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Policy Number: 109
Effective Date: December 12, 2025
Revisions: 3/6/26
Applicability: All Furniture Purchases

PURCHASING POLICY PERTAINING TO THE PROCUREMENT OF FURNITURE

Policy:

Purchase of furniture must follow the Furniture Procurement Procedures outlined below.

Purpose:

- To enable the purchase of commercial grade furniture at substantial discount (usually 35%-50% off list price) with services from vendors that include delivery, installation, and assembly, warranties and associated repairs or replacements.
- To ensure that furniture meets commercial standards for safety, including standards for flammability and toxicity.
- To provide consistency throughout the University in terms of furniture.
- To assure compliance with University sustainable purchase guidelines.

This policy provides approved furniture options from approved vendors within a range of price points, as well as additional factors to consider when procuring furniture.

Exceptions: In rare instances where first cost is the most important factor, certain furniture that will be behind a closed door – i.e., within a private faculty or staff office, or back-of-house space not visible to or utilized by the campus community – may be purchased outside the Policy.

1. Furniture within spaces visible to or utilized by students, visitors, or the campus community is not eligible for exception.
2. Furniture in spaces within student residences and dormitories, even if they meet all other criteria for exemption, is not eligible for exception to this policy owing to more stringent code requirements within those buildings.
3. Furniture integrating electrical components is not eligible for exemption, even if in spaces otherwise meeting exception criteria.
4. Further information, including the responsibilities of departments utilizing exceptions to purchase furniture outside the policy, is included in the Exception Guidelines in this document.

FURNITURE PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE

University faculty and staff are to work directly with the Facilities Planning Department in order to obtain

the following; a floor plan that meets both the user's needs and complies with required codes and clearances, selection of University approved furniture to meet the desired price point from an approved vendor, and the selection of University approved finishes that are available which are determined by the furniture selected. If new furniture is being added within a suite or individual office where existing furniture is already in place, the user will work with Facilities Planning to determine how best to match the existing furniture.

1. Complete a Furniture Request Form on the LU Facilities Requests and Forms web page.
- a. <https://facilities.lehigh.edu/planning-design-and-construction/requests-and-forms>
2. A Facilities Representative will review the request and coordinate with the requestor directly to review the furniture needs.
3. Upon review and furniture selection from Lehigh University's Design Guidelines and Standards, the Facilities Representative will contact approved furniture suppliers for a quote. The requester should not reach out to the suppliers directly.

PRICING AND BUDGET STRUCTURE

In order to meet Department budget requirements while still offering variety, (3) price groups have been identified and outlined for each furniture type. The Furniture Design Standards are organized by price point; "\$" being an economic price point, and "\$\$\$" being a higher price point. These will be shared with the requester after a Furniture Request Form has been received.

QUICK-SHIP AND URGENT TIMELINE REQUESTS

It is important to note that the typical lead time for most furniture items averages between 6-8 weeks. If the furniture request timeline is urgent, quick-ship options may be considered and will be provided by a Facilities representative. If there is not a suitable quick-ship option, temporary used furniture may be utilized until the new furniture arrives.

FURNITURE REQUESTS RELATED TO MEDICAL ACCOMMODATION

Any Faculty and Staff furniture purchasing requests related to medical reasons should be directed to Human Resources for health-related accommodations. Any Student furniture requests related to medical reasons should be directed to Disability Support Services. Ergonomic assessments not related to medical issues are performed by Facilities.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. The furniture procurement process is subject to a different approach depending on whether the furniture is required for a larger Facilities project, or a smaller request such as a department new hire, move, or replacement of old furniture. For larger Facilities projects, the furniture selection will be assessed based on the needs and goals of that particular project.
2. Sizable furniture (i.e. chairs, tables, desks) should not be brought in from non-approved sources or purchased personally. These items will also not be approved for purchase through One Card. This is partly due to flame retardant material requirements that must comply with code. Additionally, Lehigh University's approved commercial furniture vendors provide the following, but not limited to, resources that non-approved vendors do not offer; Commercial grade furniture whose durability

and materiality is intended for high use environments, coordinated installation and extensive warranty coverage and service.

3. If an employee transfers to a different department or building, furniture should be repurposed at the new location rather than the occupant bringing their old furniture. If the new space does not have furniture, then the occupant may be allowed to utilize their old furniture if it fits within the space. In recently renovated areas/buildings where furniture styles and finishes are consistent, any new furniture must match. Consult with a Facilities Planning Representative.
4. Lehigh is not responsible for funding or furnishing the home office setup for employees that work remotely.
5. For any specific questions or purchase requests that deviate from the approved Furniture Design Standards, please work with a Facilities Planning Representative.

EXCEPTION GUIDELINES

When purchasing furniture-related items outside of the University Furniture Procurement Policy, the department recognizes and agrees to be responsible for:

- A. Ensuring the furniture fits within the constraints of the desired space and can be delivered through the pathway to the space (e.g., elevators, doors and corridors).
- B. Ensuring that the furniture purchase meets required codes and standards:
 1. Furniture that includes upholstery -- including upholstered seats, backs and/or arms -- is subject to certain safety codes. Federal regulations that went into effect in 2021 require that all upholstered furniture carry a permanent label on the product including the statement "Complies with U.S. CPSC requirements for upholstered furniture flammability." Departments buying furniture outside the policy are responsible for returning any furniture that is delivered without the required label.
 2. Furniture that integrates electrical connections is subject to UL1286 ratings and should not be purchased outside the policy.
 3. Specific clearances and maneuvering room around furnishings are required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- C. Coordination of any power and data as required per the desired furniture layout. If additional power or data is needed, this must be requested via a Project Request Form which can be found on the Facilities website. (Note that furniture with integrated electrical components should not be purchased outside the Policy.)
- D. Coordinating deliveries directly with Central Receiving.
- E. Assembly, installation, and removal of packaging from the furniture delivery.
- F. Returns or claims related to any damaged or defective products.
- G. Coordinating and funding any required repairs during the life of the product.
- H. Removal and/or appropriate disposal when items are no longer wanted, needed or are beyond their useful life.
- I. Any costs associated with the above purchase, as well as removal of any existing furniture from the space to accommodate new items. Removal of any existing furniture must be confirmed with Facilities prior to removal for appropriate relocation.