

Procurement Specialist

Buy everything an organization needs, on time and for the right price. An office career you can start without a degree.

TYPICAL PAY

\$50,580

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$38k to \$69k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

up to 4 years

after high school

DEMAND

Limited

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Manufacturers, hospitals, school districts, city halls, federal agenci...

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
 Take business, accounting and every spreadsheet class offered. Accuracy matters more than brilliance here.
- 2 Entry job** Straight after high school
 Purchasing assistant, purchasing clerk, receiving clerk or warehouse clerk. Hospitals, school districts and manufacturers hire constantly at this level.
- 3 Learn the system and the rules** 1 to 2 years
 Requisitions, purchase orders, quotes, bids, receiving and three-way matching. In the public sector, also the bidding law your agency must follow.
- 4 Degree or certification, while working** 2 to 4 years, part time
 An associate or bachelor's degree in business or supply chain, or a professional procurement certification. Either one moves you off the clerk ladder.
- 5 Buyer or contract specialist** After 3 to 5 years
 Now you negotiate, evaluate bids and own supplier relationships instead of processing paperwork.

Pros and cons

- + A real office career you can enter with a high school diploma
- + Every industry and every government needs it
- + Clean path into supply chain roles that pay much more
- The clerk-level job is shrinking as software automates ordering
- Pay flattens out unless you move up and out of it
- You get blamed when a delivery is late, even when it is not your fault

Good to know

Everyone in this job is on email all day

In the federal occupation survey, 100% of procurement clerks report using email every day and 94% use the telephone daily. It is one of the most communication-heavy desk jobs measured.

The clerk role is shrinking, the field is not

Federal data counts about 61,900 procurement clerks and projects a small decline over the decade as ordering gets automated. The buyer and contract specialist roles above it are not declining, which is the a...

Optional boosts

NIGP-CPP (Certified Procurement Professional). Public Procurement Associate designation. Federal acquisition certification. CPSM (Certified Professional in Supply Management).

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Procurement Clerks (43-3061.00)
 O*NET OnLine: Procurement Clerks
 NIGP, the Institute for Public Procurement
 Federal Acquisition Institute

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/procurement-specialist>



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