Volume 2, Issue 5

VIRGINIA'S
COMMUNITY COLLEGES
SHARED SERVICES
NEWSLETTER

HAVE YOU HEARD?

WEBSITE
Launch!

Virginia's
Community Colleges
Shared Services Center

Check out our
new website!

We are **LIVE**

https://www.ssc.vccs.edu

Periodically, we will provide updates on the SSC in the form of this newsletter. Please contact SSC_Communications@ssc.vccs.edu with any contributions or suggestions.

Service Level Agreements: Mutual Expectations

What is an SLA?

SLA stands for service level agreement. The SLA provides information about roles, responsibilities, and the expected service levels of both the colleges and the SSC. It is needed to formally quantify performance expectations for both the SSC and its customers.

For example, the T&E SLA states the expectation of the traveler is to "Submit Expense Reports to supervisor within thirty (30) working days after completion of travel" and the expectation of the SSC is to "Approve validated expenses for reimbursement or return/recall items for adjustments with notes/comments as necessary within five (5) working days of receipt." Often, the SLA is referred to as a Service Partner Agreement (SPA) because it addresses both parties.

The SLA is reviewed annually by the colleges and System Office and signed by the appropriate process owner. The following sections are covered in our SLAs:
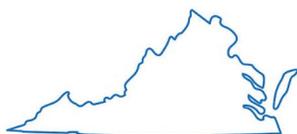
We Want Your Ideas!

Do you have ideas on ways we can partner to reduce costs, reduce administrative burden and increase compliance? If so, please share your ideas with us! You do not need to have a full solution developed to call out an opportunity you see, we can help with that part.

Submit your idea via our Idea Submission Form on our website.

SSC Governance Process

SSC Service Map

Curious to know which colleges are live with services at the SSC? The service map linked below is designed to give an overview of just that:

- Service Level Agreement Introduction
- Service Overview
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Cost of Service
- Hours of Operation
- Issue Resolution Process
- SLA Management and Periodic Reviews
- Approvals and Document Control

A typical SLA is usually less than ten (10) pages. It is not meant to be a legal contract between two parties but a mutual understanding on how to conduct business.
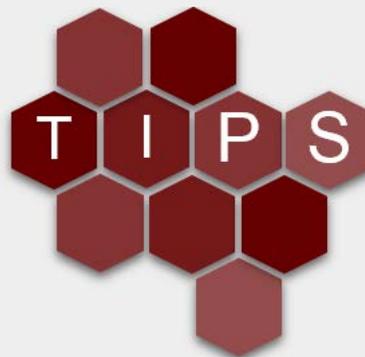

Procurement:

What information do I need to include with my blanket order?

For the SSC to be able to confirm the amount you are requesting is reasonable and compliant with state purchase regulations, you will need to attach documentation that verifies your need. The following are some items we can accept as justification:

- Copy or number of existing contract to confirm the blanket purchase order does not exceed contract value.
- Invoices from the prior year that verify your spend with this vendor for the fiscal year.
- Statement of your spend from the prior fiscal year with a purchase order number we can use to verify the spend
    - If you are requesting more than a 2% increase from the prior year, we need you to explain the need for the increase.
- AIS reports from the prior year for this vendor

Note: More information regarding blanket orders can be found here – Procure to Pay Blanket Order Clarification

SSC Town Hall

SSC Services Map

DID YOU KNOW?
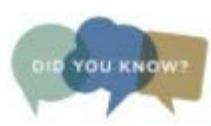
Travelers must use full addresses (street number, street name, city, state, and zip code) for all departure and destination addresses when claiming mileage in their expense reports to ensure the accuracy and legitimacy of the expense.

Thank you to Virginia Western Community College for hosting Shared Services Center's Town Halls on August 2 and 3. The two sessions were attended virtually by a total of 13 colleges in 28 locations. Our panel of 8 experts received more than 50 comments and questions and there were over 550 votes on questions posted for a response. We are working to provide written answers to all of these and will make them and the recorded version of the Town Hall available as soon as possible. Client Partners will be working with the leadership of each college to determine if there is an opportunity to hold an on-site Town Hall at each of the colleges and when this might best serve the college. If you have questions or feedback about the Town Hall, contact Client Partners Terence Carter at tcarter@ssc.vccs.edu, or Jill Harbison at jharbison@ssc.vccs.edu. Thank you again to everyone who participated!

Top Benefits of Level II for Procurement

The major advantage of receiving Level II Delegated Purchasing Authority for Goods is that we, the VCCS, would have a larger degree of flexibility in determining our own policy parameters.

1. **Use procurement rules created specifically for higher education** rather than state government to better meet the specific needs of colleges.
2. **Use one set of procurement rules rather than the current three sets (services & goods, technology, and capital projects)** which will improve efficiency and compliance by decreasing confusion and misinterpretation.
3. **Shift approval for procurement actions from state procurement office to Shared Services Center** to speed processing time.
4. **Take advantage of VCCS buying power** by shifting from a regulatory focus to strategic sourcing.
5. **Increase access to cooperative contracts** because we will be able to develop, and internally approve cooperative procurements with VASCUPP, Va. Higher Education Procurement Consortium, and other organizations.
6. **Allow for optional use of most state contracts and mandatory sources** allowing us to choose best sources for items such as bottled water, toner, pens, fire extinguisher service, and bulk fuel.
7. **Focus on expanding SWAM partnerships and opportunities** rather than set-asides for small purchases.

SSC Contracts Update

The Procurement Department has awarded contracts to CMT Services, Inc. and Infojini, Inc. for furnishing temporary personnel and staffing services for a variety of position types, on an as-needed basis. These contracts are available for use by all colleges. Listed below are the Contract Number and the Contractors' contact information.

Contractor	Contract #	Contact Information
CMT Services, Inc.	VCCS-ALL-18-0027-CMT	Keva Cox, Program Manager P: (301) 322-7860 E: kcox@cmtservicesinc.com
Infojini, Inc.	VCCS-ALL-18-0027-INFO	Prashant Jha, Client Relations P: (443) 270-1850 E: Prashant.jha@infojiniconsulting.com

The Procurement Department would also like to inform end-users of some optional use term contracts established by the Department of General Services (DGS)/Division of Purchases and Supply (DPS), which are available for use by all Colleges.

Contractor	Contract #	Description
• Guernsey Office Products, Inc. • The Supply Room Companies	E194-72924	Office Supplies
• W. W. Grainger, Inc. • Tri-City Office Products, Inc. • RE Replacement Parts • MSC Industrial Supply • B3 Enterprises, LLC • Government Scientific Source • Ball Office Products • Stephens Office Supply	E194-73142	Facilities Maintenance, Repair and Operating Supplies, Industrial Supplies, Tools (Power, Pneumatic, Hand and Cutting), Fasteners, Lamps Filters, Safety Security and all other catalog categories.
• Oak Hall Industries, LP • Balfour Art Carved Powers	E194-76148	Graduation Apparel and Services
• BMK Ventures • Laerdal Medical Corporation	E194-76166	Manikin Devices
• VWR International, LLC • Colonial Scientific, Inc. • Thomas Scientific • Government Scientific Source	E194-250	Laboratory Equipment and Supplies

If you have any questions regarding the use of contracts, please email contracts@ssc.vccs.edu.

Process Council Corner

The Travel and Expense Process Council is led by Angie King, Finance and HR Operations Manager, at the SSC. Angela Graham, the Vice President of Finance, at Dabney S. Lancaster Community College, is the Management Council representative. Four different colleges and the System Office participate on the Council.

The Council is working on the following projects and policy requirements:

1. VCCS SSC Lodging Policy, providing overnight travelers with clarification on lodging guidelines;
2. Travel arrangement service options and capabilities.

Recently, the Travel and Expense Service Level Agreement was approved by Management Council and published.

Travel and Expense Process Council
Angie King, SSC, Chair

Members:
Sarah Everett, SSC
Courtney Witt, SSC
Angela Graham, DSLCC,
    Management Council
John Guszak, NVCC
Greg Lehman, SO
Pamela Robertson, BRCC
Mary Rohas, SO
Joyce Warnacut, GCC

What Happens to Process Improvement Submissions?

You may wonder what happens if you use the Idea Submission Form. The link will take you to a page on the SSC website where you can submit your suggestions and ideas. That form then creates a ticket for the SSC Business Transformation Office to analyze and create a solution. Here's an example:

Process Improvement Request: More visibility into the status of invoices so colleges can inform the vendor.

One of the colleges submitted this Process Improvement suggestion through the form on our website. In response, colleges can view that data using a web-based version of ImageNow called WebNow. For every invoice that is received, our Accounts Payable Intake team records certain information in ImageNow, including the vendor, the day the invoice was received, the status of the receiving in eVA. If you would like to be able to view the status of invoices you submitted to SSC, contact your Business Office for access to WebNow.

More importantly, we ask that the college NOT communicate with the vendor regarding invoice status. As part of the Process Improvement response, we used hard data that we have been collecting internally (Help Center call logs) to analyze the process. The data shows that far more colleges than vendors are calling requesting invoice statuses. Please ask the vendor to contact our Help Center directly with questions. Every Purchase Order processed through the Shared Services Center has our contact information listed under the Bill-to section. The vendor should be dealing directly with SSC for all questions regarding invoicing and payment. This frees up your time and furthers the Shared Services mission of reducing administrative burden and costs.

Contacting the Shared Services Center

Contact Methods
METHOD #1 – CALL 877-340-5577

1. An agent will answer the call and attempt to answer your question.
2. If the question cannot be answered at that time, it will be escalated for research and you will be given a ticket number.
3. You will be contacted back once a solution has been reached.

METHOD #2 – EMAIL HELP@SSC.VCCS.EDU

1. You will get an immediate response via email that the ticket is being worked, this email provides you with the ticket number.
2. You will be contacted with a resolution within 48 hours.

Have you visited our newly revamped website? www.ssc.vccs.edu There are many new self service capabilities

available to you. We would also love to hear your feedback if you have suggestions of other improvements we can make to further the ease and usability of the website.