

Washington University in St. Louis
Policy Statement For
Check-With Purchase Orders
(Last Updated 09/06/06)

Overview

In certain situations, vendors will not accept purchase orders or will require a down payment or prepayment prior to shipment of the goods or performance of services. In these situations, a check-with purchase order (CW-PO) should be used. A CW-PO is a purchase order that is sent to the vendor along with a check for prepayment of the goods or services or when a down-payment is required.

Processing a CW-PO is a manual, labor intensive process and requests should be rare. **CW-PO should not be used when the payment can be made via a check request document or when there is a vendor order form.** For example, books (35-75), subscriptions (35-76) and reprints (35-13).

If products or services have already been received, and the PO is after the fact, a telephone-order purchase order (TO), should be used. Once the PO number is assigned, record it on the invoice and submit the invoice to Accounts Payable for normal processing. Telephone order purchase orders are not printed, so a hard copy (duplicate order) will not be sent to the vendor.

How to process a Check-With Purchase Order

When processing the Purchase Order the requestor should:

- Type the following, including asterisks, in the body of the PO:

CHECK MUST ACCOMPANY ORDER

- Answer “YES” to the question “*Does supporting documentation need to be sent with the PO (Y/N)?*” Supporting documentation must contain vendor name, as well as pricing information and must be forwarded to Purchasing Services. Purchasing Services will forward the approved PO and supporting documentation to Accounts Payable for processing.
- Receiving must be completed by the department if the PO is greater than \$1,000.

Check Handling

Checks will be mailed by Accounts Payable directly to the vendor, via US Postal Service, with a copy of the purchase order. If special check handling is required, the check may not be returned to either the requestor or approver of the PO. See policy statement on Special Handling of Accounts Payable Checks for the complete policy. If the check is to be sent back to the department, please include the name of the person that the check is to be returned to and the campus box number in the description of the PO.