Community Living St. Catharines Corporate Policy Directives	Authority **Chief Executive Officer**	
	Subject **Procurement & Supply Chain Code of Ethics**	
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PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Community Living St. Catharines (CLSC) complies with the Broader Public Sector (BPS) Procurement Directive, issued in accordance with the Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, 2010 and the Buy Ontario Procurement Directive, issued in accordance with the Buy Ontario Act (Public Sector Procurement), 2025.

The purpose of the policy is:

- To ensure that AGENCY's publicly funded goods and services, including construction, consulting services, and information technology are acquired by CLSC through a process that is open, fair and transparent;
- To outline responsibilities of CLSC throughout each stage of the procurement process
- To ensure that procurement processes are managed consistently;
- To support Ontario's economy, domestic supply chains and local businesses through procurement decisions, where permitted by law and applicable trade agreements;
- To ensure that procurement activities comply with the Buy Ontario Act (Public Sector Procurement), 2025 and the Buy Ontario Procurement Directive;
- To support economic benefit to Ontario and Canada through procurement activities conducted in an open, fair and transparent manner.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers/students, Board of Directors and Community Living St. Catharines members.

Definitions

Ontario Business: A business with a significant presence in Ontario, as defined in the Buy Ontario Procurement Directive.

Canadian Business: A business with a significant presence in Canada, as defined in the Buy Ontario Procurement Directive.

Domestic Supply Chain Plan: Supplier documentation identifying the origin of key goods and services used in contract performance, as required under the Buy Ontario Procurement Directive.

PRINCIPLES

The BPS Procurement Directive is based on the five key principles that allow CLSC to achieve value for money while following a procurement process that is fair and transparent to all stakeholders:

- **Accountability –** CLSC must be accountable for the results of their procurement decisions and the appropriateness of the processes.
- **Transparency –** CLSC must be transparent to all stakeholders. Wherever possible, stakeholders must have equal access to information on procurement opportunities, processes and results.
- **Value for Money –** CLSC must maximize the value they receive from the use of public funds. A value-for-money approach aims to deliver goods and services at the optimum total lifecycle cost while considering quality, service delivery, and, where permitted under applicable legislation and trade agreements, broader economic benefits to Ontario and Canada.
- **Quality Service Delivery** - Front-line services provided by AGENCY, such as teaching and patient care, must receive the right product, at the right time, in the right place.
- **Process Standardization** - Standardized processes remove inefficiencies and create a level playing field.

BUY ONTARIO REQUIREMENTS

CLSC shall comply with the Buy Ontario Act (Public Sector Procurement), 2025 and the Buy Ontario Procurement Directive, as amended or replaced from time to time.
Where permitted, procurement decisions may consider domestic supply chain resiliency and support for Ontario and Canadian businesses, consistent with applicable legislation and trade agreements.
Where required under the Buy Ontario Procurement Directive or procurement documents, suppliers may be required to submit a Domestic Supply Chain Plan.

SUPPLY CHAIN CODE OF ETHICS

To ensure an ethical, professional and accountable BPS supply chain, CLSC will adhere to the following Code of Ethics:

I. **Personal Integrity and Professionalism**
Individuals involved with Supply Chain Activities must act, and be seen to act, with integrity and professionalism. Honesty, care and due diligence must be integral to all supply chain activities within and between BPS organizations, suppliers and other stakeholders. Respect must be demonstrated for each other and for the environment. Confidential information must be safeguarded. Participants must not engage in any activity that may create, or appear to create, a conflict of interest, such as accepting gifts or favours, providing preferential treatment, or publicly endorsing suppliers or products.

II. **Accountability and Transparency**
Supply Chain Activities must be open and accountable. In particular, contracting and purchasing activities must be fair, transparent and conducted with a view to obtaining the best value for public money. All participants must ensure that public sector resources are used in a responsible, efficient and effective manner.

III. **Compliance and Continuous Improvement**
Individuals involved with purchasing or other Supply Chain Activities must comply with this Code of Ethics and the laws of Canada and Ontario. Individuals should continuously work to improve supply chain policies and procedures, to improve their supply chain knowledge and skill levels, and to share leading practices.

PROCEDURES

CLSC will ensure that all contracts entered by, or in the name of CLSC will follow the requirements set forth in the Broader Public Sector (BPS) Procurement Directive.

1. APPROVAL AUTHORITY LEVELS

Segregation of Duties

Segregation of Duties prevents any one person from controlling the entire procurement process. The five typical functional procurement to roles that require approval are requisition, budgeting, commitment, receipt and payment. At least three of the five procurement roles must be segregated.

FUNCTIONAL ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY	ACCOUNTABLE PARTY
Requisition	Authorize the procurement dept. to plan an order	Employee requesting the product or service
Budgeting	Authorize that funding is available to cover the cost of the order	Dept. budget holder/Finance Dept.
Commitment	Authorize release of the order to the supplier under agreed contract terms	Director of Dept.
Receipt	Authorize that the order was physically received, correct and complete	Individual receiving the goods
Payment	Authorize release of payment to supplier	Accounts payable role within the finance team

Approval Authority

Goods and non-consulting services: Prior to commencement, any procurement of goods, non-consulting services, and consulting services must be approved by the appropriate approval authority schedule (AAS). The AAS is approved by the Board of Directors of the AGENCY. Any non-competitive procurement of goods, non-consulting services, or consulting services must be approved by an authority one level higher than the requirements for competitive procurement.

Goods, Non-Consulting Services and Construction

Required Number of Quotes by Dollar Value

TOTAL PROCUREMENT VALUE	REQUIREMENT
$0 - $25,000	**One (1) quote** is required. This may be a written quote, online price capture, or documented price confirmation.
$25,000 - $75,000	**Two (2) invitational competitive quotes** are required. Written quotes must be retained as part of the procurement file.
$75,000 - $119,999	**Three (3) invitational competitive quotes** are required. Procurement must be documented and evaluated based on defined criteria. Written quotes must be retained as part of the procurement file.
$120,000+	**Open Competitive Procurement is mandatory** (e.g., public posting on an electronic tendering system such as MERX or Ontario Tenders Portal). Procurement must be documented and evaluated based on defined criteria.

2. COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT THRESHOLDS

All Procurements
The overall value of the procurement must not be reduced by dividing it into multiple procurements in order to circumvent the approval requirements.

Invitational Competitive Procurement
Invitational Competitive Procurement is the contractual acquisition (purchase or lease) of any goods or service, which enables some but not all suppliers to compete in fair and open environment.

Open Competitive Procurement
Open Competitive Procurement is the contractual acquisition (purchase or lease) of any goods or services, which enables all suppliers to compete in a fair and open environment. CLSC will utilize an open competitive procurement process, as required by the Broader Public Sector (BPS) Procurement Directive, when the estimated value of procurement of goods or services is $120,000 or more.
An open competitive procurement process is required for consulting services irrespective of value.

3. COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT

Information Gathering
Where results of informal supplier of product research are insufficient, formal processes such as *Request of Information (RFI)* [used to collect written information about the capabilities of various suppliers or for comparative purposes]; or *Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI)* [used to inform potential proponents of a business opportunity and to solicit proposals] may be used if warranted, taking into consideration the time and effort required to conduct them.

A response to RFI or RFEI must not be used to pre-quality a potential supplier and must not influence the chances of the participating suppliers from becoming the successful proponent in any subsequent opportunity.

Supplier Pre-Qualification
The Request for Supplier Qualifications (RFSQ) enables CLSC to gather information about supplier capabilities and qualifications in order to pre-qualify suppliers for an immediate product or service need or to identify qualified candidates in advance of expected future competitions.
Terms and conditions of the RFSQ document must contain language that disclaims any obligation to call on any supplier to provide goods or services as a result of pre-qualification.

Buy Ontario Compliance
Competitive procurement activities must also comply with the Buy Ontario Requirements set out in this policy.

4. PURCHASING

Posting Competitive Procurement Documents
Calls for open competitive procurements must be made through an electronic tendering system that is readily accessible by all Canadian suppliers.

Timeline for Posting Competitive Procurements
A minimum response time of 15 calendar days must be provided to suppliers for procurement of goods and services valued at $120,000 or more.

Fleet Vehicles and Transportation Services
Where applicable, procurement of fleet vehicles and transportation services used to support the delivery of services to individuals supported by CLSC shall be conducted in accordance with this policy and applicable legislation.

5. EVALUATION

Bid Receipt
Bid submission date and closing time must be clearly stated in competitive procurement documents. Organizations must set the closing date of a competitive procurement process on a normal working day (Monday to Friday, excluding provincial and national holidays).
Submissions that are delivered after the closing time must be returned unopened.

Evaluation Criteria
Where permitted by law and applicable trade agreements, evaluation criteria may include considerations such as Ontario economic benefit, Canadian content, and supply chain resiliency, in accordance with the Buy Ontario Procurement Directive.
Evaluation criteria must be developed, reviewed and approved by an appropriate authority prior to commencement of the competitive procurement process.

Competitive procurement documents must clearly outline mandatory, rated, and other criteria that will be used to evaluate submissions, including weight of each criterion.
Mandatory criteria should be kept to a minimum to ensure that no bid is unnecessarily disqualified.
Maximum justifiable weighting must be allocated to the price/cost component of the evaluation criteria.
The evaluation criteria outlined in the competitive procurement documents must be used when selecting the winning submission.
Suppliers should not be asked to provide information that will not be evaluated as such information may affect the outcome of the evaluation process.

Evaluation Process Disclosure
Competitive procurement documents must fully disclose the evaluation methodology and process to be used in assessing submissions, including the method of resolving tie score.
Competitive procurement documents must state that submissions that do not meet the mandatory criteria will be disqualified.

Evaluation Team
Competitive procurement processes require an evaluation team responsible for reviewing and rating the compliant bids.
Evaluation team members must be made aware of the restrictions related to utilization and distribution of confidential and commercially sensitive information collected through the competitive procurement process and refrain from engaging in activities that may create or appear to create a conflict of interest.
Evaluation team members must sign a conflict-of-interest declaration and non-disclosure of confidential information agreement.

Evaluation Matrix
Each evaluation team member must complete an evaluation matrix, rating each of the submissions. Records of evaluation scores must be retained for audit purposes. Evaluators must ensure that everything they say or write about submissions is fair, factual, and fully defensible.

Winning Bid
The submission that receives the highest evaluation score and meets all mandatory requirements set out in the competitive procurement document must be declared the winning bid.

Non-Discrimination
Organizations must not discriminate or exercise preferential treatment in awarding a contract to a supplier as a result of a competitive procurement process.

6. CONTRACT AWARD

Executing the Contract
The agreement between CLSC and the successful supplier must be formally defined in a signed written contract before the provision of supplying goods or services commences.

Where an immediate need exists for goods or services, and CLSC and the supplier are unable to finalize the contract as described above, an interim purchase order may be used. The justification of such decision must be documented and approved by the appropriate authority.

Establishing the Contract
The contract must be finalized using the form of agreement that was released with the procurement documents.
In circumstances where an alternative procurement strategy has been used (i.e., a form of agreement was not released with the procurement document), the agreement between the Organization and the successful supplier must be defined formally in a signed written contract before the provision of supplying goods or services commences.

Termination Clauses
All contracts must include appropriate cancellation or termination clauses.
Contract clauses that permit cancellation or termination at critical project life-cycle stages should be considered when conducting complex procurements.

Term of Agreement Modifications
The term of the agreement and any options to extend the agreement must be set out in the competitive procurement documents. An approval by an appropriate authority must be obtained before executing any modifications to the term of agreement.
Extending the term of agreement beyond that set out in the competitive procurement document amounts to non-competitive procurement where the extension affects the value and/or stated deliverables of procurement.

Contract Award Notification
For procurements valued at $120,000 or more, contract award notification will be posted in the same manner as the procurement documents were posted. The notification must be posted after the agreement between CLSC and the successful supplier was executed. Contract award notification must list the name of the successful supplier, agreement start and end dates, and any extension options.

Domestic Supply Chain Requirements
For procurements where domestic supply chain requirements apply, suppliers may be required to provide information or supporting documentation relating to Canadian content, Ontario business status, domestic supply chain plans, or other requirements necessary to demonstrate compliance with the Buy Ontario Procurement Directive.
Documentation supporting the application of domestic preference criteria or related evaluation requirements shall be retained as part of the procurement file.

Supplier Debriefing
For procurements valued at $120,000 or more, CLSC must inform all unsuccessful suppliers about their entitlement to a debriefing. Unsuccessful suppliers must be provided 60 calendar days following the date of the contract award notification to request a debriefing.

7. NON-COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT

Non-Competitive Procurement

A non-competitive procurement process may be used only in the limited circumstances permitted under applicable legislation, trade agreements, and applicable procurement directives.

- Non-application clauses under the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) or other trade agreement.
- Single-source situations - multiple suppliers exist, but only one can meet the requirements
- Sole-source situations - only one supplier exists that meets the requirements

Where a non-competitive procurement includes domestic preference considerations or supplier restrictions permitted under applicable legislation, trade agreements, or provincial procurement directives, the rationale for their application shall be documented and approved by the appropriate authority.

Prior to commencement of non-competitive procurement, supporting documentation must be completed and approved by the appropriate authority ~~(one~~ at a level higher than that required for competitive procurement).

8. PROCUREMENT DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS RETENTION

Contract Management

Payments must be made in accordance with provisions of the contract. All invoices must contain detailed information sufficient to warrant payment. Any overpayments must be recovered in a timely manner.

Assignments must be properly documented. Supplier performance must be managed and documented, and any performance issues must be addressed.

A dispute resolution process should be included in the contract.

For services:

- The terms for the assignment should include objectives, background, scope, constraints, staff responsibilities, tangible deliveries, timing, progress reporting, approval requirements and knowledge transfer requirements.
- Expense claims and reimbursement rules compliant with the Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive
- Expenses are claimed and reimbursed only where the contract explicitly provides for reimbursement of expenses.

Procurement Records Retention

For reporting and auditing purposes, all procurement documentation must be retained in a recoverable form for a period of seven years.

9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of Interest
Individuals involved with the Supply Chain Activities, including CLSC employees, suppliers and consultants must declare actual or potential conflicts of interest. Where a conflict of interest arises, it must be evaluated and an appropriate mitigating action must be taken.

10. DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

Bid Dispute Resolution
Competitive procurement documents must outline bid dispute resolution procedures to ensure that any dispute is handled in an ethical, fair, reasonable, and timely fashion.

Bid dispute resolution procedures must comply with bid protest or dispute resolution procedures set out in the applicable trade agreements.

11. SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Value-Add Incentives
Value-add incentive is an offer by a supplier over and above the primary goods and services being purchased, with the intent to increase the total vale received by the customer.
Value-add incentives must not be considered unless they are explicitly requested in the competitive procurement documents to maintain transparency.

Domestic Preference Incentives
Domestic preference incentives or evaluation weightings intended to support Ontario or Canadian businesses may only be applied where clearly disclosed in the competitive procurement documents and, where permitted under applicable trade agreements and legislation.

12. LEGISLATION

Compliance
CLSC must conduct procurement activities in accordance with Ontario law, applicable capital infrastructure procurement requirements, competitive procurement processes, privacy legislation, accessibility legislation, Indigenous procurement considerations and any other applicable legislation, directives or trade agreements.

The CLSC shall comply with all applicable procurement legislation, directives and trade agreements, including but not limited to:

- Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, 2010;
- Buy Ontario Act (Public Sector Procurement), 2025;
- Buy Ontario Procurement Directive;
- Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive;

- Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA);
- Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA);
- Ontario–Quebec Trade and Cooperation Agreement;
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005;
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act; and
- Any other applicable legislation or trade agreements.