This newsletter is intended to be your primary resource for weekly updates regarding Ohio|Buys. We encourage you to read and share it with other active Ohio|Buys users in your agency.

What We Are Working On

Release 2 Enhancement Kickoff

The Ohio|Buys project team is continuing to add enhancements and functionality. These enhancements are a direct result of client feedback and are focused on improving the user experience and functionality.

As you are aware, the Release 2 Enhancement work is now a formal process that the project will be focused on over the next 16 weeks.

The following are specific details regarding the process:

1. Prioritization of feedback gathered from early adopter agencies has been turned into a working list of enhancements that the project is addressing.
2. The enhancements are organized into the following functional areas:
   - General
   - Profile
   - Quick Quoting
   - Release and Permit
   - Search
   - Supplier Experience
   - Workflow
   - Purchase
   - Exceptions
   - Change Orders
   - Invoicing
   - Notifications & Alerts
   - Pcard
   - Purchase Orders

3. The structure to implement enhancements will be 2-week sprints, specific processes or functionality within an area may require design sessions; however, not all enhancements will require formal sessions.
   a. If functionality requires design sessions, there will be more formal communication around these sessions to Agency Leads.
4. At the end of the 2-week sprint, the enhancements that are completed will be deployed to Ohio|Buys.

5. OCM will be delivering communications throughout each 2-week sprint to inform agencies the status of:
   a. **what** will be included in each sprint
   b. **when** the enhancement is being deployed to Ohio|Buys
   c. **how** end users can be prepared for changes to the solution

6. The training team is working closely with the project on updating all impacted materials (Learner Guides, Job Aids and Web-based Training). OCM will also provide communication around updated training.

**Purchase Order Improvement**

Previously, when a user created a change request for a line item that had since expired, they were not able to continue to reference it and would have a strikethrough it.

A code fix was put in place to remove the strikethrough and allow change orders to proceed. Also, a non-blocking alert on the PO was created that triggers when the item expires after the PR flips to a PO. Thus, a change order can still be created on a PO where the line item(s) expired.

**Supplier Enablement**

Last week, supplier webinar participation grew by five times over the previous month. Due to our supplier enablement communications, there has been an increased interest from suppliers that were unfamiliar with Ohio|Buys and are interested in doing business with the State.

**Reminder - COVID**

As we continue to be working remotely as a result of COVID-19 initiatives, we wanted to ensure we stay connected during this time. The team is committed to providing services to your teams via teleconferencing and other available tools.

The team is aware many Agency users are getting acclimated to working from home, and we will be flexible with your time and methods. We will provide telecommunications assistance/options, as needed, in our group (e.g., using screen sharing tools like Skype, MS Teams, Free Conference Call, etc.).
The attached document describes the services the Ohio|Buys team has scheduled and will offer your agency. Additionally, you will find a corresponding resources list attached.

Note: Your OCM Practitioner will remain available to you during normal work hours throughout the day/week, albeit remotely. Please keep in close contact should you need additional services from the Ohio|Buys Team. We’re here to help!

**Budgetary Restrictions**

Due to the recent order from Governor Mike DeWine, we have been receiving questions from users related to how their in-flight requisitions will be impacted.

1. If any order is not encumbered to a Purchase Order with a “Valid” budget status, it has been impacted.

2. Agency fiscal officers will need to work with their OBM budget analysts to provide justification for the release of any part of their allotments currently on hold.

3. Any new attempted transactions using affected expense account codes will not pass budget check unless the agency has received a release from OBM. This also applies to any in-flight transaction that has not yet created a purchase order and/or passed budget check.

4. Even if encumbrances have passed the budget check, agencies should review them to see if any can be reduced or cancelled.

**Remind Your Suppliers**

We have seen a significant increase of supplier participation. Thank you to everyone who has connected us with suppliers and would ask for your continued advocacy in our outreach effort.

As a reminder, the webinars cover:

- Accessing and Navigating Ohio|Buys
- Responding to Solicitations
- Reviewing and Acknowledging Purchase Orders

**Webinar Information**

Supplier/bidder training webinars will be held on the dates listed below. Each 1-hour webinar will provide a review of the topics above, as well as...
Suppliers are welcome, but it is not necessary to attend more than one session as the topics reviewed will be the same in all sessions.

Webinar Schedule and Access Information
To join a webinar, choose the date and time you would like to attend and follow these steps:

1. About 5 minutes before the start time, join the conference call by dialing: 1-844-425-8144 and enter Passcode: 57319 89362#
2. Then click the link below associated with the webinar you would like to attend.
3. After clicking the appropriate link for the date and time, download and install Cisco Webex Meetings or click the Join from your browser hyperlink at the bottom of the page.
4. Enter your name and email address and you will be able to join the meeting.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Start Time</th>
<th>Webinar Link</th>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, May 8</td>
<td>10:00 AM</td>
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NOTE: Prior to attending, please verify your device is able to join the webinar by clicking on this link: https://www.webex.com/test-meeting.html

Additional Training
There is also additional training in the form of web-based eLearning videos and job aids.
We recommend viewing the training videos prior to attending the webinars.

Online training for Suppliers
Training videos are available on the Ohio|Buys website, covering the following topics:
- Accessing and Navigating Ohio Buys for Existing Suppliers
- Accessing and Navigating Ohio Buys for New Bidders
- Reviewing Exceptions and Updating Improvement Plans
- Reviewing and Acknowledging Purchase Orders
- Creating and Managing Invoices
- Viewing and Responding to Solicitations
- Managing Advanced Shipping Notices and Returns
Helpful Hints

Quick Quotes

In the event you do not know all of the Suppliers you’d like to invite to participate on a bid for work, please create your sourcing event in Ohio|Buys and add at least one vendor to your quick quote then click submit. Once you submit, the solicitation app appears on the public solicitation site as pictured and linked below.


IT Release and Permit

The IT Release and Permit (R&P) is built into the Ohio|Buys workflow. Agencies should not obtain an IT Release and Permit outside of Ohio|Buys. If an agency has obtained an IT Release and Permit outside of Ohio|Buys, they cannot use that R&P in Ohio|Buys (please use the legacy process in OAKS).

We strongly encourage agencies to utilize Ohio|Buys for FY21. The solution has been configured to handle FY21 requests; however, it will not interface to OAKS until the budget has been opened in OAKS. The Ohio|Buys team will push all requisitions staged for the next fiscal year forward into OAKS.
Creating FY21 Requisitions

Requisitioners have the ability to create requisitions for Fiscal Year 2021 by using a future budget date. To create a requisition for FY21, the **Budget Date** field must be changed to a date on or after **07/01/2020**. The Budget Date field is located on the header page of the requisition.

**Regarding IT Release & Permits:** Ohio|Buys has been configured to handle FY21 requests. The IT Release and Permit (R&P) is built into the purchasing workflow and the requisition will complete all procurement and fiscal approvals before it goes into the IT R&P process. Once the IT R&P has been generated in Ohio|Buys, the final agency approver will receive and approve the requisition. Once approved, the requisition will go to an “Ordered” status (PO). The PO will remain in budget error until the FY21 budget date arrives, the budget status will change to “Valid” and the PO will interface to OAKS and be dispatched.

These “staged” orders will not be impacted by Fiscal Year End and agencies will obtain all IT R&Ps in Ohio|Buys. However, if an agency has obtained an IT R&P outside of Ohio|Buys, that IT R&P cannot be used in Ohio|Buys. In this case, please proceed using the legacy OAKS process.

**Note:** If the requisition references a contract with a 07/01/2020 or later effective date, you cannot create your requisition until that date. Changing the budget date on your requisition will not allow you to supersede the effective date of the contract.
Questions regarding creating FY21 requisitions can be directed to OBM Shared Services at 
[ohiosharedservices@ohio.gov](mailto:ohiosharedservices@ohio.gov) or 614-338-4781.

In Case You Missed It

Please remember that we are frequently updating Agency 
[Job Aids](mailto:). Please take some time to review this material so you and your teams can 
utilize the most current information to make Ohio|Buys work for you. We will 
continue to keep you informed as Job Aids are added and 
[Ohio|Buys training page](http://www.ohio.gov) for easy 
bookmark or favorite the [Ohio|Buys training page](http://www.ohio.gov) for easy 
updates.

Helpful Links

Below you will find links to valuable information and training for Ohio|Buys:

- FAQs
- [Ohio|Buys Fact Sheet](http://www.ohio.gov)
- Key Terms
- Job Aids
- [Ohio|Buys Live Catalogs](http://www.ohio.gov)

Support

In order to ensure that we can make this process as easy 
possible, please send non-system/support questions to: 

[ohiobuys@das.ohio.gov](mailto:ohiobuys@das.ohio.gov)

To provide feedback that would benefit the program or to 
please visit the [Ohio|Buys Feedback survey](http://www.ohio.gov).