Technology Procurement Policy

The University of Southern Mississippi and all Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) are required by law to follow Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services (ITS) procedures for information technology procurements. For some technology acquisitions, hosting services, IT projects, and consultants, we must obtain ITS and the Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) approval prior to initiating a purchase. ITS has delegated compliance responsibility for technology purchases between $5K and $250K to the IHL Chief Information Officer’s (CIO). All technology purchases over $250K must go through IHL and ITS for approval.

ITS was created by the legislature to maximize the use and benefit of information technology in state government among all state agencies and institutions of higher learning. The acquisition of information technology for all state agencies and institutions of higher learning is within the scope of the ITS law and the policies and procedures established in accordance with this statute. ITS law and policy cover the procurement of all information technology hardware, software, and services by state agencies and IHLs.

Information Technology Equipment, Software, and Services:
Section 25-53-3 of the Mississippi Code of 1972 defines ITS’ authority over the acquisition of any information technology, computer or telecommunications equipment, electronic word processing and office systems, or services utilized in connection therewith, including, but not limited to, all phases of computer software and consulting services and insurance on all state owned computer equipment. Acquisition of computer or telecommunications equipment or services means the purchase, lease, rental, or acquisition in any other manner of any such computer or telecommunications equipment or services. Telecommunications equipment, systems, and related services are defined as the equipment and means to provide telecommunications transmission facilities; telephone systems, including voice processing systems; facsimile systems; radio paging services; satellite radio, telephone, and dispatch services; mobile telephone services, including cellular mobile telephone services; intercom and paging systems; video teleconferencing systems; personal communications networks and services; and any and all systems based on emerging and future telecommunications technologies related to any of these devices or services.

Note that, unlike public purchasing law, the statute that defines ITS’ purview over technology acquisitions includes services. All technology services, whether for direct, hands-on skills such as application development and network support, or for such technology consulting services as technology training (both classroom and on-the-job), technology studies, project management, technology advisory roles, quality assurance support, and facilities management, are within ITS purview.

Per state statute, all telecommunications systems and services affecting the management and operations of the University at ANY location must be acquired through ITS via iTech. All major voice and data telecommunications services that can be provided to state institutions of higher learning through ITS and/or through ITS contracts must be obtained through iTech. This includes but is not limited to: telephone lines, long distance services, audio and web conferencing, data communication services (internet access), and data and telephone equipment.

Additional information can be found in the ISS Procurement Manual.