Purchasers for county departments may purchase from local vendors with price of up to 10% over that of retail and department stores with no Starke County facility such as Menards, Lowes or similar stores. However, nothing in this policy shall create any cause of action for any vendor, vendor's agent, owner, manager or employee, nor shall it be construed to prohibit a purchase from an out-of-county vendor, nor invalidate any purchase by the county from any out-of-county vendor.

5. Departmental accounts prohibited. County Departments, Department heads, Elected Officials, agents, employees and boards, and all subdivisions of any kind whatsoever are prohibited from opening any type of Charge Card account on behalf of the Starke County Government or any Department of the Starke County Government. Examples of such accounts are Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover, etc. The sole authority for opening and overseeing the use of such accounts is vested in and retained by the Board of Commissioners.

6. Personal use of accounts prohibited. Section 13.01 of the Starke County Employee Handbook prohibits any personal use of any Starke County Government asset. The Board of Commissioners hereby expressly include in this policy that County officials, County employees, and all agents or consultants of the county are strictly prohibited from using any County account for any personal purpose whatsoever, including, without limitation for the purposes of obtaining or gaining advantage from the County's pricing or tax exempt status.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in strict disciplinary action, and in some cases may constitute a criminal act.