Paying for Services – Getting Started

A service is an activity in which labor is the major factor and not merely incidental to the production, acquisition, and/or delivery of a good. The procurement of services has unique requirements, and the first requirement is an evaluation of whether, based upon guidelines established by the Internal Revenue Services, the individual or entity providing the service should be classified as an employee or an independent contractor (vendor).

The next page contains a flowchart that will enable units to quickly determine whether they must contact another university office for guidance, appoint the service provider as an employee, or perform a service provider evaluation.

When a service provider evaluation is necessary, a questionnaire will be completed by the potential service provider. This Service Provider Questionnaire will enable the unit to evaluate whether a service provider should be classified as an employee or independent contractor. The evaluation and classification must be performed before engaging an individual or entity to perform services and before any services begin. It must be based upon IRS guidelines, not on administrative ease or relative costs.

**Note:** If the IRS reviews classifications and determines the service provider should have been classified as an employee, any costs associated with misclassification (taxes, interest, penalty) are the responsibility of the unit.
**SERVICE PROVIDER EVALUATION DECISION FLOWCHART**

**Are you purchasing only goods with no service component?**

- **NO**

**Are the services “specialized,” e.g., real estate, insurance, as described in [Section 201](#)?**

- **YES**
  - **Stop!** This applies only to services.

- **NO**

**Are the services listed in [Section 203](#) as exempt from the Service Provider Evaluation?**

- **YES**
  - **Stop!** Consult [Section 201](#) and contact the appropriate office for further assistance.

- **NO**

**Are you paying for catering services and/or event space rental?**

- **YES**
  - **Stop!** A service provider evaluation is not necessary. See the chart below on Catering and Event Space Rental.

- **NO**

**Has the service provider been approved by Procurement Services and signed a university contract?** For a listing of preferred and contract suppliers, visit [https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/procurement/supplierlistview](https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/procurement/supplierlistview)

- **YES**
  - **Stop!** Use the procurement method listed on the Procurement Services website for the preferred and contract suppliers.

- **NO**

**Is the service being performed one for which Procurement Services has developed a unique contract?** See list of Consulting Agreements and Contracts for Services on next page.

- **YES**
  - **Stop!** A service provider evaluation is not necessary as the [performer and small services provider contracts](#) contain a service provider attestation. Refer to the [matrix](#) on the website and select the appropriate contract and payment method.

- **NO**

**Is the service provider an entity, i.e., corporation, partnership, limited liability partnership, or limited liability company?**

- **YES**
  - **Stop!** A service provider evaluation is not necessary. Select the appropriate consulting agreement and initiate a purchase order.

- **NO**

**Note:** It is understood that the FTC/BSC may not be aware of all facts related to service providers’ current or former affiliation with Cornell. Should additional facts become available when the service provider completes the vendor registration, Procurement Services will notify the FTC/BSC.
Service Providers – General Information

The following information does not apply to service providers appointed through Payroll.

Insurance
The service provider (vendor) is generally required to provide proof that they meet the university’s minimum insurance requirements if the performance of the service could result in liability to the University (i.e., services performed on university property). For information on the university’s minimum insurance requirements, see Section 405, Insurance Requirements topic within this manual. If you are unsure as to whether the intended service provider must provide proof of insurance, contact Risk Management and Insurance.

*Note:* Procurement and Payment Services (Procurement) maintains a list of vendors that have supplied proof of adequate insurance coverage, available at http://www.dfa.cornell.edu/procurement/buyers/insurance or you may check the Insurance tab on the vendor record in KFS.

Contracts
A contract must be executed between the service provider (vendor) and the university in order to establish mutually agreed upon terms and conditions of the transaction. The university’s purchase order is a legally binding contract that contains terms and conditions designed to protect the interests of the university.

When procuring services, it is often advisable to include terms beyond those in the Cornell purchase order’s standard terms and conditions, such as the scope of work or deliverables, acceptance criteria, identification of who will provide the services, etc. Contracts covering several specific types of services have been drafted by the Office of University Counsel and these documents will be used in conjunction with the purchase order. The contracts, listed below, can be found at http://www.dfa.cornell.edu/procurement/tools-forms/forms/contracts.

Unique Contracts for Services (with service provider attestation)

- **Addendum for Facility Contract Agreements** – use this agreement when utilizing a facility’s contract for event space rental. See chart below for details.
- **Caterer contract** – for use with caterers. See chart below for details.
- **Performer without Equipment contract** -- for use with individual service providers, such as entertainers, DJ’s, clowns, small bands. Caution: Contracts for major, public, entertainment events held in places such as Bailey Hall and Statler Auditorium must be reviewed by the Office of University Counsel; do not use the standard Performer nor Small Services Provider contract.
- **Performer with Equipment contract** -- for use with individual service providers, such as entertainers, DJ’s, clowns, small bands. Caution: Contracts for major, public, entertainment events held in places such as Bailey Hall and Statler Auditorium must be reviewed by the Office of University Counsel; do not use the standard Performer nor Small Services Provider contract.
- **Service Provider contract** – for use with individual service providers, such as massage therapists, henna/face painting
• **Service Provider contract for Graphic Design, Web Design, Videography** -- for use with individual service providers

• **Service Provider contract for Writing, Editing, Indexing** – for use with individual service providers

• **Service Provider contract for Photographer, Artist, Illustrator** -- for use with individual service providers

• **Service Provider contract for Deaf or Foreign Language Translation** – for use with individual service providers

• **Professional Services Search Firm Agreement Template** -- All final search firm agreements must be approved by Human Resources. The authorizing party must retain a copy of this contract. In addition, please forward a copy of this agreement, **completed and signed by the contractor and university representatives**, along with all relevant attachments, to Allan Bishop, Recruitment and Employment Center, 337 Pine Tree Road, Ithaca, NY 14850 and Glenn Morey, Cornell Procurement Services, 395 Pine Tree Road, Ithaca, NY 14850.

### Consulting Agreements

• **Independent Contractor/Consultant agreement** – for use with **individuals** who have been evaluated and classified as independent contractors; covers such issues as tax and liability.

• **Professional Services agreement** – for use with business entities; covers such issues as tax and liability.

• **IT Professional Services agreement** – for use with business entities providing information technology and cloud computing services; covers such issues as tax and liability.

Finally, units with unusual business needs require **customized contracts**. Such contracts must be reviewed by the Office of University Counsel; therefore it is advisable to contact Procurement prior to initiating the purchase order. Additional information on contracts can be found in **section 502** of this manual.

**Note:** Procurement has negotiated university wide contracts with certain frequently used service providers. These vendors have already been evaluated and classified as independent contractors. For a list of these service providers, please see [http://www.dfa.cornell.edu/procurement/supplierlistview](http://www.dfa.cornell.edu/procurement/supplierlistview).

### Catering and Event Space Rental

*Catering* occurs when a vendor prepares, sets up, serves or cleans up food on Cornell controlled property, including both facilities owned by Cornell and facilities (event space) that may be rented or leased and only under Cornell’s control for the period of the event (i.e., rental of a banquet hall). Catering should not be confused with simple *delivery* where no service is provided on site (i.e., pizza delivery).

Below are two charts which identify contract requirements, deposit and final payment options for catering only, event space rental, catering with event space rental.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Catering Only</th>
<th>Dollar Amount</th>
<th>Contract Requirements</th>
<th>Deposit Options</th>
<th>Final Payment Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Caterers with a University Contract** | Up to $10,000 | The standard catering contract is not needed.  
Quote/scope of work is required. | A deposit up to 50% of the total, not to exceed $5,000, may be paid via pcard. | The BSC may make final payment on a pcard. The total payment (sum of deposit and final payment) may not exceed $10,000. |
| **Caterers with a University Contract** | $10,000 or greater | The standard catering contract is not needed.  
PO is required. A Quote/scope of work must be attached to the requisition. | After the PO is issued, a deposit up to 50% of the total, not to exceed $10,000, may be paid via pcard. | Final payment to be made through the PO process. |
| **All Other Caterers** | Up to $10,000 | Use Cornell’s standard Catering Contract.  
The BSC director or designee signs the completed contract and returns it to vendor. | After contract is signed, a deposit up to 50% of the total, not to exceed $5,000, may be paid via pcard. | The BSC may make final payment on a pcard. The total payment (sum of deposit and final payment) may not exceed $10,000. |
| **All Other Caterers** | $10,000 or Greater | The unit will ask the vendor to complete Cornell’s standard Catering Contract.  
The BSC collects Cornell’s Standard Catering Contract (BSC does not sign) and attaches it to the KFS Requisition. | After the PO is issued, a deposit up to 50% of the total, not to exceed $10,000, may be paid via pcard. | Final payment to be made through the PO process. |

**Caution:** When hosting events in a private residence, you must contact the Department of Risk Management and Insurance prior to the event. It is imperative to ensure that the appropriate vendor insurance and licenses are in place to protect the homeowner from potential liability.
### Event Space Rental OR Catering with Event Space Rental

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dollar Amount</th>
<th>Contract Requirements</th>
<th>Deposit Options</th>
<th>Final Payment Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to $10,000</td>
<td>In addition to the contract that the vendor has supplied, the unit will ask the vendor to complete Cornell’s Addendum for Facility Contract Agreements, and then the BSC Director or designee signs the addendum.</td>
<td>After a vendor contract and addendum are signed, a deposit up to 50% of the total, not to exceed $5,000, may be paid via pcard.</td>
<td>The BSC may make final payment on a pcard. The total payment (sum of deposit and final payment) may not exceed $10,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 or Greater</td>
<td>In addition to the contract that the vendor has supplied, the unit will ask the vendor to complete Cornell’s Addendum for Facility Contract Agreements. The BSC collects the addendum and vendor contract (BSC does not sign) and attaches them to a Requisition.</td>
<td>After the PO is issued, a deposit up to 50% of the total, not to exceed $10,000, may be paid via pcard.</td>
<td>Final payment to be made through the PO process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For your convenience, the list of caterers with contracts is available on the Procurement website at [https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/procurement/buyers/commodities/hiring-caterers/caterers](https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/procurement/buyers/commodities/hiring-caterers/caterers).

### Joint Venture
The university may enter into a joint venture with an outside entity for the performance of services. These ventures are often complicated. Units must involve Procurement prior to entering into such an agreement.

### Sponsored Project Consulting Agreements and Subcontracts
When an individual is performing services that are directly related to the science or scope of a sponsored project, a [Service Provider Evaluation](https://www.osp.cornell.edu/) must be completed to determine if the individual is an employee or an independent contractor. If after the evaluation, the service provider is deemed to be an Independent Contractor, a purchase order is required and an Independent Contractor/Consultant Agreement must be completed. Proceed to [Section 701, the Service Provider Evaluation](https://www.osp.cornell.edu/).

**Note:** If another organization is performing a substantive portion of the work effort based upon an award made to Cornell, it may be necessary to formalize this relationship through the execution of a subcontract. Such agreements are executed by the Office of Sponsored Programs. Please see [www.osp.cornell.edu](http://www.osp.cornell.edu) for further information on subcontracts.
Performing the Service Provider Evaluation

The purpose of the service provider evaluation is to determine whether to appoint a service provider, who otherwise “passed” all the steps in the Decision Flow Chart in section 700 (page 2), as an independent contractor or as an employee paid through payroll. The IRS asserts that if Cornell exercises control over the service provider, the individual should be appointed as an employee.

There are myriad risks and costs associated with each classification of the service provider. For employees, there are the employer's share of FICA tax, employee benefits, workers compensation and other insurance coverage, overtime premiums, etc. For independent contractors, there are contract costs as well as potential penalties and interest from the IRS and other regulatory agencies if the agency, during its review, reclassifies the independent contractor as an employee.

The unit engaging the service provider has primary responsibility for independent contractor review. The unit may be held financially responsible for any taxes, interest, penalties, judgments, or awards due to misclassification.

To determine whether a service provider is an independent contractor or an employee under common law, you must examine the relationship between the worker and the business. All evidence of control and independence in this relationship should be considered. If Cornell exercises control over the service provider, the individual should be appointed as an employee. The factors that provide evidence of “control” fall into three categories – Behavioral Control, Financial Control, and the Nature of the Relationship itself.

- **Behavioral Control** generally reflects that the organization exercises control over the service provider’s activities. If Cornell provides training and/or instructions about how to complete the task, the service provider should generally be classified as an employee. In contrast, independent contractors determine how they will accomplish the task.

- **Financial Control** generally reflects that the service provider is not at risk for financial loss on a contract because the organization provides the equipment, reimburses the business expenses and pays on an hourly basis rather than a negotiated fee for specific deliverables.

- **Relationship Control** generally reflects that the service provider works primarily for the organization and anticipates a continuing relationship. An independent contractor has a broad customer base and is free to work when, for whom, and for as many firms as he/she chooses.

A checklist is available to assist the unit in completing the evaluation of Behavioral Control, Financial Control and Nature of the Relationship. See the Service Provider Evaluation Worksheet.

Procedure for Performing the Service Provider Evaluation

- **Note:** The BSC may assume all or part of the tasks outlined below for the unit. Contact your BSC for their specific procedures.

1. The unit engaging the service provider will send the Service Provider Questionnaire to the service provider for completion (see the Forms section of the Procurement and Payment Services’ Website) and request its return directly to the unit.
2. After receiving the completed Service Provider Questionnaire, the unit will complete Cornell’s Service Provider Evaluation Worksheet to determine whether “control” over the service provider exists, as described on the previous page. Remember to attach both the Service Provider Questionnaire and the Service Provider Evaluation Worksheet to the requisition. (See the Forms section of the Procurement Services’ Website.)

* Caution: The unit must review the service provider’s classification prior to entering into an initial contract or renewing a contract. The unit should make its own determination and not rely on another unit’s determination.

3. If the unit concludes that the service provider should be classified as an employee, the unit will request appointment of the individual as an employee through the Office of Human Resources (see your BSC for further instructions).

4. If the unit concludes that the service provider should be classified as an independent contractor, the unit will:
   a. Document the resolution of any conflict of interest and/or commitment identified during IC evaluation process. See the University Policy 4.14, Conflicts of Interest and Commitment for more information.
   b. Evaluate the need for insurance. Requirements for insurance coverage are outlined in the Section 405, Insurance Requirements section of this manual; contact Risk Management and Insurance with questions on insurance requirements. ♦ Note: Procurement will contact the service provider and request proof of insurance; contact Procurement to request this assistance.
   c. Determine the terms of the agreement with the service provider, such as the scope of work or deliverables, acceptance criteria, identification of who will provide the services, etc. These terms are most easily defined through completion of the Independent Contractor/Consultant Agreement form (see the Forms section of the Procurement Web site.) Contact Procurement with questions on these terms, which are in addition to the standard terms and conditions of Cornell’s purchase order.
   d. Request the issuance of a purchase order through the BSC and submit to the BSC the Service Provider Questionnaire, the Service Provider Evaluation Worksheet, conflict of interest/commitment resolution (if applicable) and Independent Contractor/Consultant Agreement. ♦ Note: The Service Provider Questionnaire requires the name, title and signature of the unit-level individual that performed the service provider evaluation.

Other Considerations with Independent Contractors:

Billing and Tax
All business expenses that the unit has agreed to pay must be submitted as a component of the vendor’s invoice. Do not process an expense/travel reimbursement for the independent contractor. Do not submit individual expense receipts with the invoice. In accordance with IRS regulations, the university will report all payments to independent contractors totaling $600 or more during a calendar year on IRS form 1099-MISC.
The independent contractor is responsible for all estimated tax payments and other tax filing requirements; all tax records, including original business receipts; general liability and other insurance coverage for workers who work on his/her contract with Cornell; medical insurance, personal accident insurance, pension plan, or other benefits, whether personal or extended to his/her employees.

Inquiries by Government Agencies

All inquiries made directly to the unit by a government agency about independent contractors must be directed to the Tax Manager in the Division of Financial Affairs. Do not respond to these inquiries at the unit level.
Responsibilities Related to the Payment for Services

Unit Responsibilities

- Work through the Paying for Services flowchart to determine the appropriate payment method or contract method
- Complete service provider questionnaire and evaluation worksheet, if directed in flowchart
- Determine the terms of the agreement with the service provider, such as the scope of work or deliverables, acceptance criteria, identification of who will provide the services, etc.
- Provide contract to service provider for review and signature and return to unit for completion
- Review, date, initial or sign the contract as required for the department on the particular Cornell agreement
- Provide required information (as described above) with the I Want Doc or form required by your BSC

Business Service Center (BSC):

- Understand and communicate policies to faculty, staff, and service providers
- Verify that the service provider evaluation has been performed (where one must be performed, based on the information provided in section 700) and documented by the unit, prior to requesting payment to the service provider
- Verify that all conflict of interest and conflict of commitment issues have been resolved and documented by the unit
- Ensure that independent contractors meet the university insurance requirements
- Ensure that contracts are properly executed prior to the performance of services
- Attach the following to the requisition: Service Provider Questionnaire, Service Provider Evaluation Worksheet, and contract (Independent Contractor/Consultant Agreement form or Performer or Small Services Provider contract) to Procurement Services when requesting the purchase order
- Ensure that the procurement of services is undertaken in compliance with the policy and procedures outlined in this manual

Procurement and Payment Services:

- Request, review, and maintain Certificates of Insurance for service providers
- Maintain a searchable database of vendors with insurance
- Receive IRS forms, supplier information forms (via manual or automated process) and proof of insurance from vendors that are service providers
- Maintain the KFS vendor database

Tax Compliance Office in the Division of Financial Affairs:

- Provide guidance to units on IRS issues and interpretations

Risk Management and Insurance:

- Negotiate any exceptions to the minimum necessary insurance coverage for independent contractors