

PROCEDURE FOR CONTRACT AUTHORIZATION

I. General Purpose

Vice Presidents are responsible for reviewing, approving, and signing as “University Official” contracts (up to \$25,000) generated within their divisions. The Vice Presidents may officially delegate their signature authority on contracts and other documents, and are encouraged to name a delegate to serve during any absence from their office.

Three basic criteria must be met prior to contract approval:

1. The contract must be appropriate to the mission and operations of the University.
2. The funds and other resources must be available.
3. The terms of the contract must comply with Board of Regents, local, state, and federal regulations and laws.

The guiding principle for these procedures is that individuals having ultimate responsibility to oversee the activities described in particular agreements or contracts should have signature authority for them. Prior to final signature, contracts and agreements need to pass through only those offices having direct line responsibility for the activities (or their funding) and those assuring administrative or regulatory compliance.

All contracts and agreements involving the University must be signed by the President, the Provost, or one of the Vice Presidents (or a documented designee) as the authorized University Official in order to be valid. In signing their approval, individuals having line authority attest to the appropriateness of the content of the agreement and to the source of the funding.

II. Process

Prior to being signed by the University Official, contracts and agreements must be reviewed and approved by:

1. The department chair or unit director.
2. The dean (if (1) above is academic department).
3. The Office of Legal Affairs.

The above review and approval is noted by signature on an approval routing form attached to the front of the contract. (Appendix A) These signatures apprise the authorized University Official, i.e., President, Provost, or Vice President, that the terms of the contract have been appropriately reviewed.

With the exception of grant proposals, all contracts of \$25,000 or more in Georgia State University expenditures or revenues must be reviewed and signed by the Vice President for Finance and Administration as the University Official. The President must sign contracts between the University and any other state entity. All other contracts and agreements may be signed by a Vice President or documented designee. (See the section below on delegation of Signature authority.

III. Summary of Signatory Responsibilities

The following outlines the responsibilities of all individuals signing their approval of contracts or agreements.

- A. *Department Chair or Unit Director*
 - 1. Guarantees that the department or unit can furnish services, materials, and/or funds designated in the contract.
 - 2. Assures that the contract is appropriate and necessary to the department's missions and priorities.
 - 3. Assures that alternative activities, actions and/or providers have been considered, and that those stipulated in the contract or agreement represent the most feasible and reasonable alternatives for the department.

- B. *Dean*
 - 1. Guarantees that the college or school can furnish the services, materials, and/or funds (including any matching requirements) designated in the contract.
 - 2. Assures that the contract is appropriate and necessary to the college or school's mission and priorities.
 - 3. Assures that alternative activities, actions and/or providers have been considered, and that those stipulated in the contract or agreement represent the most feasible and reasonable alternatives for the college or school.

- C. *Office of Legal Affairs (on approval routing form):*
 - 1. Assures that the contract does not subject the University to undue liability or risk.
 - 2. Assures that the terms of the contract comply with University regulations, and applicable local, state, and federal laws.

- D. *Vice President or President (on contract or agreement):*
 - 1. Verifies that all appropriate signatures are intact, including Legal Affairs approval and Accounting Services/Grants and Contracts approval.

2. Assures that the contract is appropriate and necessary to the University's mission and priorities, and is not in conflict with the needs, mission, or priorities of any other division within the University.
 3. Obligates the University and the Board of Regents to the terms of the contract.
- E. *Approval Criteria:*

1. **Contract/Grant Proposal Approval**

Contract Signature Authority: Vice President for Research

Proposals and awards whose agencies which specifically require the signature of the Chief Financial Officer or President shall be forwarded accordingly after approval by the Vice President for Research.

2. **Student Activities Contracts Approval**

Contract Signature Authority: Vice President for Student Life

The committee chair, program advisor, Dean of Students budget office, Office of Legal Affairs, Dean of Students Budget Director, Dean of Students, and the Office of Accounting Services must review student activity contracts and agreements. A standard contract has been developed for commercial solicitation agreements. The Commercial Solicitation Agreement form is used for outside vendors (who must be sponsored by a University chartered student organization or University department) who wish to sell goods or services on University property. The contract does NOT have to be reviewed by Legal Affairs as long as no changes are made to the standard commercial solicitation agreement contract and there are no appendages to the contract. The ultimate authority for overseeing all student activity contracts and agreements rests with the Vice President of Student Life, who signs the actual contracts. After the Vice President has signed, the contract should be returned to the Dean of Students Budget Office.

3. **Consulting Agreement Approval Form**

Contract Signature Authority: Vice President over program area

The appropriate unit director(s) or department chair(s) and dean must approve consulting agreements. These signatures on the routing form attest to the appropriateness of the services, the fees to be charged, and the budget account. The Consulting Agreement is a standard University contract. This contract does NOT need additional approval of Legal Affairs as long as no changes are made to the standard consulting agreement contract and there are no attachments to the contract. After

funds are encumbered, the Vice President (who has ultimate control over the budget and program in question) may then sign the agreement or contract as the University Official. After services are rendered, the signed contract and approval form should then be sent to Accounts Payable for issue of payment.

4. Generic Contract/Agreement Approval Form

Contract Signature Authority: Vice President

All other contracts and agreements (including program, hotel and licensing agreements) must use the generic routing form. The agreements are approved by the Department Chair, or Head, Dean, Office of Grants and Contracts (sponsored programs) and Office of Legal Affairs. The Vice President over the program area serves as the University Official and signs the contracts and agreements. After the President or Vice President signs the contract, it should be returned to the originating department.

III. Delegation of Signature Authority

Vice Presidents may delegate signature authority for routing forms or contracts and agreements. This delegation may be limited to specific types of contracts or to specific time periods. Department heads or deans may delegate signature authority only for contract approval routing forms to another individual. To delegate signature authority, the person charged with the signature authority *must* submit the information to the Office of the Vice President for Finance and Administration. A list of authorized signers will be sent to the Office of Legal Affairs and to all units of Finance and Administration who participate in the execution of contracts and agreements. Contracts and agreements signed by other than authorized staff will be rejected and returned to the originating department.

IV. Signature Approval Routing Forms

To assure the proper and timely routing of contracts and agreements through the signature approval process, the University uses a specific routing form, (Attachment A). This form should be attached to the front of the contract. The form provides contact information and shows the next step in the routing process so that contracts and agreements can be handed expediently.

ATTACHMENT A

**GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF LEGAL AFFAIRS**

CONTRACT ROUTING FORM

Contact Name: _____ Telephone No.: _____

Department: _____

(Name of the party with whom the University is contracting)

Dates of contract: _____ to _____

Amount of contract: \$ _____

If services/goods are being received by the University, what is the funding source to pay for the services/goods? _____

Individual Authorized to sign this contract: _____

All contracts must be signed by an authorized representative of the University at the vice presidential level or higher (or a person for which a signature authorization is on file in the Office of the Vice President for Finance and Administration) in order to be binding.

Contracts with amounts over \$25,000 must be signed by the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

The following have reviewed and approved this contract:

Department Chair/Unit Director

Date

Dean (if above is academic department)

Date

Legal Affairs

Date

This routing form should be used for all Contracts/Agreements, except those from the Office of Sponsored Programs and Student Services.